

IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN THE CHANGING MINDSET OF YOUTH ON SOCIAL ISSUES - A STUDY OF DELHI-NCR YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

In today's fast moving world, everyone tries to be ahead of their competitors, friends and social circle. Considering the fact, there are so many burning issues around us which we need to think upon and act, it's an alarm for us to be aware about the society and its issues. Current issues like violation of human rights, girl's education, adverse effects of global warming, wrong deeds of political leaders, crime against women, corruption etc. need to be discussed openly with the society in an effort to do something about it and bring a revolution.

Social Networking sites provide a platform for discussion on such issues as it is this media which majority mass rely on and extend warm support. One such burning issue that has been overlooked in today's scenario is the impact of social networking sites in the changing mind-set of the youth. Our research is conducted on youths between age group of 18-30 years with a view to know the level of awareness on the social issues and how far social networking sites awakened the today's youth in expressing their views on current and burning issues like corruption, human rights, girl education etc. Study was conducted on 100 people mostly through email or sending link of questionnaire on various social sites.

Keywords: Social networking Sites, Corruption, ANOVA, social issues, Anna Hazare.

INTRODUCTION:**IMPORTANCE OF A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE:**

Social network sites are web-based services allowing individuals to construct a semi-public or public profile in a bounded system as well as to articulate a list of others so as to share connections, views and thoughts. However the type, classification and nature of these connections may differ from site to site.

Uniqueness of social networking sites not only allows individuals to meet strangers but enables users to discuss and make visible their social networks. This results into connections between individuals which otherwise is not possible through any other media already existing. Maximum of the time social networking sites are used to communicate with people who are already their friends or acquaintances in the social network sharing same mindset or same interests and views. Discussions on debatable topics, news articles are most common topics on these SNNs. There are a number of SNS's available now-a-days wherein users are increasing leaps and bounds as shown in the table below-

TOP 7 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN THE WORLD

Rank	Sites	Estimated unique monthly users
1	Facebook	55,0000000
2	Twitter	95800000
3	Myspace	80500000
4	Linkedin	50000000
5	Ning	42000000
6	Tagged	30000000
7	Classmates	29000000

Social networking sites are not only popular for providing a platform for chatting, sharing scraps, videos, pictures etc. but also for discussing social issues. However, certain issues yet require study and research like impact of SNS on youth's minds and loss of privacy as earlier people believed in keeping their data private but now they enjoy going public and showing wall posts, status updates, tweets and infact every thrill of their lives. In this way, we are ourselves breaching our privacy and personal space at the compromise of publicizing intimate details so as to attract hundreds of online readers and even strangers.

There is a pool of social problems which requires attention of majority so that we can fight against them as a united country and make the society more peaceful. Social awareness brings more matureness, unity and thoughtfulness when it comes to making important decisions for them or for society.

When these social networking sites started, youths got immediately attracted towards them as they found it very convenient to expand their social circle, chat with other fellow teenagers, share their personal photos and see others data too without any security alert. Infact now there is a sort of competition among the youths to pose themselves as most favorite and renowned person on internet. The actual competition is to get the coveted title of the king/queen of the virtual world, which is sure to have a profound impact of the psyche of an entire generation. So, the effort, time and focus we spend on creating our position, popularity rate and brand on these social networking sites is a standing testimony to the awakening of the narcissist in us.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON SOCIAL ISSUES:**CORRUPTION:**

It is the biggest crime harming societal values, morals and in core population. The 2010 statistics of Transparency International shows that 54% of Indians paid bribe in last year for getting their work done across different departments and sectors. This day-to-day corruption is posing a serious problem for people to live life in a normal way. Everybody is in some sense exposed to corruption either as a perpetrator or as a victim or as a beneficiary. Paid a Bribe (ipaidabribe.com) is one of the social networking website started by Janaagraha which aims to capitalize on the commonness of the practice and provides a platform to people to report their experiences and find what others have gone through.

POWER OF FACEBOOK:

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Orkut etc. are the most popular sites for having forum on social issues. More than 150 pages related to social issues like corruption, human rights, girls education etc have emerged in the last few months in social networking sites like facebook, Youtube, Orkut, etc. Surprisingly, maximum of such lot seem to be created by various enthusiasts.

JOIN ANNA HAZZARE:

Anna Hazare is a great revolutionist fighting against corruption and wrong practices in the society. In recent days he got lots of support and popularity from people who now pose him as their role model. 'Join Anna Hazare's Fast To Bring the Jan Lokpal Bill' is one of such page created by a Mohammed Zaid Shaikh, a Mumbai-based Facebook user. This page is followed/liked by more than 38,000 users which shows that mass were in favour of Anna movement and gave this revolution a strength and hit factor. Another such page 'India against Corruption' page has earned more than 3.2 lakh fans, so far. This number is growing in hundreds day by day. The power of social networking can be seen in various protests done by many social activists through the crowds they gathered.

CONNOTATION OF BLOGS:

Blog writing is a latest trend which serves as an online journal linking to varying news stories and sites. It allows individual or group of users to record their opinions and information. Now every hit personality or celebrity is maintain their blog logs and updating in a regular basis so as to enhance their popularity rate and get open views and suggestions from mass. Maintaining blogs also enables strengthening community ties and advancing key issues. People now don't rely much on traditional means of interaction instead they want to penetrate internet, social networking and derive the best output. For example, Amnesty International, an international human rights campaigner active in over 150 countries, earlier relied on traditional media e.g. newsletters and e-mail, to interact with their approximate 2.2 million members (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/who-we-are>) but it failed to create a bi-lateral channel of communication between staff and supporters so they switched to blog writing which dramatically helped in exchanging views of supporters as well as organization.

INTEGRATING COMMUNITIES:

Social networking sites helps in integrating all the parts of the country including subcultures and minority groups who otherwise never get the physical means and space to practice their views and beliefs. Through social networking sites individuals can communicate with others irrespective of meeting face to face or present at a specified time. As these individuals are not aware of things they can use these websites and can raise their voices and can also participate. As these social issues need regular discussion individuals can use networking sites to communicate periodically or regularly depending on your and others' requirements. So we can say in a country like INDIA social networking websites is acting as an officer who integrate individuals about social issues like corruption, girl's education, and Human rights etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Lot of literature is available now days on the social networking sites and their impact on the youth of any nation, children, adolescence and families as during the last 5 years, usage of such sites has increased among preadolescents and adolescents. According to a latest poll, 22% of teenagers log in more than 10 times a day on to their favorite social media site, and more than half percentage of adolescents log more than once a day (Steyer James, 2009). Infact research also states that parents need to be aware of the type; content and nature of social media sites as maximum of them are not suitable for children and adolescents. So, Pediatricians are now playing a vital role to help families understand these sites and their usage so as to monitor for potential problems with sexting, cyberbullying, Facebook depression, and exposure to inappropriate content' (Keeffe, G.S. 2012). 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. (Boyd, D. 2007) 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). Out of 75% of teenagers owning cell phones, 25% use them for social media, 24% use them for instant messaging and 54% use them for texting (Hinduja S. & Patchin J., 2007). 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 behaviors, as clique-forming, bullying, and sexual experimentation according to a recent research (Lenheart A., 2009).

James Bennett in 2010 examined the link between organizational culture and social networking so as to predict whether social networking tools are capable of reshaping and revitalizing and the brand and culture of an organization, which in turn can lead to enhanced levels of employee productivity and satisfaction. As the adoption of these SNS such as Facebook is increasing by diverse populations, the benefits provided by them have made us better off as a society and as individuals, and that, as they continue to be, we will see an increase in their utility. Positive outcomes from these technologies as jobs found through LinkedIn or political activities organized via Facebook is well-known, but now a growing corpus of research on social networks sites supports this view too.(Sumiti Sehgal, 2010). Social networking sites have both negative and positive impact on the education of the youth. (S. Kuppuswammy, 2010).

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the awareness level of usage of different social networking sites.
2. To find out level of trust over the information received from social networking sites.
3. To map the level of success of movement like Anna Hazare against corruption in people's mind.
4. To study the type of social issues discussed over social networking sites.

HYPOTHESIS:

1. There is hardly any knowledge available on social networking sites regarding social issues like corruption, human rights etc.
2. Awareness level of men and women are equal on social networking sites
3. Youth participation is negligible in social movements discussed on social networking sites.
4. There is no difference in responses of the people on the issues like 2G scam and gender discrimination on the basis of different age groups

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research gives an insight to the people's connection with social issues and the social networking site. The research also analyses that are the people really participating in the movements or just discuss them on web and sit back. It also covers the different sections of people with the opinion on the various issues pertaining in India. Research was conducted on the youth of Delhi-NCR region. Total sample size taken is 100 respondents. It was an exploratory study and tools used were tables, graphs, pie charts, ANOVA, Cross tables using IBM SPSS 19.0. Only Structured Questions (mostly in Likert scale) were used.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

In response to the query whether you have the access to the internet or not following table is obtained:

TABLE 1.1: ACCESS TO INTERNET

		Area of the respondent			
		North Delhi	South Delhi	West Delhi	East Delhi
		Count	Count	Count	Count
Access over Internet	Yes	9	58	22	10
	No	0	1	0	0

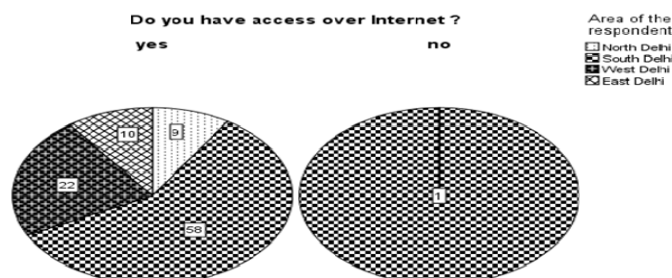


FIGURE 1.1 ACCESS TO INTERNET

The above given table and graph depicts the relationship between the area of the residence of people and percentage of people having internet access with them. This graph shows only amongst the respondents of data

only 1 person does not have internet access rest all other respondents have easy internet access. In response to the query, 'If you are NOT participating with any of social networking websites, what is the main reason', following table obtained which depicts the structure of people having access to social networking sites. If not then what can be the possible reasons for not being a part of the social networking site. When we analyze the reasons we find out that mostly people don't have time that's why they are not using or using these sites less.

TABLE 1.2 MAIN REASON OF NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE ACTIVITIES OF SNS

		If you are NOT participating with any of social networking websites, what is the main reason?							
		I don't have time		It's not Interesting		I don't want any publicity		It's against my religion	
		Gender		Gender		Gender		Gender	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
		Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Do you have access over any social networking sit?	Yes	6	5	1	4	3	2	0	1
	No	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

In response to the query which networking sites were mostly used, following responses were obtained;

TABLE 1.3: SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE USED

Which all Social Networking Site do you use?			
Name of Social Networking Site	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Twitter	32	11	11
Orkut	41	14	25
Facebook	96	33	58
Linkedin	44	15	73
Youtube	57	19	92
Flikr	9	3	95
Myspace	5	2	97
Blogspot.com	10	3	100
Total	294	100	

The table shows the number of social networking sites users. Facebook is the most popular website of all the other social networking sites. In response to the query how much time was spent by the respondents on their favourite networking sites cross tabulation was performed and represented as follows:

TABLE: 1.4: TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

		How much time do you spend on your favourite networking sites per session?				Total
		less than 5 minutes	5-10 minutes	10-30 minutes	30+ minutes	
Gender	Male	2	9	19	20	50
	Female	3	9	20	18	50
Total		5	18	39	38	100

Table 1.4 depicts that the average time spent per session on the social networking site by male and female separately. On one hand where male prefer spending more than 30 minutes per session females try restricting themselves to between 10-30 minutes.

In response to the query, whether use of the social networking sites as a tool for mass mobilisation and rapid information dissemination of information through internet is useful, Graph 1.2, describes that the respondents of different age group's thinking on this issue is positive and they think that it is useful. Almost 90% of the people think it is a mass communication tool specially the people of the age group 20-40 years.

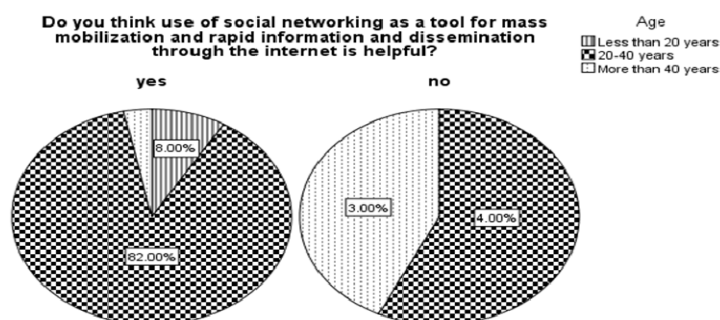


FIGURE 1.2 USE OF THE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AS A TOOL FOR MASS MOBILISATION AND RAPID INFORMATION DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

In response to the query 'what kind of social issues you came across to the social networking sites', the corruption is the most popular issue discussed over the SNS followed by human right and gender inequality. When it is being asked, 'do you really think that social networking site influence the people's opinion on the social issues', the people of the entire region of Delhi are specific that only sometimes their opinions changes on the social issues not always. In response to the query whether mostly all the discussions end with signing out of users from the social networking sites. Most of the people don't react to the situation or the social issues faced they are least bothered. They just read comment and shut their pc without further concrete steps that can be taken. This can be interpreted from the above figure where 71% of people don't react, they only sign out of their systems. In response to the query that how often you came across the blogs on corruption and social issues, table no. 1.6 results as follows:

TABLE 1.5 DOES THE DISCUSSION LEADS TO RESULTS ALSO OR JUST END WITH SIGNING OUT OF USER FROM THESE SITES?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	71	71.0	71.0	71.0
	Disagree	29	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

TABLE 1.6: HOW OFTEN YOU COME ACROSS BLOGS ON CORRUPTION & SOCIAL ISSUES

		Age		
		Less than 20 years	20-40 years	More than 40 years
		Count	Count	Count
How often you come across blogs on corruption & social issues?	Daily	0	17	0
	Weekly	6	35	3
	Monthly	2	32	2
	Or More Than That	0	2	1

The above table represents the proportion of people in different age groups who often come across blogs on corruption and other social issues. Most of them from the age group 20-40 indulge into discussing these social issues and give their justifications on the subject. In response to the query that whether you participated in the Anna Hazare candle light March, people from Age group 20-40 years responded positively as the results given in the table 1.7:

TABLE 1.7 PARTICIPATION IN ANNA HAZARE CAMPAIGN

		Age		
		Less than 20 years	20-40 years	More than 40 years
		Count	Count	Count
During the Anna Hazare campaign, do you participated in there candle light march?	yes	0	15	0
	sometimes	2	13	3
	no	6	58	3

The hypothesis holds true that Youth participation is negligible in social movements discussed on social networking sites. The above table shows how many male and females participate in the candle march conducted by the Anna Hazare. This depicts that instead our youth was aware still it was not a part of the candle march against corruption it was just a mere spectator to the events. Most of the respondents got the information of the Anna Hazare campaign through the Facebook and other networking sites as social media was used by Anna Ji team in mobilising the mass(youth) as they are more prone to the internet. In response to the statements on the current and live issues of social concerns most of the people response with respect to the various age groups was tested through the analysis of variance test.

TABLE 1.8 ANOVA ON VARIOUS STATEMENTS ALONG WITH AGE GROUPS

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Youth plays an important role in bringing a change in society?	Between Groups	7.338	2	3.669	7.025	.001
	Within Groups	50.662	97	.522		
	Total	58.000	99			
Corruption has polluted our society?	Between Groups	.493	2	.246	1.152	.320
	Within Groups	20.747	97	.214		
	Total	21.240	99			
Mr P. Chidambaram's association in 2g scam?	Between Groups	2.046	2	1.023	1.333	.269
	Within Groups	74.464	97	.768		
	Total	76.510	99			
Gender Discrimination is bringing our society back to the same level from where it was started	Between Groups	.718	2	.359	.335	.716
	Within Groups	103.872	97	1.071		
	Total	104.590	99			
Joining any page on social networking helps to suppress the problem?	Between Groups	4.381	2	2.190	2.105	.127
	Within Groups	100.929	97	1.041		
	Total	105.310	99			

In response to the statement that 'Youth plays an important role in bringing a change in the society', a null hypothesis was framed that there is no difference in the people mean response of the people according to different age groups which was rejected as F- value at 5% level of significance comes out to be 7.025 which is more than the tabulated value so it can be expressed that different age groups response differ significantly on this statement.\

In response to the statement, 'Corruption has polluted the society', Null hypothesis that there is no difference in the different age group on this statement, was accepted as the F-value (1.152) was much lower than the tabulated value at same degree of freedom. Similarly the null hypothesis on the statements related to 2G scam and Gender discrimination was also accepted as the F-value on these statements 1.33 and 0.335 were lower than tabulated value. In response to the statement, 'Joining pages on the social networking helps to suppress the problem', F -value comes out to be 2.105, which is much less than tabulated value. So null hypothesis was accepted which means responses were not differed over the different age groups.

ANOVA results shows that youth were more vibrant while discussing the social issues during the social networking sites usages but they are not coming forward in concrete way to resolve the issues.

CONCLUSION:

It was found that these social networking sites are acting as great medium for view mobilization. People are feeling free in sharing their thoughts on any issue and even youth is 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 people are getting more aware about the social issues mainly from Facebook. But instead of getting this knowledge the people generally don't discuss them and if they do, they just sign off the sites after discussion and the issue just remains focused on web only.

It was found that women's are spending less time on these sites mainly for 10-30 minutes yet they are more sensitive towards these social issues. Most of the people think that youth can play a positive role in changing our society which is represent in most of the responses to different queries.

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