



Social Media: Benefits and the Related Concerns

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Internet has gained an absolutely central importance in human life, and social media had a prominent role in this picture. In the contemporary society technology shows a quick progress, and social networks increase rapidly their number of users on each and every day. Social networking is one of the main indicators of the technology era, attracts people of all ages while the virtual world goes beyond the real life via the resources and applications it offers. Especially young generation shows an intense interest in social networking sites which is an extension of the Internet technology. They cannot think of communication without thinking of online-networks like Facebook, Whats app.,LinkedIn, Google, Twitter etc. The main focus of the paper is to assess the possible benefits and concerns of social media. In the paper the current situation of social media in terms of facts and figures and preventing negative aspects will also be discussed.

Keywords: Social Media, Benefits, facts and figures.

Introduction

Only 17 years ago, in 2004, major communication revolution took place i.e. the birth of Facebook. Since then the way of communication has changed away from the classical one way communication to a dialogue, interactive oriented and 'many to many' model. Social media has become an integral part of the world. Especially young generation cannot think of communication without thinking of online-networks like Facebook, Whatsapp, Google +, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Tumblr, gaming sites, and blogs etc. Why are people so enthusiastic about using these new technologies of virtual interaction? Since the time of Aristotle humans have been described as social beings, and one might state these technologies allow them to act out their crucial feeling of social belonging accordingly (Spitzer, 2012). Social media have become prominent parts of life for many young people in the contemporary society. Young generation engage with social networking sites without stopping to think what the effects whether, positive or negative are on our lives.

There are many positive aspects, but there are equally as many dangers that come with the use of social networking sites. In order to make the right choices, we must dig in and research this topic thoroughly. From the literature it was found that there is no cleared definition of what is social media. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010) defined it is a kind of websites or other internet based services where the content being communicated is created by the people who use the service, interaction among people in which they are creating, sharing, exchanging, and modifying their ideas in virtual communities or networks. it is a group of

Internet based applications that build on the ideological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.

Facts and Figures

Taking the example of Facebook as the largest online social networking site this web-based services allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison 2008). The frequency of communication via social media is continuously increasing. As per the report of Datareportal global overview published on 27th January 2021 related to social media are:

- More than half of the world now uses social media
- 4.66 billion people around the world now use the internet, of those users, 316 million new users have come online within the last 12 months
- 5.22 billion are unique mobile users

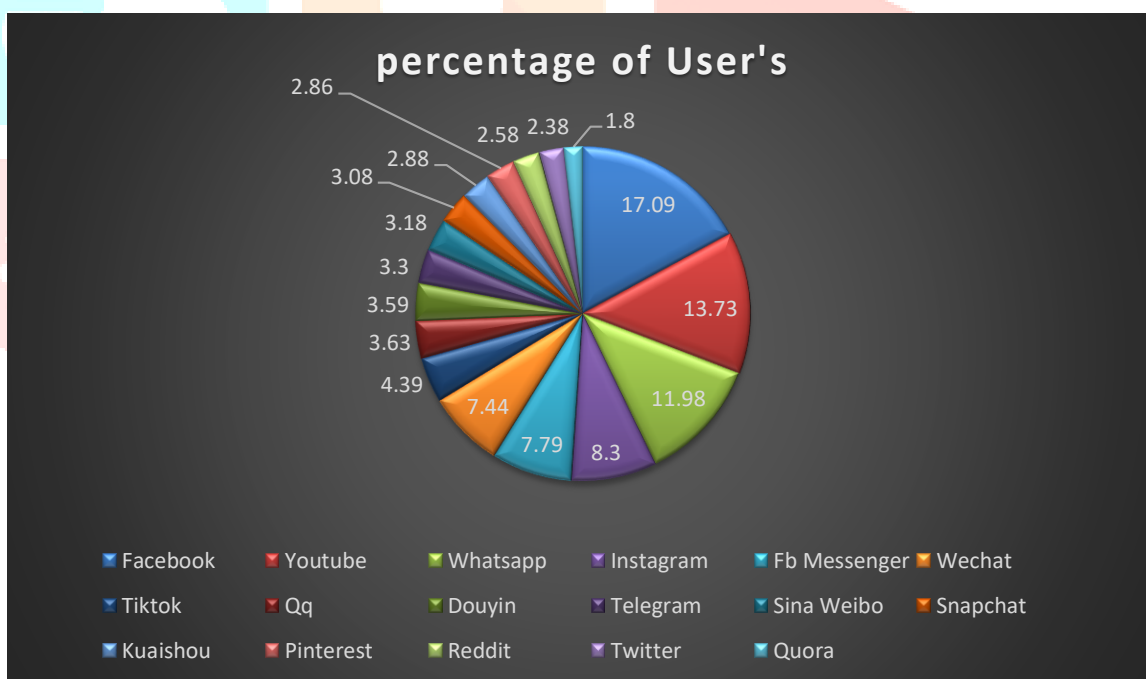
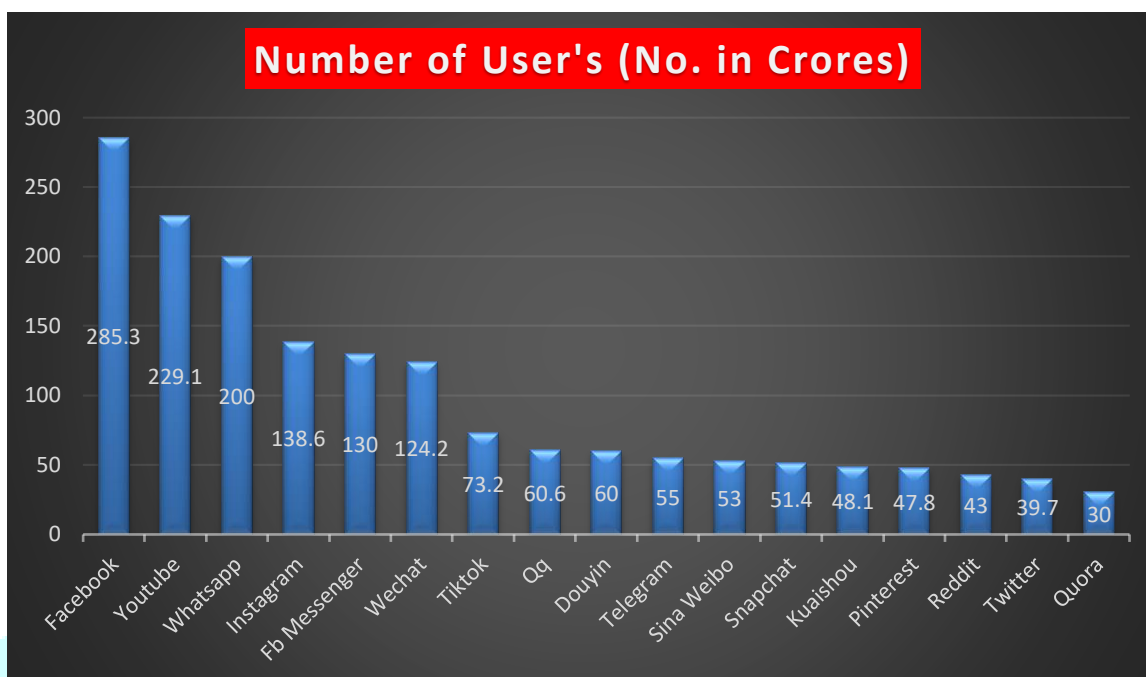
A special report by [datareportal](#) in July 2020 regarding covid-19: increase in online and digital activities on percentage based given in tabular form below:

• <i>Watching More Shows and Films on Streaming Services</i>	54%	• <i>Spending Longer Using Social Media</i>	43%
• <i>Spending Longer on Messenger Services</i>	42%	• <i>Listening to more Music Streaming Services</i>	37%
• <i>Spending More Time on Mobile Apps</i>	36%	• <i>Spending more Time Plying Computer or Video Games</i>	35%
• <i>Creating and Uploading Videos</i>	16%	• <i>Listening to More Podcasts</i>	15%

The world's most used social platforms the latest global active user figures in crores or a selection of the world's top social media platforms as 18 July 2021 given by KEPIOS Analysis is given in below tabular form

Social Media Platform	User's	Percentage
Facebook	285.3	17.09
YouTube	229.1	13.73
Whatsapp	200.0	11.98
Instagram	138.6	8.30
Fb Messenger	130.0	7.79
Wechat	124.2	7.44
Tiktok	73.2	4.39
Qq	60.6	3.63
Douyin	60.0	3.59
Telegram	55.0	3.30
SinaWeibo	53.0	3.18
Snapchat	51.4	3.08
Kuaishou	48.1	2.88
Pinterest	47.8	2.86
Reddit	43.0	2.58
Twitter	39.7	2.38
Quora	30.0	1.80

Total	1669	100
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(Statisticbrain, 2014) reported that almost half of the 18-34 years old checks Facebook as soon as they wake up or before they get out of bed (28%). The average number of friends per Facebook user is 130 and an average number of pages, groups, and events a user is connected to are 80.

Taking the example of the continent with the highest Internet penetration rate worldwide in 2012, 69% of the Europeans are indicating that they use social networking sites at least once a week; more than half of them (54%) every day. The percentage in the group of 15-24 is even much higher: Almost everybody (95%) use it at least once a week and 85% everyday (European Commission, 2012). Facebook statistics offer an inside view about the behaviour of the youth in the Internet on a worldwide basis. The Australian Psychology Society (APS) released a national survey report in 2017, looking at the impact of new technology

and social networking sites on the well-being of Australians. In the survey around 1,000 adults over the age of 18 and 150 young people aged 14-17 years took part. The survey found more than three in four young people (78.8%) and more than half of all adults (54%) were highly involved with their mobile phones. Young people are reportedly using social networking sites for an average of 3.3 hours each day, on five or more days of the week. (Source: <http://theconversation.com/how-parents-and-teens-can-reduce-the-impact-of-social-media-on-youth-well-being-87619>).

India had estimated 432million Internet users as per the report on December 2016. This however, doesn't take into account the impact of demonetisation. It is estimated that by 2017, Internet Users in India are most likely to be in a range of 450-465 million. The report finds that the overall internet penetration in India is around 31% presently (Source: IMRB I Cube, All India Estimates. December estimates does not account the impact of demonetization)

Impact of Social Media on Youngsters

Social media has become a new set of cool tools for involving youngsters in the contemporary society. Many young people's day to day life is woven by the new and fast technology. Youngsters are in conversation and communication with their friends and groups by using different media and devices every day. It was seen that in past years youngsters are in touch with only friends and their groups in schools and colleges. But present days youngsters are in contact not only with known friends but also with unknown people through social networking sites. According to BBC news report of 2013, 67% Facebook users are very common and well known social networking portal. Young people frequently use the web, mobile phones, and online games to communicate and gather information with each other. As per the report issued by the [GlobalWebIndex](#) in 2018 stated that people ages 16 to 24 spent almost an average of three hours and one minute using social media sites each day. The survey in California reported that how social media impacts the behavioral health of California's adults shown in table below.

Type	Example	% who use social media nationally
Text Massaging	Cell phone feature	75% of all teens own a cell phone, 88% of cell phone-owning teens text, 72% of all teens use text messaging
Social networking sites	Facebook, MySpace	73% of online teens have used a social networking site
Online video sites	Youtube.com	63% of online teens watch online videos
Online gaming	SecondLife.com	61% of online youth play games online, including multiplayer online games
Blogging with in social networking sites	Facebook or MySpace feature	52% of online teens have commented on a blog

Source: Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Behavioral Health in California, Source: (Lenhart, 2010) except for Online video sites (Nielsen, 2009) & Online gaming (McAfee, 2010)

Positive aspects of Social Media

Social networking sites are both, good and bad. The social networking sites have actually changed the life pattern of the individuals. Let us discuss the positive aspects of social media.

- One of the important positive effects of social media is that it gives a way to the learners to effectively reach each other in regards to class ventures, bunch assignments or for help on homework assignments.
- Many of the students who are shy and do not take an interest consistently in the class room, they can share their views and can express their thoughts easily on social media.
- The use of social media provides the opportunity for learners to teach good digital citizenship and the use of Internet for productivity and also it helps youngsters to stay connected with each other.
- Social networking sites can allow people to find support online that they may lack in traditional relationships.
- In a critical development period, youngsters can go for social networking sites for information and guidance and also helps youngsters to stay connected with each other.
- Youngsters can look to social media for getting the answers related to their career objectives and helps to meet people they may not have met outside the social media forums.
- Social networking sites help us to share ideas beyond the geographical boundaries and also provide open access and opportunity for all users, writers and bloggers to connect with their clients.
- Another most significant positive effect of Social media is that it unites people on a huge platform for the achievement of specific goals. This brings positive and need based change in the society and also provides awareness in the members of the society like campaigns, advertisement articles, promotions which helps the people to be up to date with the current information.
- Information through social media spreads faster online than any other media. McGillivray, (2015) mentioned that more than 50% learn about breaking and other news on social media.
- Social networking sites provide academic research to everyone with online access and allowing people access to previously unavailable resources.
- Social media sites inform, guides and empower young generation to change themselves and their communities.
- Social media allow people to communicate and express their feelings with friends and this increased online communication strengthens those relationships. McGillivray, (2015) said that 52% of online teens said that social media sites have helped their friendships. 88% online users said being online helps them stay in touch with friends they don't see regularly.

Negative aspects of Social Media

- The first concern about the negative effect of social media is the kind of distraction to the students present in the class. As teachers confused to recognize who is paying attention in the classroom.
- The second negative effect of using social media is the privacy issues like posting personal information on online sites and posting inappropriate information may lead the youngsters to the wrong side.
- The crimes like Kidnapping, murder, robbery can be easily done by sharing details on social media.
- Mostly youngsters waste their precious time on social networking sites like chatting, watching useless videos which also affect their health and which can divert the concentration and focus from the particular task. McGillivray (2015) reported that 47% of 18-34-year-old users reported using social media or texting during meals. He also reported that when alerted to a new post or tweet, it takes

about 20 to 25 minutes for the average user to return to their original task. 30% of the time it takes two hours for the user to return to their original task.

- Research reported in the journal [JAMA Psychiatry](#) founded that young ones who use social media sites more than three hours every day “may be at heightened risk of mental health problems, particularly internalizing problems.
- Cyber-bullying is commonplace online cause’s emotional trauma, and sometimes even leads to suicide. McGillivray (2015) reported that 49.5% of student’s victimization by bullying online and 33.7% admitted to online bullying. McGillivray (2015) found that at least 800,000 minors had been harassed on Facebook. Middle school children who experienced cyber bullying were almost twice as likely to try to kill themselves.
- Some useless blogs, posts and videos influence youth extremely that they become violent and can take some inappropriate actions.

Social Media and Preventing Negative Aspects

Let’s take a look at how to prevent negative aspects of social media

- Follow Someone Inspiring: There are plenty inspiring people on social media. Each day, they post inspiring quotes, blogs, videos, photos and even live streams of inspiring and motivating things. Their job is not to make you feel lousy about your own life, but to inspire you to take action and do better.
- Make a list of things you're grateful for. Gratitude beats comparison. If you notice you're comparing yourself in a negative way, shift to something you're grateful for and write it down.
- Chalk out a schedule with planning and how much time you want to spend on such sites, visit them, share your update, quickly go through your notifications and messages, and move away.
- Always avoid canned responses
- Be always empathetic. Take social networking sites off your radar by uninstalling apps, removing shortcuts from your desktop or home screens. This makes getting to social networking platforms longer and requires more effort. Sometimes, out of sight, out of mind really does ring true.
- Don’t become dependent on social media. Instead, find yourself some offline hobbies, friends, and ways to recreate so, that you don’t become addicted to the social media.
- Don’t allow social media to interfere with your daily chores, responsibilities, nor your relationships with your friends and parents. Take out time for it, and move away after that.
- Keep taking frequent breaks when you work on online. Your body and mind, including the overworked brain, need a break. Chalk out a time for social media, instead of being online all the time.
- Be always aware that all that you share on the social networking sites becomes public. Therefore, be careful when you click your pictures and share them.
- Remember that, your body needs at least 6-7 hours of sleep therefore, time your work and limit your online activities. Look after your health because that is your biggest wealth.
- Get moving toward something better when you feel a need to hit social networking sites. Do some exercise or go outside for some fresh air and activity can fire up your muscles and give your mood a positive boost.

Conclusion

Social media is considered as the boon and bane in the contemporary society. As the technology is growing the social media has become the routine for each and every person, peoples are seen addicted with these technology every day. It facilitates global communication in seconds, connects deserted areas with the civilization, and plays a significant role in e-commerce and above all in the participation and democratization process. But the list of disadvantages and threats of social media is also long. Use of social media is beneficial but should be used in a limited way without getting addicted. Social networking is affecting the efficiencies as well as the grades of the students therefore; the learners must determine their own boundaries and should set their own limits as to how and when to use social media irrespective of the positive and negative effects it imparts.

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