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## Information Explosion and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth:

## Prospects and Challenges

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help to generate website traffic and customer engagement. In case we want to run some out of the box highly creative campaigns that can not only inform your audience and but also attract them then this one is best fit. To run Social Media campaign on Pinterest, we need to have a site that is bookmark-friendly. We should optimize headlines and images for the feeds that Bookmarking and Content Curation Networks use for accessing and sharing the content. Flipboard let's to create own Flipboard magazine by using most engaging content.

#### **Consumer Review Networks: Yelp, Zomato, TripAdvisor**

Using Customer Review networks will help to find out, share and review different information about a variety of products, services or brands. When a business has positive reviews on these networks, their claims turn more credible because reviews on these networks act as Social Proof. For running a successful Social Media Marketing Campaigns, it is very important for today's businesses to have positive reviews on these sites. In addition, resolving all the issues that customers are posting on these Review platforms is another thing that is going to be very important for the positive and productive outcomes for the business.

#### **Blogging and Publishing Networks : Wordpress, Tumblr, Medium**

We should choose these types of Social Media networks for publishing, discovering and commenting on articles, blogs and other content on the web. Content marketing is one of the most powerful ways to target, attract, engage and convert a target audience. It is going to be the base of successful online marketing campaigns that play the most important role in conversion funnels of Digital Marketing campaigns. Word Press and Blogger are the traditional blogging platforms while Tumblr (micro-blogging service) and Medium (Social Publishing Platform) is the latest blogging and publishing networks.

**Some Facts** - Youth were never inspired by any emerging phenomena that much until social media came to the fore. The unprecedented clutch of this most vibrant trend nowadays is being further endorsed by survey reports from recognized bodies worldwide as well.

One such survey conducted by TCS with the name of "TCS GenY Survey" targeted the 'Post-Millennial' generation. It included responses of more than 17,000 students of age group 12-18 years from urban high schools spread across 14 cities all over India. The main findings included -

- Used by above 65% of the respondents, Mobile phones emerged as the favorite gadget of the youths.
- 18% of the youth access internet through mobile phones, which is only next to their internet use at home (72%).
- One in every four youngster access internet for more than 60 minutes on daily basis while above 50% do so for 30+ minutes every day.
- 73.65% youngsters use internet for academic research work, more than 62% use it for social media activities such as chat/connect/blog.
- A staggering 73.68% of the respondents all over India use Facebook/Twitter as their communication handle, leaving SMS, Voice call, email and instant messaging way behind. Another survey report published on SOCIAL MEDIA CHIMPS in the form of Info graphic reflects the impact of social media to even deeper extent. It says -
- 5 million Facebook users are aged under 10
- 38% of the Facebook users among children are from the age group 13-17
- 50% of teens login to their FB account at least once in a day.
- Girls aged 16-17 years are most prone to cyber bullying attacks.
- 10% teens have had their embarrassing photos being posted on social media sites without permission.
- On the brighter side, social media promotes collaboration, creativity, communication, technological proficiency and leadership qualities.

**Positive Impacts** - Social media can be used in ways that promote positive and productive ideas in society. These positive behaviors make social media an invaluable tool to young people if used correctly.



of internet based an application that builds on the ideological and scientific foundations for communication, in to an effective and interactive conversation between different societies and individuals. Social media is one of the easiest means and includes media and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google etc. This is creating lot of boom in the current generation as it is one of the easy resources in conveying the information. Using social media will help in improving contacts and increases business. Social media may comprise of different forms like magazines, social circles, forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, videos and social bookmarking. But now the trend of getting information has totally changed and people are using internet to acquire information and to meet people. Social media is different from traditional media which include newspapers, television, radio and films etc. This social media is expensive when compared to the traditional media and is also easily accessible. This is useful for communicating and interacting with people worldwide but is also one of the best ways to succeed in business. Almost 70% of the business is done online because this will reach to the target audiences soon, all over the world. This is also one of the biggest pools of information.

### **Different Types of Social Media Networks**

Human nature by default has been programmed to be socially active in a community. Some people are more active, while others are less so. However, people have always been looking for ways to connect and network with each other. And, in this age of digitization, people have become more socially active on the internet, which is possible with the advent of the numerous social media platforms and apps. Now, even relationships begin, grow and end on social media. People no longer need a personal handshake or face-to-face meeting.

Social media sites have also grown in numbers by leaps and bounds. As revealed on Statista, approximately 2 billion users used social networking sites in 2017. With the increased use of mobile devices, this number is likely to increase further. Here, we discuss some of the most popular social media networks.

#### **Social Network: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn**

Such types of Social Media are used to associate with friends and family. They help your business via branding, social awareness, relationship building, lead generation, and conversion. Anyone can channelize different types of content through these networks that will help them widen their reach.

#### **Media Sharing Networks: Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube**

Media sharing types of Social Media are used to find and share photos, videos and other kinds of media on the web. They are also going to help in brand promotion, targeting and so on. They give individuals and brands a place to discover and connect with target audiences can be targeted and converted into a convincing and result driven marketing strategy. Media sharing networks nowadays also offer these features, however, for Media Sharing Networks, this is their basic role.

#### **Discussion Forums : Reddit, Quora, Digg**

Such types of Social Media channels are used for finding, sharing and discussing different kinds of information, opinions, and news. They help businesses by being top notch resource for immaculate market research. These forums are the oldest ways of running Social Media Marketing campaigns. Before the entry of popular Social Media players like Facebook, these forums were the place where professionals, experts and enthusiasts used to do different kinds of discussions concerning a variety of fields.

#### **Bookmarking and Content Curation Networks: Pinterest, Flipboard**

Opting for such types of Social Media will help to find out, share, discuss and save a variety of latest content and media that are trending as well. They are very helpful in channelizing brand promotion for business, plus, choosing this one to run different types of Social Media Marketing campaigns.



Below are some of the ways in which social media can be used to benefit young people:

**Educational Benefits** - Youth use social media platforms such as Facebook in order to complete collaborative assignments. It provides a space for them to share and discuss ideas, plan and delegate tasks, and upload and provide feedback on completed works. Also, social media itself can actually be an educational resource - with social networking sites such as YouTube and Wikipedia being heavily referenced as a source of information. Finally, sites like YouTube have an endless supply of educational videos that help youth to develop or refine various skills, such as cooking, fixing household items, or speaking other languages. Some YouTube videos also provide objective overviews of important contemporary issues that can help teenagers to become engaged and make informed decisions.

**Rapid communication** - Everybody is becoming so busy with their lives that they don't even have time to communicate with their family members. Our time is getting thinner and thinner with busy work schedule and family commitments. Social networking sites give us a chance to communicate in a speedy and effective manner. Writing in Facebook, Google and Twitter will reach as many people as we want just in a span of seconds and with no cost. These sites will allow us to live a life which is unhindered with a small talk.

**Building relationship and finding a common ground in an open society** - We can make a strong relationship with friends and relatives through these sites. This can help foster friendship and more bond strengthen us. Because friend is the only person with whom we can share everything related to our life. Connecting with groups will help in improving one's own business, thus creating profits. Professionals like LinkedIn will have many groups based on different criteria. Through LinkedIn people get jobs and some promote their business.

**Enhancing Creativity** - Social media refers to online services that enable users to connect with other users, and create and share content. One of the positive effects of social media on youth is that it encourages them to think outside of the box and exercise creativity in how they engage with their audience and friends. Furthermore, given that they make up the vast majority of people using social networking sites, youth are at the forefront of molding the future of social media.

**Confidence & Independence** - Engaging on social networking sites can be a new adventure for young people. It is like exploring a new place where different skills are needed. Young people learn to develop their character to be more confident and independent in order to be heard or have a positive online presence. This eventually transfers to their daily lives.

**Interconnectivity & Identity** - Social media is capable of building and extending teenagers' personal and collective identities. During adolescence, teenagers have access to newfound independence and begin to form and experiment with new identities. Social media provides them with the necessary tools to self-discover through trial and error. In the online world, teenagers feel safe seeking support for issues they wouldn't otherwise feel comfortable discussing, such as mental health, sexuality, and physical health. Today's youth rely on social media in order to raise and spread awareness, share in the struggle, and combat stigma. Teenagers who are able to be vulnerable online can establish relationships based on mutual trust and empathy, which can have truly positive effects on their health and well-being.

**A flexible Media** - Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google help users to find and connect with friends worldwide, easily with a quick process. These will also be helpful in promoting and increasing contacts. Using these sites is very easy because they are designed in a way to reach a large audience and new features and functions are constantly developed so as to make the site more satisfying user needs. Many famous personalities for example celebrities, business men and women create their own blogs to promote their business or to express their views. This makes their work easier in reaching huge audience in a very less time.

**Negative impacts** - Social media, now a days is leaving a negative impact mostly on youth. As youth spend lot of time on the internet to visit and check their single or multiple accounts, it affects students, youth and productivity of work because of the extreme use of technology.



**Cyber bullying** - Usage of social media may create a chance for emotional distress in getting frightening, irritating and degrading communication from another teenager which is called cyber bullying. It's been proved that cyber bullying will build advanced levels of depression and anxiety for victims and also resulted in youth suicide. Most of the females become victims of this cyber bullying.

**Texting** - Texting is used to harass people. Using cell phones and social networking sites for instant messaging to threaten, and hassle relationship partners is increasing day by day. One in three teens in relationships has been text messaged up to 30 times an hour by a partner to know where they are, what they are doing, or who they are with.

**Privacy** - Most of the teenagers are not aware of the website policies when setting their profiles and they may not be even aware of disclosing the information to the third parties like the advertisers. Most of the teenagers like to post their information publicly which will affect them when the hackers or people with cruel intention may use their information for wrong purposes.

**Effect on Health** - Social media has an impact on physical as well as mental health of an individual. Since a lot of time is being utilized in using the multiple social networking sites, individuals seldom get time to eat and sleep on time as well as since they are spending a lot of time on these websites, there is hardly any time left for physical activity, all of which impacts an individual's health.

**Poor Self-Esteem** - One characteristic of social media are that they are a platform utilized by individuals to post pictures, share stories etc., hence this attribute of these websites are said to have an impact on an individual's self-esteem. Frequent comparisons are made in terms of the pictures one posts, the number of likes, views, comments etc. all of which leads to a teen evaluating himself/herself in light of these attributes.

**Poor Communication Skills** - Students nowadays, are mostly involved in virtual communication that is communication over the internet, which reduces their ability to communicate effectively with other face-to-face.

**Poor Grades** - Multiple studies have indicated that social media usage is inversely proportional to grades in school and college. It is assumed that over exposure of students to the internet, takes away a lot of their time which could be otherwise utilized for studies.

**Dealing with Social Media Threats** - Considering the fact that the young social media users are still in the nascent stages of their lives, their elders need to put forth certain effective measures to ensure their safety online -

- **Parental Guidance** - It is important to understand the behavior of kids while using internet; whether they sit alone or with family, what they access, etc.
- **Activate Privacy Options** - Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites have their own privacy settings. Anyone can customize them to maintain utmost secrecy of their kids' account while they are online.
- **Educate Youths** - Always be aware and make sure to educate youth about every possible risk they may get exposed to while accessing internet, preferably social media sites.
- **Protect Credentials** - Don't disclose important phone numbers, email ids, passwords, bank account num., instant messenger IDs, addresses, etc., before your kids until you believe they are mature enough.
- **Maintain Secrecy** - Encourage youth not to disclose any sensitive information over the web, be it related to them, their family or friends.
- **Activate filters** - It is better if you can use filters to block the content of any unwanted or objectionable sites.
- **Implement Firewalls** - Anyone can also implement firewalls that could keep a regular check on fraudulent sites, cyber bullies and those involved in electronic aggression.



## Conclusion

Considering all of the above pros and cons, it is necessary to develop the use of such social networking sites, especially for high school and college students. Social media has great impact on the Indian youth but it has lot of challenges which we have to face. When it comes to safeguarding the interests of your young ones over the web, it is essential to take effective steps so that they may not fall prey to fraudulent or illicit acts happening across the social media. Thus, students should get the choice to spend time socializing in an effective way. It should not affect their school or college performance, and it should be kept in mind that social media creates virtual worlds that drastically differ from reality. Youth should be helped in developing the cognitive and critical thinking ability via awareness which will help them in analyzing how much time they want to spend on social media. We should focus on the ethical usage of these Social Media so that it serves us in a right way. The youth can play an important role since social media is a boon and curse both for the Indian society.

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