Positive And Negative Impact Of Usage Of Social Media On Undergraduate College Students Of Chandigarh: A Sociological Study

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Abstract

Modern society is characterized by the emergence of new cultural features, chief among them the widespread availability of social media. New lifestyle patterns have been brought about by excessive social media use. As a result, ways of communication has changed. These interactions create new power dynamics in which certain people are better and more heard because of their increased visibility, while others who become victims to social media suffer. Thus, it affects our Society in a number of ways, both positively and negatively. The goal of this study was to evaluate both the positive and negative impacts of Social media on Undergraduate college students of Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Keywords: Social media, advantages, disadvantages, undergraduate college students.

Introduction

The evolution of more recent technologies is fascinating, but characterizing them can be difficult. With regard to social media, the same is true. It distinguishes itself from other major media by permitting two-way communication. It is becoming more and more common, and its use is growing daily. Social media has made it easier to communicate these days, allowing us to contact and speak with people instantly from anywhere in the world. Certain social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, YouTube, and Snap chat assist users with a variety of tasks. Social media is a type of electronic communication where people establish online groups to exchange opinions, data, concepts, messages, and other materials. Through a variety of platforms that offer the chance to electronically and virtually connect people worldwide, any information may be quickly acquired in a matter of seconds (Dewing, 2012). The term "social media" describes web-based programs that let users engage in virtual communities and networks, produce and share content, and facilitate communication between users. These platforms allow users to interact with a variety of interests through user-generated content, connect with others, and post personal updates and thoughts.

Social media is used by a wide range of individuals for everyday communication, education, health, entertainment, and political engagement. Social media serves as a platform for socialization and education. They spread knowledge and information to a vast number of individuals by using web-based technologies. They make it possible to produce and share user-generated content. (Sonawane & Patil, 2015). Social media gives lonely people of all ages a way to connect with others. Elderly people in modern culture frequently feel as though they have lost their social voice, and using social media from the

comfort of their own homes helps them regain it tenfold. There is no denying the need of preserving this voice for the aged person (Morrison, 2010).

Castells (1996) defined the concept of 'Networking societies', he argued that network societies are social structures based on networks run by information and communication technologies based on digital computer networks and microelectronics that create, process, and disseminate information based on the knowledge accumulated in the network nodes. A network society is one that is linked by several nodes and networks. He referred to this situation as a new public sphere in which society is interconnected on a global scale. He maintained networks that link people globally control modern civilization.

Goffman (1959) in his book 'Presentation of Self in Everyday Life' discussed the parallels between theoretical performances and people's daily actions. According to him, social contact and stage performances have front and back regions. Similarly, on social media people are divided into two regions. Individuals share images and videos on social media while considering their current situation. Both real-world and virtual social identities excited his curiosity. He presents himself using a virtual social identity, and his real-life social identity is who he is (Kundu, 2012).

The 'Risk society' is what Beck compared to contemporary society. Global dangers are more likely as society grows more technologically adept and globalized. These risks are distinct from those of earlier eras and are brought about by advances in science and technology. It goes without saying that social media helps people, but it also poses hazards to society. One such risk is cybercrime. He believed that the repercussions of technological innovation would be detrimental to society if any of it went wrong. Although social media plays a significant role in social construction, there are countless risks involved (Tucker, 1998).

Social media, which is regarded as new media, gave users all over the world access to new platforms and channels of communication. It either benefits or hinders humanity. It affects our Society in a number of ways, both positively and negatively. The present study tried to evaluate both the positive and negative aspects of Social media on undergraduate college students of Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Defining Social Media

According to Kietzmann (2011) "Social Media is a web and mobile technology that generates a number of platforms that facilitate easy communication and information sharing."

According to Davis (2016) "A collection of interactive online tools that enable the production, and sharing of user-generated material, whether individually or collaboratively, is known as social media. Social media should not be seen as something distinct from the real world, but rather as an essential component of a complex social environment. Numerous facets of both public and private life, such as identity processes, interpersonal relationships, and the political economy, are impacted by and influenced by the widespread use of social media."

According to Barassi & Trere (2012) "Apart from the term social media, 'Web 2.0' is another name for the modern Internet, which is defined by user-generated content and interactivity. According to some, the most recent phase of digital technology, known as 'Web 3.0,' is defined by user participation and collaboration."

Origin and Evolution of Social Media

In a way, social media started on May 24, 1844, when a telegraph machine manually hammered out a series of electronic dots and dashes. The US Department of Defence established this pioneering digital network, which made it possible for researchers at four affiliated colleges to exchange hardware, software, and other information. The expansion of the internet in the 1980s and 1990s made it possible for online communication services like CompuServe, America Online, and Prodigy to be introduced. Through real-time online chat, bulletin board messaging, and email, they introduced people to digital communication. As a result, the first social media networks were created, starting in 1997 with the brief Six Degrees profile uploading service. In 2004 MySpace became the first social media site to exceed a million monthly active users. TikTok, for example, began in September 2016, and by mid-2018, it had already attracted half a billion subscribers. Facebook users build profiles to share personal information, much like

MySpace, and other users can write comments. Social media was first used by college-age users to socialize, but it quickly gained popularity among both younger and older users (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019).

Review of Literature

Chaudhary and Ali (2020) investigated how common social media is among young people. When comparing men and women, it was discovered that women were more addicted than men.

According to Gaur (2015), people today rely more on the internet than on radio or newspapers for their news. He contends that social media aids in children's learning, creativity, and engagement while also assisting them with their schoolwork. He emphasized how beneficial the internet is to people. The internet makes it possible for people all over the world to freely exchange information. The emergence of social media has made all of this possible. However, over use of it also contributes to depression. He examined the idea of "smiling depression," which refers to those who are depressed but do not express it.

According to Glaser P, Liu JH, Hakim MA, et al. (2018) excessive social media use has been linked to negative effects such anxiety, depression, discontent, and low self-esteem.

Joshi (2019) contends that people prefer to connect through social media in the digital age, yet this leads to feelings of loneliness and anxiousness.

Krishna (2016) asserts that while technological advancement is increasing, it has also led to a new type of addiction among its consumers. Addiction to computers and the internet are the two primary problems. These days, a smartphone is the essential instrument for using the internet. Selfies have two sides, as the author explains. Some people think of it as a means of increasing their confidence. However, because people are always focusing on their appearance, snapping too many selfies is also regarded as a psychological disorder. The author mentions about 'Selfie syndrome' which is a disease of new era.

Lal (2017) asserts that social media has the power to destabilize society. However, social media has drawbacks just like any other technology. The primary issue with social media is trolling and fraudulent information. The virtual world is being introduced to kids these days. The author comes to the conclusion that social media offers its users a variety of options and possibilities when used responsibly.

Lenhart & Madden (2007) highlights that even if every contact and acquaintance on these social networking sites is virtual, they give students who utilize them a virtual existence in which to make new friends. Some students' sign up for these sites in the hopes that others will learn about them, become friends with them, and gain greater fame as a result of their growing number of friends. Regretfully, these websites only offer virtual contacts.

According to Mazman, and Usluel (2011) Women use social media sites to establish and preserve their current friendships, whilst men use them to establish new ones.

According to Meikle (2016) millions of individuals utilize social media, which gathers personal data and transforms people's everyday lives into business information. Facebook was termed "the sharing industry" by him. Sharing can signify a variety of things, including communicating with people, supporting someone or something, and disseminating information.

According to Mulisa and Feyisa (2018) social media poses numerous threats that affect children in our schools, and one of the primary issues that secondary school students deal with is cyber bullying. Numerous emotional and health problems are brought on by social networking. Social networking offers only few advantages for their academic pursuits but majorly there are negative impacts of social media.

Sisode (2018) Facebook users had low self-esteem and a high usage rate. Increased Facebook use reduced in-person interactions, which exacerbated feelings of loneliness and sadness.

Verma (2015) highlighted that interpersonal communication is being replaced by online communication. Despite the fact that its users are always connected to one another, using it carries some risks. Social networking sites facilitate relationship expansion. However, he also emphasized the drawbacks, including privacy concerns, bullying, stalking, and the ease with which illicit content can be found. Benefits of using social networking sites include discovering new relationships, feeling connected, and using them as a

source of information. However, there are other risks involved. Students ought to understand how to use social media and the typical dangers that come with it.

Theoretical Framework

Alienation Theory: It is appropriate to apply Marx's idea of alienation to social media. People today feel disconnected from their friends since they are not physically there in real life, even though they are always chatting with them on social media. The reason they feel alienated is because they spend most of their time on social media and compare themselves to others, believing that they are not able to live up to the lives that others portray online (Giddens, Anthony, 2016).

The Theory of Conspicuous Consumption: In his article "The Theory of Leisure Class (1899)," Veblen discussed that people excessively spend money on products and services to show off their wealth. By posting their status updates and photos to their social networking sites, users use social media to demonstrate their social standing. They go to any lengths to flaunt their extravagant and contented lifestyle. However, this ultimately makes people feel dissatisfied and low in self-worth (Ritzer, 2011).

Theory of Representation: Baudrillard argued that postmodernity and modern cultures are radically unique and different. Since indications of the real have taken the place of the actual, there is no longer a real being represented. The real will therefore never again have the opportunity to create itself. He introduced a concept of "hyperreality," in which a simulation of reality overtakes the real world and makes it harder to distinguish between the two. People's perceptions of reality are influenced by the media. Because they give users the impression that they are real, many social networking sites are simulations of reality, since they lead users to believe that they are real but they are not (Freidan, 1963).

The Public Sphere theory: In his work "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere," Habermas examined the evolution of the public sphere over time. According to his theory, the public sphere is a space in social life where people can freely discuss and debate on issues of shared interest, influencing public policy and forming public opinion. Ideally, this area is open to all citizens and functions according to the rules of reason and reasonable conversation. Social networking sites are an example of the public sphere in the current era. Almost anything may be posted on social media. Numerous people express their opinions on a range of topics, including politics, environment, legislation, etc. Reaching a broad audience would have been challenging with traditional media, but social media have made it simple (Castell et al., 2006).

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the Demographic background of Undergraduate college students.
2. To identify the Usage Pattern of Social media on Undergraduate college students.
3. To identify the Positive impacts of Social media on Undergraduate college students.
4. To identify the Negative impacts of Social media on Undergraduate college students.

Research Methodology and Sampling Techniques of Data Collection

Social media has had a profound impact on students' lives. They are using these social media platforms a lot. Due to their frequent usage of these social media platforms, they possess both the positive and negative impacts of Social media. The purpose of the present study was to determine how social media affected Panjab University's undergraduate students in Chandigarh. A total of 200 respondents were selected as the sample size. There were 100 respondents from each college (50 male and 50 female). Questionnaire technique was used. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions were included. Convenience sampling was used as a method for collecting data. A hand tabulation of the questions has been done. The use of percentage analysis has led to a conclusion.

Area of Study

The main focus of the present study was to evaluate both the positive and negative impacts of Social media on Undergraduate college students of Panjab University, Chandigarh. For this purpose, two different colleges of Panjab University, Chandigarh were chosen as the sample region for this purpose. College identities have been kept anonymous to protect respondents' privacy.

Significance of Study

This study aims to investigate the positive and negative impacts of social media for Undergraduate college students of Panjab University, Chandigarh. It has been noted that there have historically been relatively few sociological studies published on Undergraduate college students. This topic of study requires investigation into several aspects. As a result, this study helps us better understand social media's positive and negative impacts on Undergraduate college students.

1. Demographic Information

Table 1 showing Demographic distribution of respondents

Age	Male	Female	Total
17-19	40(40)	45(45)	86(43)
20-21	35(35)	32(32)	67(33.5)
22 & above	25(25)	22(22)	47(23.5)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)
Stream	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Arts	50(50)	42(42)	92(46)
Commerce	28(28)	33(33)	61(30.5)
Science	22(22)	25(25)	47(23.5)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)
Nature of Residence	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Live Independently	64(64)	54(54)	118(59)
Living with family	36(36)	46(46)	82(41)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)
Family Income (Monthly in Rupees)	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Up to 50,000	39(39)	27(27)	66(33)
Above 51,000	61(61)	73(73)	134(67)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of respondents. There were 40 percent of male respondents and 45 percent of female respondents who were between the age group of 17 to 19 years old. There were 35 percent of male respondents and 32 percent of female respondents who were between the ages of 20 to 21 years old. There were 25 percent of male respondents and 22 percent of female respondents who were 22 years old and above. There were 50 percent of male and 42 percent of female respondents who belonged to Arts stream. 28 percent of male and 33 percent of female respondents belonged to commerce stream. While, there were 22 percent of male respondents and 25 percent of female respondents who belonged to science stream. It was found that there were 64 percent of male respondents and 54 percent of female respondents who lives independently which means either they live in hostel, as pain guest or with some of their relatives/ friends. There were 36 percent of male respondents and 46 percent of female respondents who lives with their family. There were 39 percent of male respondents and 27 percent of female respondents whose family income (monthly) is up to Rs. 50,000 and there were 61 percent of male respondents and 73 percent of female respondents whose family income (monthly) is above Rs. 51,000.

2. Usage Pattern of Social media

Students are proficient in using technology. They are therefore able to quickly adjust to new developments in the information age. They now include social media use into their daily routines. According to Lenhart et al., (2005), 27% of young adults use social networking sites every day. Due to increased usage and technical improvements, social media has become extremely popular. Table 2 shows the Usage Pattern of Social media of Undergraduate college students of Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Table 2 showing Usage Pattern of Social media by respondents

Per day usage	Male	Female	Total
2 to 4 hours	09(09)	08(08)	17(8.5)
5 to 7 hours	17(17)	22(22)	39(19.5)
7 to 10 hours	42(42)	30(30)	72(36)
More than 10 hours	32(32)	42(42)	74(37)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

Table 2 shows the usage pattern of the respondents. The respondents were questioned regarding their daily usage, or how many hours they spend on social media using devices such as desktops, laptops, smartphones, and other devices connected to social media. Only 09 male and 08 female respondents stated using social media for two to four hours every day. There were 17 percent of male and 22 percent of female respondents who stated that they utilized social media for 5 to 7 hours every day. There were 42 percent of male respondents and 30 percent of female respondents who reported using social media for 7 to 10 hours every day. 32 percent of male respondents and 42 percent of female respondents claimed using social media for more than 10 hours every day. Compared to male respondents, more female respondents were discovered to be utilizing social media, i.e., more than 10 hours a day and this is a major consumption of social media. According to Lenhart et al. (2005), young individuals utilize social networking sites on a daily basis, and the study confirms their findings. As a result of growing usage and advancements in technology, social media has gained immense popularity.

3. **Positive impacts of Social media**
   The question of whether social media affects their lives was posed to the respondents. They were given a list of positive variables and asked if they experienced these impacts in their lives. Table 3 shows the positive impacts of social media in respondents' lives.

Table 3 showing Positive impacts of Social media on respondents

Positive impacts	Male	Female	Total
Helps in learning and education	82(82)	84(84)	166(83)
Better communication	72(72)	86(86)	158(79)
Help stay connected with friends and family	76(76)	88(88)	164(82)
Good source of Entertainment	89(89)	76(76)	165(82.5)
Helps me handle my mood swings	72(72)	84(84)	156(78)
Facilitates career development	69(69)	57(57)	126(63)
Allows to share creative work like music, art, etc.	72(72)	80(80)	152(76)
People openly express their opinions on issues for a better Societal Change	85(85)	89(89)	174(87)
Provides a platform to freely discuss and debate and raise awareness for social issues	83(83)	87(87)	170(85)
Easy and fast way to access News and Current Events	75(75)	80(80)	155(77.5)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

*The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female students separately (i.e., 100 each).

Table 3 shows the positive impacts of social media in respondents' lives. It was found that 82 percent of male respondents and 84 percent of female respondents claimed that social media helped them in learning

and education. There were 72 percent of male respondents and 86 percent of female respondents who mentioned that social media made their communication better. The study supports the findings of Meikle (2016) who termed Facebook as "the sharing industry", where people shares and communicates with ease. There were 76 percent of male respondents and 88 percent of female respondents who said that social media helped them stay connected with their friends and family. The study supports the findings of Verma (2015) who mentioned that benefits of using social networking sites including discovering new relationships, feeling connected, and using them as a source of information. There were 89 percent of male respondents and 76 percent of female respondents who believed that social media is a 'good source of Entertainment'. There were 72 percent of male respondents and 84 percent of female respondents who said that social media helped them in handling their mood swings. There were 69 percent of male respondents and 57 percent of female respondents who said that social media in some or other way helped them facilitate their career. There were 72 percent of male respondents and 80 percent of female respondents who believed that social media helped them to share their creative work like music, art, etc. There were 85 percent of male respondents and 89 percent of female respondents who believed that social media is a place where people can openly express their opinions on issues for a better Societal Change. There were 83 percent of male respondents and 87 percent of female respondents who believed that social media 'provides a platform to freely discuss and debate and raise awareness for social issues'. There were 75 percent of male respondents and 80 percent of female respondents who believed that social media is an easy and fast way to access News and Current Events. The study supports the findings of Gaur (2015) who stated that people today rely more on the internet for news.

4. Negative impacts of Social media

The question of whether social media affects their lives was posed to the respondents. They were given a list of negative variables and asked if they experienced these impacts in their lives.

Table 4 showing Negative impacts of Social media on respondents

Negative impacts	Male	Female	Total
Distraction and Loss of Productivity	92(92)	87(87)	179(89.5)
Spread of Misinformation/ Fake news	90(90)	95(95)	185(92.5)
Compromise Privacy and Data Vulnerabilities/ Cybercrime/Scam	92(92)	96(96)	188(94)
Bullying, and Stalking	38(38)	89(89)	127(63.5)
Fake relations/ virtual contacts not real	82(82)	97(97)	179(89.5)
Social Isolation	78(78)	83(83)	161(80.5)
Focus excessively on presenting 'Perfect' (fake) posts and selfies	86(76)	97(97)	183(91.5)
Addiction	84(84)	93(93)	177(88.5)
Causes Depression, low self-esteem and Anxiety	74(74)	93(93)	167(83.5)
Total	100(100)	100(100)	200(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise indicate percentages

*The respondents have given multiple answers. Total percentage was calculated from the total number of both male and female students separately (i.e., 100 each).

Table 4 shows the negative impacts of social media in respondents' lives. It was found that 92 percent of male respondents and 87 percent of female respondents said that social media proved to be a distraction and loss of productivity in their lives. There were 90 percent of male respondents and 95 percent of female respondents who mentioned that social media spread misinformation and fake news. Regarding this, the respondents stated that they frequently come across fake news on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. There were 92 percent of male respondents and 96 percent of female respondents reported that their privacy had been violated. Data vulnerabilities are extremely concerning because many respondents acknowledged receiving fake or fraudulent calls and messages. The study supports the findings of Mulisa and Feyisa (2018) who mentioned that the primary issue of social media is cyber bullying. There were 38

percent of male respondents and 89 percent of female respondents who mentioned that they had been victims of Bullying and Stalking on social media. Compared to male respondents, more female respondents reported having experienced social media stalking. The study supports the findings of Lal (2017) who stated that social media is linked with trolling and fraudulent information. There were 82 percent of male respondents and 97 percent of female respondents who mentioned that social media makes fake relations, they are virtual contacts and not real. The study supports the findings of Lenhart & Madden (2007) who stated that social media only offer virtual contacts. There were 78 percent of male respondents and 83 percent of female respondents reported feelings of social isolation. The study supports the findings of Joshi (2019) who stated that social media leads to feelings of loneliness and anxiousness. There were 86 percent of male respondents and 97 percent of female respondents who believed that social media focus excessively on presenting 'Perfect' (fake) posts and selfies. Many respondents stated that everyone is competing to portray their lives as flawless, lavish, and joyful, while in actuality, the majority of them are staged, edited, and artificially created. The study supports the findings of Krishna (2016) who mentioned about 'Selfie syndrome' which is a disease of new era. There were 84 percent of male respondents and 93 percent of female respondents who mentioned that they are addicted to social media. The study supports the findings of Chaudhary and Ali (2020) who stated that women were more addicted than men. They keep on scrolling their smart phones watching reels, videos, photographs and many other things. There were 74 percent of male respondents and 93 percent of female respondents who mentioned that social media causes Depression, low self-esteem and Anxiety. The study supports the findings of Gaur (2015) who stated the idea of "smiling depression," which refers to those who are depressed but do not express it.

Conclusion

As respondents reported experiencing anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem as a result of social media, Marx's theory of social media alienation is supported. The study also supports the Veblen theory of Conspicuous Consumption, since respondents stated that they display their lavish and comfortable lifestyle by posting images and status updates on social networking sites to show off their social standing. Many respondents stated that social networking sites are replicas of reality because they make viewers think they are genuine when they are not, which supports Baudrillard's theory of Representation. As many respondents indicated, Habermas' Public Sphere theory also forms the basis of the study. People can freely discuss and debate topics of common interest on social media, which shapes public opinion and influences public policy. However, it could be said everything has both positive and negative aspects. Social media has the potential to be both beneficial and destructive. Depending on its usage, it will vary. You may either use it constructively or you can become trapped in its negativity.

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