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SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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In every era, cultures go through numerous changes, and in recent years ours has been more impacted than anything else by social media. The latest kind of fasting in today's world is not living without food but living without mobile, living without social media. Social Media offers a portal for entertainment and communication and have grown exponentially in recent years. Large media companies are not likely to go away overnight, nor will the need to communicate by phone or meet people in person, but social media is providing yet one more means of engaging with people on this vast planet of ours, and if used effectively can give all of us greater choice in how we live and what happens in our world. These social media sites have changed the way we interact with each other. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Vine and more make it simple to stay connected in people's lives. One can easily catch up with friends with their statuses, photos and videos they post. And social media is not just important for your personal life, it is also a great tool for businesses or anyone trying to develop their professional network or look for a job. In recent year's social media, likely more than anything else, has significantly impacted most of our daily lives. Envisioning the global conversation that has developed over the past few years because of the different types of social media like might have been unimaginable for most people at the beginning of this decade. With all the social media sites and applications envisaging every year, it can be tricky to keep up and navigate through them. Each one has something different to offer depending on what you are looking for and can benefit you in many different ways. This paper provides hands on information about the social media, its types, its impact on the society, various age groups and various systems.

Social Media can sometimes seem like just a new set of cool tools for involving young people. Sometimes you may use it this way (and that's OK - there are some pretty cool new tools around!). But the emergence of social media potentially has a bigger impact than that.

It impacts upon young people who are growing up in an age where media is not about broadcast content from the TV, but is about interactivity, multimedia and multi-tasking.

And it impacts upon organisations who need to remain relevant to a new generation, and who find their own work and structures being changed by changing communication tools and patterns of communications.

Online social media have gained astounding worldwide growth and popularity which has led to attracting attention from variety of researchers globally. Although with time all generations have come to embrace the changes social network has brought about, teenagers and young adults are the most fanatic users of these sites. According to various research studies in the field of online social networks, it has been revealed that these sites are impacting the lives of the youth greatly. When

using these sites such as Twitter, Facebook or MySpace, there are both positive and negative effects on the youth.

Ken Mueller On 14th March, 2014 gave 11 reasons I believe that people are drawn to various social media platforms, and enjoy using them:

1. We desire community

No one likes to be alone. Social media allows us to be a part of community, not dictated by space or location, and in general, these communities tend not to be exclusive, nor do they have insurmountable barriers to entry. We can even be a part of multiple communities that might not normally mesh well. With community comes that sense of family (when our own families might be dysfunctional) and a sense of unity (when our world is characterized by fragmentation and confrontation).

2. We desire to extend our communities

Many of our “real world” communities also exist online. By using social media, we have the ability to remain connected to our communities even when we’re not physically together.

3. We desire to connect and reconnect

Social media platforms have given me the tools and means to re-connect with people I went to school with or worked with several decades ago. Some of them weren’t even really close friends at the time, but via social media, and through the passage of time, we connect in new and interesting ways.

4. We desire to move beyond isolation

One criticism of the digital age is that we are sitting in front of our computer screens, isolated from the world. Even if this is true, social media allows us various levels of social interaction, even from the comforts of our own home. We can meet and interact with people from all over the world, and yes, even build friendships. Many of my strongest friendships are with people I originally met through social networks. The average user of a social networking site has more close ties and is half as likely to be socially isolated as the average Indian.

5. We desire real world connections

It may seem like an anomaly, but connecting with people via social networks very often leads to real world connections. Meetups, Tweetups, and just informal get togethers are often the result of online connections. And, the initial online connections also helps get rid of the initial uneasiness that often comes from blind meetings. You already know something about each other, including commonalities. Real world connections that begin online, tend to work better and faster. You already have a sense of whether or not you’re going to like the other person based on online interaction. This is one reason why we are seeing the mainstreaming of online dating, and an increase in the number of marriages that began as online relationships.

6. We desire to be involved in more causes and activities

Again, according to Pew, heavy social media users tend to be more politically and socially engaged than non-users. They are also engaged in volunteerism at a higher rate than the general public. Social media allows us to connect with other like-minded individuals more easily, and at a faster pace, than ever before. It also helps us find new interests, while realizing that we might not be alone in our love of some particular topic or hobby. You might be the only fan of a particular band or TV show in your local, physical community (or, so you think), but social media can help you discover entire communities of fans with which you can connect. Plus, it gives you the ability to discover more opportunities for serving your community and others.

7. We desire having our own voice

Many of us feel voiceless, as if others, including big corporations and mass media outlets, aren't hearing us. Through social media we can say what we want with the chance of being heard. I have friends who are shy in person, but you would never know it from how they interact on Twitter and Facebook. They might be uncomfortable speaking up in a crowd, but online they are free to speak their minds. It is an instant voice, unlike writing a letter to the editor, which may never appear in the paper.

8. We desire safety, privacy, and control

Not necessarily control over others, but over our own experience. Again, this might seem counter intuitive in an age where the government apparently has access to all of our online, and the issue of the lack of privacy on Facebook and Google is debated and bemoaned on a daily basis. But, social media platforms are customizable. We now have a lot of control over who sees us, and how much they see. We can block people completely, or allow them total access to our online lives. We are the gatekeepers of our own experience, and social media lessens the chance of being thrown into awkward public experiences. There is no substitute for having strong personal filters in place, and coupled with platform specific privacy tools, we can create a very safe, private, and controlled experience.

9. We desire to be "insiders"

There is something "mystical" about exclusive clubs and organizations. Social media gives us the chance to be "insiders" with businesses and organizations we might never had access to previously. If we are actively involved with a company via social media, there is a chance we might become one of their "insiders"; someone they go to for quick market research. Any group we join, or business page we like on Facebook, gives us access to information that others might not have. Businesses are smart if they take advantage of their loyal followers or fans and reward them with information or special privileges. Our comments can be used by businesses and marketers to improve their product offerings, and their quality of customer service and experience.

10. We desire a more level playing field

When you interact with others and businesses online, it doesn't matter who you are or what you look like. In many ways, social media CAN be color blind (not always). But online, you theoretically are just the same as the CEO of a Fortune 500 company. Your weight, appearance, clothing....none of

those matter as much as they do in “the real world.” I’ve seen brick and mortar businesses treat customers in varying ways based on appearance; that is less likely to happen in the digital realm. Plus, we as individuals can gain unprecedented access to celebrities, politicians, CEO’s, journalists, and more.

11. We desire a chance to succeed

From crowd funding and crowdsourcing campaigns, to how quickly information can be shared and spread about our latest endeavours, social media is a great tool for facilitating the success of the little guy. As someone who loves to support small businesses, and is a fan of lesser known independent music and art, I love how I have the ability to discover new things. I also love how I can tap into that to get the word out about my activities, both professional and personal. I love watching my friends create something wonderful, and then get it funded online. Prior to social media and the internet, the barriers for entry into all sorts of business and cultural activities would have been incredibly high. Tapping into the power of online word of mouth allows us the chance to succeed on our own terms, and gives us an outlet for our creative efforts, while expending far less in personal resources.

Impact on Politics

Every politician worth his salt needs to jump on the social media bandwagon. This is because social websites have played an important role in many elections around the world, including in the U.S., Iran, and India. They have also served to rally people for a cause, and have inspired mass movements and political unrests in many countries.

Media plays an important role in politics as it influences public opinion and helps define and take up the issues. It can keep the powerful in check by seeking transparency in their actions. Thus, an independent media is an effective check on government’s power and influence over its citizens. In fact, with the emergence of TV and Radio networks, many governments in Europe and America brought about legislations so that the broadcast media did not deviate from neutral position.

Gone are the times when political discussions were not held publicly. People often use social media to raise their concern against certain political issues and to gather against certain political agenda. Even ministers and other government officials choose social media services to have talks with the normal people and address their issues.

We all know that media and politics enjoy a symbiotic relationship. Simply speaking, none of the politicians, how powerful they may be, can afford to neglect media. Yet, only those who are media-savvy and know how to play within the media rules can use them to their advantage (The US President Barack Obama is a good example of such media-savvy candidates who understood media’s constraints and could wield a mass appeal).

The revolutionary 2014 general elections in India saw social media as a new battleground and Narendra Modi emerged as India’s Obama. Unlike the conventional ways of sending messages, recorded calls and public gatherings, this election saw politicians leveraging social media to reach out to their constituents like never before. Even those who were reluctant earlier have now become active either out of necessity to keep up with their peers or as mandated by their political party.

Twitter recently released a blog on the 100 days of Twitter diplomacy by Narendra Modi, with an interesting heat map of tweets with geotags that had mentions of his name. Here is a look at the social media profiles of some of the noted politicians and an attempt to classify them into various buckets based on patterns of their engagement.

Social Media Leader: Some politicians have nailed the art of social media engagement, with an amazing mix of personal feelings, nationalist pride and smart positioning.

PM Narendra Modi, for one, has mastered the art of using social media with nary a false step. In the first 100 days of his being India's PM, he has added over 2 million followers, taking the tally to 6.2 million followers and making him the second most followed politician in the world behind only Barack Obama. Including the followers on the official twitter handle of PMO, the follower count is close to 9 million. Modi seamlessly keeps foreign relations (wishing Nishikori on being the first Japanese and Asian male to enter US Open finals), nationalist pride (wishing Sania Mirza on the mixed doubles win), engaging with young India on the occasion of Teachers' Day and sharing with the world how he gifted the saree from Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif. The tweet that shared his most human side and made him seem more accessible and create his brand new persona was of course the selfie of him seeking his mother's blessings after winning the mandate. Sought blessings from my Mother pic.twitter.com/OegXhartLx— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) May 16, 2014

Despite knowing that there is an army of social media experts who handle and guide Modi's online presence, it still is quite an achievement to share opinions and truly converse with the masses.

Social media is not only confined to you and me but to politicians as well. Through different activities politics and politicians in India have brought social media into the limelight. It is expected that social media will play a huge role and influence the coming general elections to a great extent. The study by IRIS Knowledge Foundation and supported by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has indicated this fact. Social media will be real game changer with political leaders having millions of fans on Twitter and supporters on Facebook as well as Google+. In order to build a certain image, most of the politicians also have their own websites.

Impact on Business

Net savvy companies are using social media to advertise their products, build customer loyalty and many other functions. Interactions and feedback from customers help businesses to understand the market, and fine-tune their products and strategies. Many firms organize contests and give away prizes to enthruse consumers to visit their social website page more often. Compared to television advertisements and other expensive forms of marketing, social media presence is a cheap and effective means to enhance brand image and popularity.

With millions of users, don't you think social media platforms are the best place to promote your brand or business? Even social media sites like Facebook and Twitter has special ad programs which will increase your visibility throughout the site and will charge you a small amount for the promotion.

There is a constant rise in social networking and the impact of social networks penetrates into each kind of business. Social media are often used as a source of information and spread of knowledge changing people's views and opinions. They belong among very important business marketing tactics

and help to create new business opportunities, develop a stronger market position or modify consumer's behaviour. The study deals with the issue of social networking and its influence on the business and society. It classifies social media and explores the possibilities of social networks communication in business. It investigates the relation of social networks and ethical business behaviour. It concentrates on ethical issues, threats and challenges in commercial social networking. It provides advice on ethical business behaviour on social networks and suggests the ways how to define a social media code of ethics at company's business. Using social media in the business ethically is becoming a competitive advantage and its impact will rise rapidly in the future. Companies with a well-established ethical social media code will have more chances to succeed in social networking competition.

Role of social media in business and consumer market in India cannot be undermined. It is the change in consumers' behavior that is changing the role of social media in India. With time, use of social media has seen a drastic change from just used for fun to fun plus knowledge and marketing. For business purposes, Facebook is the most important social media platform as there is customers' engagement, followed by Twitter, YouTube and blogging. Social media is used by brands to build communities for interaction and spreading news.

So not only individuals but every organization, be it big or small, has an online presence on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube channels and other related social media platforms. 95.7% of organizations in India use social media to build communities, 76.1% for highlighting brand news, platform specific parameters such as number of likes, share, comments, people talking about the company are considered by 81% of the organizations to measure their success. As far as the budget is concerned, most of the organizations set budget below INR 10 million on their social media spending that makes 1-5% of their total marketing budget. Social media interaction provides useful information about the behavior of the customers to the organization on regular basis.

Gaining Traffic

People who own a business know how important it is for them to have a website about the business that they have in order to enhance their reach to more people, over the internet. Through social media, you can create a website for your business, and you can allow customers to leave comments about your services and by replying to the comments or concerns that they leave, you can form a bond with your customers, and you increase your chances of gaining traffic. Idea is not to just use Social media for engagement only, but also drive them to your company business page, which will educate users about your work and you might be showing your page to a future customer.

The most important thing about social media is that it allows you to engage your customers in a whole new way. Social media allows you to get personal with your customers and form a bond of trust with them. As mentioned above, by replying to the concerns of your customers and by asking for their opinions, you can make your customers satisfied with what you have to offer and in this way you get more traffic, which promotes your business.

You can share photos and videos about what your business has been up to i.e. the parties you have organized or the charities that you have held, etc. This helps in creating a strong bond with your customers as it helps in making them a part of your business.

Increase in Sales

Now, Social media strategy requires decent investment, and what really counts is ROI. It could be in terms of people talking positively about your company or product on various social media channels. But, by the end goal is to convert the user into sales. When you interact with your customers and you form a bond of trust with them, this allows you to create interest in your customers and this way you can increase your sales.

Reputation Management

One thing, which I have seen in particular any negative comment about any online business is more harmful than anything else. Any serious business, should have a reputation management team for social media, which not only helps them to track the emotions of people in their comments, but also helps in solving user issues and gives them a good experience.

For example, you will notice whenever you talk about Airtel (Indian telecom) or any other popular social media brand, you will get instant response and a comment. Maintaining the image of your business is very important. It is a known fact that rumors can easily destroy the image of any business, and this is where you can use social media to help maintain the image that you have. Through social media, you can easily reply to the rumors and the destructive comments that go against your business and help maintain the image that you want your business to have.

One way is, use your Facebook page as an announcement channel for your product or company related news. Also, if you keep your followers updated about what's happening in your company and things which you are doing, this will help them to stay in loop with your business brand and also increase trust.

Marketing Research

As social media is a very efficient way of connecting to people, you can use social media to conduct marketing research. You can make people offer reviews about your business, and you can even conduct surveys. You can also see what your competitors are doing and in this way you can plan what kind of service or product you should be launching.

Inexpensive

Social media is very inexpensive when compared to the other advertising tools. The social media tools are free for use for everyone, and that is why by just working on your social media tools for a few minutes a day, you can get a lot of benefits from it and increase your sales and have better relations with your customers. Though in recent days, Facebook is making pages reach tough and requires a budget to improve the reach, but you can find a way out by improving engagement on your Facebook page.

You need help from professionals when you want to use traditional promotional tools. However, using social media tools is very easy and as mentioned earlier, very inexpensive.

It's Global

Traditional promotional tools can also be used to reach a global audience; however, it is very expensive. In contrast, using social media tools is inexpensive, and you can reach a global audience in a flash! If your content goes viral, then there is no telling how many people it will reach, and you don't have to pay for it.

Now, Social media is all about getting targeted people to join and interact with your business page or profile. You need to follow many rules like (Constant sharing, breaking news, questions, humor) and other strategy to bring all conversation on your page. Here is a guide which will help your business to get more followers on Twitter.

Save on Advertising:

When people constantly see updates on their Timeline (Facebook, Twitter) or mention, you are actually doing brand awareness for your company. You can consider lowering down your budget on advertising and concentrate on Social media marketing plans. More over, ads are like one time investment and one time gain, but with Social media presence, your subscriber/followers will give you long term benefits.

From my experience, What I have seen is selecting the right social media platform for your growth is very important. Specially, Facebook fan pages are very effective to create an engaging community. Here you can learn how to create Facebook page for your business.

If you are a small business owner and have no budget for hiring a social media guy or social media company, there is nothing much to sweat about, as you can always use social media tools like Hoot suite and buffer app which supports various social-media network, and let you manage everything from one page.

So, there you have it, I have told you about the benefits of using social media for business owners. You too can start using social media by creating a website for your business or by using different social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, etc. However, you need to be sure that you need to interact with your customers in order make the social media more beneficial for your business.

Impact on Organisations

All these changes have a big impact on organisations working with young people. They can shift the expectations young people have of services, provision and engagement. They can shift the balance of power between young people and organisations. And changes in communication tools and markets can change the role and nature of organisations themselves.

Effect on Socialization

Social networks offer the opportunity for people to re-connect with their old friends and acquaintances, make new friends, trade ideas, share content and pictures, and many other activities. Users can stay abreast of the latest global and local developments, and participate in campaigns and activities of their choice. Professionals use social media sites like LinkedIn to enhance their career and business prospects. Students can collaborate with their peers to improve their academic

proficiency and communication skills. You can learn about different cultures and societies by connecting with people in other countries.

SOCIAL NETWORK IMPACT ON YOUTH

Social media tools are woven into many young people's day-to-day lives. Young people are in conversation and communication with their peer groups using a wide variety of different media and media devices every day.

10 years ago, young people may have only been in touch with friends and peer-groups when hanging out at school, or meeting up in town. Now young people can be touch through instant messaging, social networks, online games and many other tools. Young people are growing up in a constantly connected society.

A blended world

Talk if 'real world vs. online world' or 'real world vs. virtual world' is mistaken. The online world is real. It has meaning for the young people who use it, and increasingly physical and virtual and woven together.

Appropriating technology

When a technology is developed, you can't always predict how people will use it. Often young people are involved in 'technology appropriation' - taking social media tools and using them in new ways, developing and experimenting with new forms of communication using the tools available to them.

Digital Inclusion

The impacts of social media are not equally spread across all young people. Some young people lack direct, regular access to the internet. Others may have literacy or skills issues which prevent them from participating fully in mainstream social media spaces.

However, as social media brings about changes in society - it does impact upon all young people.

Where young people have limited access to technology their 'digital exclusion' may add to 'social exclusion'.

Positive effects on teens

Social networking can be risky for teenagers when reputation is damaged or when safety is at stake. However, when used properly, these sites can also can give a positive effect on adolescents. Here are nine points teens should take advantage of and parents should know:

1. It educates. Because of the "sharing" option, social networks give teens a chance to share informative videos and articles with each other. It also helps them reach out to their teachers, coaches, and academic experts easily and collaborate with their peers on school projects.

2. It hastens communication. No need for snail mails and telegrams to get your message across. With a single click, one's message reaches the intended recipient. In case of urgent news, social media can help teenagers get the attention of the person they wish to contact immediately.

3. It builds bridges over barriers. Through social media, teenagers are able to meet new friends from foreign areas and distant lands. Communicating with individuals from different cultures can help teens become more sensitive to cultural differences.

4. It strengthens relationships. For some, communicating online is simpler than communicating personally. Virtually chatting with an acquaintance allows teens to learn more about each other, thus strengthening the trust between the two parties. It also bridges distance. Through social media, adolescents who want to stay in touch and reconnect with friends from their past can quickly do so.

5. It encourages community participation. Through forums, teenagers are able to contribute their opinions and thoughts on certain topics and themes that interest them. By participating in discussions, they engage in positive self-expression.

6. It boosts confidence. Facebook likes and good comments tend to be overwhelmingly positive. For pick-me-up days, teens can check their profiles and automatically gain affirmation, validation, confidence and self-esteem.

7. It battles depression. Recent studies show that many teenagers have not chosen the path of suicide, thanks to these tools. Blogging can be therapeutic for teens who are confused, down, or need to vent frustrations. When they log on to a social community, they find people to talk to and those who'll listen.

8. It helps them find their identity. As teenagers personalize their profile, they experience a sense of independence. Aside from being able to share their ideas and interests with others, they also get to join groups that help them "fit in" and foster their identity.

9. It unleashes potential. Where was Justin Bieber discovered? On Youtube. Many young and emerging dancers, singers, and artists gain popularity through the Internet. Thanks to social networking sites, talented teenagers can show the world what they're good at.

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