



# IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON YOUTH: A Study of Kashmir with special reference to Urban Srinagar

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## ABSTRACT

*The impact of social networking sites can be good but if we have a closer look on the real impact of social networks, today it is ruining all dimensions of youth be it social, economic, psychological mental stability, physical health etc. The social networking sites like skype, linkedin, facebook, twitter, whatsapp, and instagram etc. are continuously distracting them. The main focus of youth should be focussing on building strong family ties and proper concentration on education to achieve successful career but unfortunately today's youth are emphasizing valuable time on such sites. Social Networks was only an electronic connection between users but unfortunately it has become an addiction for youth, teenagers as well as adults. This paper is focused to find out the answer whether the social networking sites are boon or bane for today's society especially focussing the main impact on youth. On one hand these sites provide to communicate with our dear ones and on the other it creates platform for many cyber crimes. In this paper the focus is on positive as well as negative impact of these social networking sites on the youth.*

**Keywords:** Social Networking Sites (SNS), impact, youth, Kashmir, Urban Srinagar.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Internet is a very essential part of life from shopping to electronic mails and education. There is a very large community of people which is using internet for pure education but unfortunately we have also a very large number of people including majority of youth and teenager using internet only for social networks. Internet is very big evolution of technology but when we talk about the social networks it is extremely dangerous for youth and has become enormously common and widespread in past few years. Considering the fact, there are so many burning issues around us; it is need of the day to be aware about the society and its issues. Current issues need to be discussed openly with the society in an effort to achieve betterment. Discussions on debatable topics, news items and other articles are most common topics of this social network. Social network provides a platform for discussion on such issues as it is the media which the mass rely on and provide warm support. One such burning issue that has been overlooked in today's scenario is the impact of Social Networking Sites (SNS) on the



changing behaviour of youth. There are a number of Social Networking Sites (SNS) available now-a-days, users of which are increasing in everyday life. These include, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Hi5, Orkut, YouTube, Skype, Instagram, WhatsApp, Viber, WeChat etc.

Social Network is a social structure made up of a set of social actors (such as individuals or organizations) and a set of the dyadic ties between these actors. Social Network as per analysis is an inherently interdisciplinary academic field which emerged from social psychology, sociology, statistics, and graph theory. Social Network analysis is now one of the major paradigm in the contemporary era, and is also employed in a number of other social and formal sciences.

Youth is the time of a person's life when one is young, but often means the time between childhood and adulthood (maturity). The term also refers to individuals between the ages of 16 and 24. It is the time in which they make choices which will affect their future.

Presently Social Networking Sites (SNS) are used by people to communicate with online friends and group membership to keep in touch with current friends, reconnect with old friends or create real life friendships with people of similar interests or groups. Besides establishing important social relationships, social networking members can share their interests with other like-minded members by expanding similar interest groups and forums. Networking is also used to help members to find a job or to establish business contacts. Thus Social Networking Sites (SNS) are not only popular for discussing social issues but also for providing a platform for developing relationships.

Social Networking Sites (SNS) have facilitated communication. Though these sites have many advantages, they have their negative effects too, namely cyber crimes which has become a privacy threat to the people worldwide. It is a cause of behavioural changes among the youth and their families. These behavioural changes include changes in their social behaviour and approaches. Children and teenagers spend so much time on the internet and have tendency to get addicted to these sites. The sites are used as an alternative to procrastinate homework or studying, and also as a source of entertainment. Presently the easy use of network sites like internet has taken upper hand over age accepted way of schoolwork and homework. The new easy way is much in accordance with liking of children and teenagers as it does not involve any hard work. However it consumes much time in lieu of tendency to achieve new information which may even be in the form of pictures and statuses. Heavy Internet use is a cause of greater impulsivity, less patience and weaker critical thinking skills. It has also been noticed that prolonged internet use which exposes students to interactive, repetitive, and addictive stimuli produce permanent changes in brain structure and function. It may appear that use of the internet and social media improves the mental skill to skim and scan. However in practice these degrade the capacity for concentration, reasoning and reflection. There is therefore the need for critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning to honestly appraise the public regarding details about the merits and demerits of using social media.



## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Williams et al (2008) in a review of online social networking profiles states that social networking profiles involve individuals creating and maintaining personal internet sites allowing authors and other users to post content, thus creating a personal network. Boyd (2007) says that gender appears to influence the participation on social network sites. Boyd also asserts that social media sites allow many tasks that were not possible offline as making new friends, staying connected with friends and family, exchanging ideas and sharing pictures. Participation in social media offers adolescents deeper benefits that extend into their view of community, self, and the world. Knight (2006) in the article “Is Social Networking Losing Clout with Youth?” explains that according to ratings, in 2003, teens were most likely to visit icon sites for instant messaging. Wintour (2009) in the article titled “Facebook and Bebo risk” infantilizing the human mind says that social networking sites, such as Facebook, are putting attention span in jeopardy. Today many parents are IT literate and use technology suitably well, comfortably and feel capable with the online sites that their children and adolescents are using. But some parents find it problematic to relate to their techno-savvy youngsters online. Such parents gradually lack an idea and connectivity with these new forms of socialization that play a vital role in their kid's lives (Palfrey J & Gasser U, 2010). Youths and adolescents are at some risk as they navigate and experiment with social media because of their limited capacity for self-regulation and susceptibility to peer pressure. There are frequent online expressions of offline behaviours, as clique-forming, bullying, and sexual experimentation according to a recent research (Lenheart A., 2009). Social networking sites have both negative and positive impact on the education of the youth. (S. Kuppuswamy, 2010).

## **III. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

In our society there is the pool of social problems. Amongst these social problems the field of Social Networking requires attention. Many issues with this regard require the in-depth study and research. This study will focus on the “Impact of Social Networking on Youth – A Study of Kashmir with special reference to Urban Srinagar”. There is a need to bring in light the various causes responsible and their impact on the nature of consequences with this regard. This study is an effort to find comprehensive magnitude of the problem particularly in reference to the rural and urban group.

## **IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This research is conducted on youth with special focus on the Srinagar (urban) district of Kashmir. They are divided into three categories, that is, in the age group of (19 – 22), (23 – 26) and (27 – 30) years. Every effort is made to give due representation to both the sexes so as to reach to the logical conclusions on the principle of due representation.



## **V.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the objectives of this study:

- To study why youth use Social Networking Sites (SNS).
- To study how youth perceive information received from such sites.
- To identify and assess the problems faced by youth under various themes such as personality, education, economy and health.

## **VI.METHODOLOGY**

The present study is empirical in nature which is based on primary as well as secondary data. Primary data is collected on the basis of a structured questionnaire which is pretested before actual use. The primary data is supplemented by secondary data wherever required which is collected and thoroughly studied from Journals, Magazines, Newspapers, and other published and unpublished sources. The method of sampling used is cluster sampling followed by systematic sampling. Information is randomly gathered from different colleges (governmental, semi – governmental and private) for persons who are active users of social networking sites. Finally, the data collected is put to statistical testing through appropriate statistical tools and techniques to make logical deductions about the population.

## **VII.FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

Social networking isn't for everyone, but it's now such a massive part of all our lives, whether we embrace or reject the notion, that it can no longer be ignored. It isn't just your inner circle of close friends and even closer family members that social networking sites allow you to communicate with easily and effectively, either. They open the world up to you, making it a smaller place than it has ever been before. Family living abroad can be kept abreast of the latest happenings in your world as quickly as those living next door. Friends who you haven't seen since school, and who have since moved away, are able to keep in touch. It is found that these social networking sites are acting as great medium for view mobilization. Youth are feeling free in sharing their thoughts on any issue and even in raising their voice against social acts like violation of Human Rights, corruption etc. These social networking sites are proving themselves a boon at least in bringing thoughts of people on these social issues. It is also being generated from the information so obtained that youth are getting more aware about the social issues mainly from Facebook.



The negative effects of a new technology are never fully visible in the initial stages due to the hype and excitement involved. However, the more time we spend online the more connected we get hence the urge is to not miss out on anything this induces an invisible layer of stress and pressure on the individuals. Hyper-networking (more than three hours on social networks per day) and hyper texting (more than 120 text messages per day) are correlated with unhealthy behaviours in youth. Hyper-networking is also associated with depression, substance abuse, poor sleep patterns, suicide and poor academic performance. It's entirely possible to have hundreds of friends on Face book. They may not be friends you know on a personal level and spend time with in the real world on a weekly basis. But they're friends nevertheless. Kashmiri youth who are the heaviest media users report being less content and are more likely to report that they get into trouble a lot, are often sad or unhappy, and are often bored.

Education is very essential part of an individual's life for every teenager education is more important than anything. Today youth shows very much interest for using social networks but unfortunately Social Networks affect education badly. Technology is step towards betterment, no doubt but any technology which can provide ease of social networks can be dangerous for social network addicts. Social Networks grab the total attention and concentration of the students and diverts them towards non educational, unethical and inappropriate actions such as useless chatting, time killing by random searching and not doing their jobs. As social network has introduce many attractive tasks like gamming, advertisements etc. so that people can never get enough of these things. The social network addict becomes a useless node for parents, friends and other associated people. According to survey students do not take their meals on time and do not sleep on time which causes a very non serious attitude with education. All they need after addiction is use of social networks. This act of going far from your family, friends, teachers and other associations could be very much dangerous for life and education. It changes the mindset of student completely like fantasies. This virtual life of student destructs his thoughts from education towards other activities and by living inside fantasy world student slowly starts to hate educated life and studies. One of very common action performed by almost every user on social networks is eavesdropping. It is phenomenon of understanding the other users by spying their profiles, actions, likes, comments and other activities performed.

Also the unwanted online sexual solicitation, the Kashmiri youth fell prey to in some instances. The unwanted online sexual solicitation is defined as "the act of encouraging someone to talk about sex, to do something sexual, or to share personal sexual information even when that person does not want to". Online sexual predation occurs when an adult makes contact with a minor with intent to engage in sexual activities that would result in statutory rape. The youth are much more likely to receive sexual solicitation between same-age youth than sexual predation and most of these solicitations come from same-age peers who are known offline.



## VIII.CONCLUSION

No doubt that SNS has great impact on the Kashmiri youth and has a lot of challenges also to face. Today's youth are being corrupted by a new and powerful source. Social media has flourished in the age of the Internet. The new digital social networking media are a frontier that is rich with opportunities and risks, particularly for young people. Through SNS technologies, young people are participating in a range of activities, including social networking, blogging, gaming, instant messaging, downloading music and other content, uploading and sharing their own creations, and collaborating with others in various ways but also five key issues are at stake in the new social networking media identity, privacy, ownership and authorship, credibility, and participation. It offers a way to keep in touch with new and old friends, network, follow bands and companies, and offers a mini biography of each user's life. When used responsibly and with caution, social networks can be a great tool. When used immaturity or carelessly, social networks can be a dangerous medium capable of great damage.

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