IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND CYBER MEDIA ON THE SOCIETY

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Abstract : Communication and social interaction has changed in today's world by the rise and evolution of social and cyber media. Social media platforms like face book and twitter have revolutionized the way we communicate with each other. In this research paper will see the tremendous impact that cyber media has had on our social, personal and professional lives. However, where there are plus points of any new invention—there are bound to be some misuses too. Pros and cons, use and misuse always go hand in hand. It is up to each individual as well as institution to see that they do not get conned by cyber criminals. A number of people in today's' world have been duped and have had to pay a heavy price both in terms of finances and violation of their privacy. They have realized only too late that they have fallen prey to cyber predators, and there is nothing they can do about it apart from deactivating their social media accounts. However, some small precautions go a long way in preventing such crimes.

Keywords : Wikipedia, Google, Face book, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, LinkedIn, and Tumbler.

1. INTRODUCATON : SOCIAL AND CYBER MEDIA

Cyber media is the medium of communication through internet or cyberspace. These days most communication between organizations, establishments or individuals takes place through the Internet and the World Wide Web which is the part of the Internet that is visible to us. Since this form of communication, (that is published on the Internet or in Cyberspace and portrayed through electronic devices), takes place through the various websites of the World Wide Web, it is also referred to as Web media. We tend to use the terms "internet', 'Web', 'Net' and 'cyberspace' more or less interchangeably to mean online space that we access to find information or to communicate with others or to be entertained through multimedia content. Cyber media is also referred to as social media, as it offers a platform to users for socializing with each other. It has influenced the lives of people and society in a big way. Cyber media is, thus, the Internet-based form of communication that allows the Web-users to converse with each other or share and exchange information, ideas opinions, feelings, pictures etc. through a particular network or web. Cyber media comprises blogs, micro-blogs, instant messaging, wikis, photo-sharing and video sharing sites, podcasts, widgets, virtual worlds and social networking sites.

Social Networking Sites :
Most of us today are extensively using social networking sites like **Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, LinkedIn, Tumbler, Pinterest,** and many more, for various purposes. Out of these **Facebook, Twitter**, and **You Tube** are perhaps the most frequently visited networking sites. **Facebook** is a socializing networking site that allows people all over the world to relate with friends, relatives, companies and organizations. **Twitter** is an informative micro-blogging website that allows people to post updates in 140 characters or less. **You Tube** is the world's largest video-sharing site. Some other Social networking sites are the **LinkedIn** which is a business related site used mainly for professional networking; **Instagram** enables users to share pictures and short videos using their mobile device; **Pinterest** is a website that offers inspirational and creative content such as fashions, recipes, event-planning and the likes, and draws a large female audience.

The benefits of using Social and Cyber media can be seen at many levels. On a personal level, it helps people to interact with family and friends, to learn new things, to develop their interests, share information and be entertained. Facebook, Twitter and You Tube carry a lot of entertaining content shared by billions of people around the world. On a

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professional level, networking sites help to add to people's knowledge in a particular field and build their professional network by connecting with other professionals in their field. Cyber media is also of great help to the corporate companies. Thus at the Corporate level, it helps the companies to converse with their customers and clients, gain their confidence, get a feedback from them and promote and elevate the company's brand and services accordingly.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CYBER MEDIA

Cyber media is the new media as differentiated from the old or traditional or conventional media. Whereas cyber media consists of the internet mobile phones, social networking sites, emails etc., conventional media comprises the broadcast media (radio and T.V.) and the print media (newspapers and magazines). Sometimes, the users of conventional media take the help of Cyber media as well for the success of their stories. For instance, they get information for their stories from the Internet or depend on the images and videos on their mobile phones or on information from their emails to cover stories that are hard to access. Even the BBC prefers its correspondents to be well versed in both traditional as well as online media. Some characteristics of Cyber media are as follows:-

1/ Hypertextuality is one of the major characteristics of Cyber media. Any information on the net can be substantiated by other relevant material, linking web pages in one website to those of any other website on the World Wide Web.

2/ Online readers have the option to interact with Cyber writers in any and every website in the World Wide Web. Online readers can give their views and receive replies from the Cyber writers instantly.

3. Cyber media is multimedia as one can supplement ones content with video footage, images, pictures etc.

4. Cyber media is accessible twenty-four hours a day. A web page can be accessed by anyone though the Internet at anytime. It is, therefore, not time-bound and has no time limitation.

3. Impact of Social and Cyber Media

1. Cyber media also has no space limitation as it is borderless. Users of this media in any part of the world can access information or communicate with anyone without restrictions of borders that divide countries.

2. The new media is much more difficult to regulate and censor, unlike the old or the traditional media. It is difficult to censor or silence Cyber media as governments cannot easily prosecute someone for posting links on a social networking site or intercept emails, or close down websites or take legal action against Internet service providers. The governments also do not have the infrastructure to control the vast amounts of information flowing constantly through the wide spread networking sites and websites.

3. New media, that is Cyber media, is often audience-created and user-driven.

4. Cyber media uses digital, online and mobile technology.

4. IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND CYBER MEDIA

Cyber media has influenced our lives in many ways and the world without it is simply unthinkable today. In the following passages, we shall discuss how every section of society and every sphere of life has been impacted by social and cyber media.

Impact on Education

Social and cyber media has had a tremendous impact on our systems of education. Students can now browse sources like **Wikipedia, Google**, and others, anytime to get the information they want. Teachers too are taking the help of **You Tube** to show their subject-related videos to the students. As most of the students use

Facebook nowadays, teachers can send them updates on school events, class schedules, dates for assignment submission etc. by making a common page for all the students to share. Students too can keep in touch with their teachers to solve their difficulties in their course of study from home if they are homebound for some reason. They can also give online presentations, take examinations online and receive feedback from the teachers. They can also easily communicate, discuss and share information for a group project they are to submit through various social sites like **Orkut**, Facebook and **Instagram** etc. This promotes team work. Social networking sites also help students to download matter from the internet or to purchase online goods and also to read e-books on **kindle**. On the negative side, all the information available on the Internet may not be a hundred percent reliable and needs to be cross-checked before one downloads it. Also children can access any type of reading material on social sites, including explicit pornographic material that may harm them in the long run. Some of the games children access on these sites are extremely violent in nature and can influence their minds and social behavior adversely. Plagiarism is another bane of the internet. The information on any topic under the sun offered by the Internet is so vast that students are easily tempted to copy some of it and pass it off as their own. Sometimes, they use it to do their assignments and homework, thereby killing the initiative to think for themselves.

Impact on the Youth

Today, teenagers and young adults are the most frequent users of online Social media and it has become a way of life with them. It has made their lives easier and efficient. With tight working schedules, the young rarely have time to meet up with friends. Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter etc. help them to socialize with their old friends and also give them a chance to make new friends. Moreover, through Social media, they remain updated with what is happening around the world. It also helps them to stay connected even when they have moved away from each other. Further, it provides them with a platform to create groups having common interests which help them to find opportunities through discussions to promote their respective careers. Social media also helps the young to refine and develop their artistic abilities. Their creativity gets a boost from the creative comments, poems, statements etc. posted by other users and from the encouraging feedback they get from family and friends for their own posts. This also helps to build their self-confidence and make a career choice.

On the negative side, however, the impact of cyber media on the youth does not appear to be all rosy. Accessing social platforms with their computers, tablets, or cell phones and chatting for hours together with cyber friends not only makes them lose many hours of productive work but may also make them incapable of face-to face interaction. Young ones with a Face book, Twitter, or Instagram account are logged in all the time which curbs their physical movement. Eye strain and backaches are a common complaint of the cyber addicts. Cyber addiction can also lead to social isolation which in turn, may impair their emotional and mental health resulting in conditions like anxiety and depression. Sharing of their personal details online by the young users can increase the risk of identity theft, and of exposing them to outside predators and to Cyber bullying. Hackers have been known to have emotionally blackmailed young web users leading to disastrous results like mental agony and even suicides in some cases. A lot of sexually explicit content is easily available online which leads to its gross misuse by the youth.

Impact on Society

The internet has reduced the world to a global village where millions of people are connected with each other through one of its most innovative technologies—Social media. Social networking sites have become the most visited destinations on the Internet. These websites allow users to connect easily and share ideas, feelings and messages very quickly with other users. Verbal communication has given way to online messaging. Whereas sites like Facebook and Twitter use writing as the mode for communication, **Skype** connects people by word of mouth. The incorporation of webcams by most social sites enables people to talk with and even watch each other. The interaction on social sites between friends, relatives, co-workers etc. promotes social behavior and fosters a profound sense of community. Important issues can be discussed on various sites and opinions and judgments can be formed by a variety of people. Groups of people with similar interests can interact with each other thereby ending their isolation. Sites like You Tube are a constant source of entertainment and offer a platform to users to upload and share videos with one another. The You Tube is also a great platform for film producers and musicians as their fans can easily access their music videos. My Space and other such sites enable easy access to a variety of videos like movies, music, sports and documentaries. News can reach the farthest corner of the world in no time. Some social networking sites are slowly replacing television because they can provide news at a faster rate. In fact most of the news channels and newspapers also have Facebook and Twitter accounts that provide news stories as they are unfolding.

Social networking sites have been instrumental in providing a voice to segments of society whose voices might otherwise not be heard. For instance, in the UK a site called Mumsnet's forced politicians to address parents as equals. In Libya civil society members along with disabled persons' organizations, launched an innovative multimedia compaign called *Zaykum Zayna* ("As You are, We Are"). Through messages on social media, this conveyed democratic values of equality and highlighted the rights of persons with disabilities. Although the advent of Cyber and Social media has offered us numerous advantages, yet there are still groups around the world, such as the elderly the illiterate and the poor who have limited or no access to social sites. Also, like the young, other agegroups too in society are becoming addicted to social sites resulting in the same ailments that afflict the youth. Similarly, people have also become vulnerable to cyber crimes as hackers are breaking into their accounts and accessing crucial information like bank account details etc. to con them.

Impact on Politics

The evolving role of social and cyber media in elections and in the functioning of world democracies cannot be denied. The networking sites are being creatively used for political campaigning around the world. During the 2016 Presidential elections in the USA Social networking sites, were used extensively by the leading presidential candidates, Trump and Clinton. These played a decisive role in the final outcome. Twitter was used aggressively by Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, to run down his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, and also to strike a one-

to-one rapport with the American people, even if sometimes his tweets were offensive and violated the standard campaigning norms. Former USA President Barack Obama, took the help of Facebook to raise funds for his elections and to send messages to the American public while campaigning for the Presidential elections in 2008 which he eventually won. Social media also played a major role in the 2014 Indian elections, won by Narender Modi, whom the citizens on Facebook voted as the second most "liked" politician in the world after Obama. Like Obama did during his presidency, Modi as Prime Minister is making extensive use of the Social and Cyber media to reach out to the Indian masses to promote his cherished goals of development and innovation. The social sites also play an indispensable role in the proper functioning and strengthening of democracy. They act like a "watch dog" to oversee the election processes. By using text messages, they gather and relay information on irregularities that political parties and contesting candidates commit during elections, thereby bringing transparency in the election processes. Social and Cyber media also educates the voters on how to exercise their democratic rights. They provide a platform both to the political parties and candidates for communicating their manifestos to the electorate; and to the people to air their views and needs, and interact with leaders to debate key election issues. Social media has also been instrumental in bringing about political change in world governments. The **Arab Spring** uprisings, since 2011, are an example of how digital media enabled communities to unite around shared grievances and mobilize against dictatorial rules in their respective countries. Social protests against unjust rulers in the Arab world spread from country to country because social sites carried documented evidence of the tragedies being suffered by people at the hands of dictators in the Arab countries. The new information technologies and social media networks, not easily controlled by the States, helped the activists, to come together and rise against dictators resulting in holding of democratic elections in their countries after the Arab Spring revolutions. But social media can also play a negative role in the election processes. Dissemination of misinformation, relayed easily and very fast by the cyber media, can at times lead to civil unrest and rioting etc. and at other times endanger the freedoms of speech and the press. Sometimes, social media poses risks for the contesting candidates when their comments posted on social sites backfire. At other times, the predictions on social sites, regarding election results, can go terribly wrong as the number of twitter mentions received by a candidate may not translate into electoral success.

Impact on Business

Business establishments and organizations are turning to social and cyber media to advertise their goods, to increase their performance in various ways to accomplish business objectives and to increase their annual sales. Marketing is one of the most important and common use of social media that businesses make. Today, every brand has a target section of online audience. Professional networking sites are also being used by businesses to connect with their clients. Businesses and organizations reach millions of users by creating pages and offering promotions and discounts to them. These users, in turn, reach out to their friends and so on. Networks also help businesses to acquaint them with the likes and dislikes of their prospective customers. They also help businesses to increase their market insight to get ahead of their rivals. Networks can, at times, play spoilsports for some business ventures. An online user may post a negative comment about a business organization which can snowball into adverse publicity for it, leading to its shut down. Hackers are known to have diverted companies of their investment and profits by entering into their personal accounts on social sites. Sometimes a wrong online brand strategy can also destroy a company.

5. CONCLUSION :

The impact of cyber revolution, in the field of education, society, business and politics, has also given rise to corresponding cyber crimes that are increasing at an alarming rate. Online financial frauds, violation of privacy of net users, cyber bullying, identity thefts, sex crimes like trafficking in child pornography, rise in cases of violence, murders, burglaries etc. and also the menace of plagiarism. A large number of criminals, who are exploiting the ease and speed of the internet, are indulging in nefarious cyber crimes, taking advantage of the anonymity offered them by the Internet. Listed below are some preventive measures that can minimize the threats posed by cyber attacks on web-users.

• One should be very careful what personal details one posts on the Net because these will permanently remain there. While making online purchases, one should see that details like one's name, age, address, mobile number, bank details etc. are given only after making sure the websites are secure otherwise hackers can easily hack into the information provided.

• The safety of one's personal computer should be ensured by putting in a strong password and by using an anti-virus software. Also, one should always activate one's computer firewall. These measures will prevent any virus from infecting one's computer and corrupting files and data.

• One needs to be careful while downloading material and applications because these are the channels from where viruses may enter one's accounts.

• One's social networking sites and profiles should have security settings.

• One should never click on, or open a file of an unknown origin. Neither should one open emails from strangers. One's e-mail password should be protected strongly otherwise email accounts can be easily hacked.

• Incidents like cyber bullying, threats or harassment over the Internet, hacking and financial frauds, sex crimes, theft of identity etc. should at once be reported to the site administrator or to the police.

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