

IS SOCIAL NETWORKING A BOON OR BANE

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Social media make the people easy to communicate one to another to express their thoughts. It engages people persistently and build up the trending activity to everyone. People welcoming social networking to use and sharing their thoughts with other people. It's proved that to be very useful for everyone and it offers a universal platform to share and express, but its consistent engagement is affecting individual productivity, relationships and society as a whole. Like individuals, businesses also used to advertise their products through social networking. The individuals interact with others by using virtual presentations as well as textual messages. The internet creates the creativity among the people by presenting themselves. Social networking began in the form of generalized online communities to assemble people having similar interests and sharing any information or ideas. Some examples of worldwide famous social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest etc.

Google became popular as a principal internet search engine in 1998. Wikipedia started as an online encyclopedia in 2001. Most popular social networking site, Facebook got launched in 2004. Myspace and LinkedIn came into existence as social networking sites in 2003. As of 2017, 45% of the world's internet users are on social networking sites. The latest collection of Global Digital 2019 reports reveals that internet users are growing by an average of more than one million new users every day, with all of the original 'Next Billion Users' now online. Facebook got launched in 2004 and now has become the largest social networking site in the world. More than one billion people are active users on Facebook on a daily basis. However, Social Networking has both its advantages and disadvantages.

Social Networking as Boon:

Communication between the family and friends who are staying across the world have increased because of Social Networking's free messaging and calling. Now the people are able to find their childhood friends and connect with them. It is a huge opportunity for the company, especially -The Startups where they had to spend a lot of money on advertising previously. With the sudden outburst of social networking, changed the entire perception, thus they can initiate their business with less cost or no cost at all. Online business gives an opportunity to understand their customer well, even helps to boost their brand name and to reach many people.

Now every passing day, every passing hour, people's usage of the internet and Social Networking, has been increasing at a higher pace. Thus Digital Marketing is a new field which is under huge progression. Optimization of the search engine has begun to extend rather localizing to the particular area, which has proved to be the best entity for business. People are now surfacing with a whole lot of new ideas which would have sounded crazy initially, but later it turned into a huge brand and the people started it have become millionaires and billionaires in no time like Google, Facebook, Twitter. Thereby it has tremendously increased the living standard individually.

People are able to express their views openly and understand other views which help the people to join for a particular cause. The best example, Tamil Nadu, traditional game Jallikkattu was banned, some people started the protest against it, but soon much more joined the protest later with the help of Social Networking, which has pushed the Government to pass an ordinance to lift the ban completely. Even the authorities are closely monitoring all online sites, which are helpful for them to get to know the mood of the people, to catch the suspects as well. Cybercrime, which is the latest prevailing concern. But the government has prepared a separate department to closely watch and observe the activities in online. As we know that Social Networking is the voice of the people so it has the capacity to influence the outcome of the political issues. It is distracting for everyone and especially the younger generation. They are always glued to their mobiles, computers, tablets which is a wastage of time and leads to less interaction with family and friends. Social Networking provides many advantages for individuals and society:

1. **Increases Knowledge:** The individuals improve and enhance their skills by sharing their ideas, knowledge and information with millions of people even if they are miles away.
2. **Easiest Connection:** Individuals can keep in touch with their friends at all times from any corner of the world and can find anyone else.
3. **Educational Purposes:** Educational institutes, teachers and professors can extend their classroom discussions through social networking and post assignments, quizzes and tests and assist students with homework.

4. **Common Interests:** Social Networking gives the possibility to share same interest and hobbies a place to share inform Benefits for Businesses. Social Networking marketing is an excellent tool that businesses are using to get exposure at a much lower cost than any other means of traditional marketing. Everything is just one click and one post away.
5. **Builds the Brand:** It is possible to build the new brand and also existing brand among the world. By creating advertisements and promotions they can sell the products faster and easier.

Residential location and usage behaviour of social networking sites:

The users of social networking depends on rural as well as urban areas. The people of Urban areas receives the benefit of science and technology. At the same time rural area people's depends upon the nature as well as technology. The usage behavior of social networking classified in the table.

Table 1: Residential Location and Usage Behaviour of Social Networking Sites

S. No	Residential location	No. of Respondents	%	Mean	Min	Max	S.D
1	Urban	447	67.3%	66.47	26	99	18.987
2	Rural	217	32.7%	62.82	26	97	20.924
	Total	664	100.0%				

The table 1 shows that the 67.3 % users are belongs to urban users and 32.7% users belongs to rural background. The above analysis infers that the usage are high by the Urban people.

Acceptance of social networking advertising and independent variables:

Youth today are highly dependent on technology and rely on the satisfaction of "likes" and "re-tweets" for the feeling of acceptance. Social media brings us false self-esteem, a lack of independence, and determines our ranking of popularity. Perhaps, the urge to be accepted by society lies within the fingertips of our so-called "friends" and "followers". Hence, the acceptance of social networking was studied by Multiple Regression Analysis. It permits researcher to summarize the linear relationship

among the two or more independent variables and a dependent variable. The unstandardized regression equation permits values of Y to be predicted from the independent variables in the original units of variables. The analysis is done for the acceptance of social networking advertising that the respondents intend to accept. The predictors selected for this analysis are gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, family type, size of family, monthly income, residential location, usage hours, usage behaviour and the dependent variable is acceptance of social networking advertising.

Table 2: ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10002.605	11	909.328	13.710	.000 ^b
	Residual	43243.371	652	66.324		
	Total	53245.976	663			
a. Dependent Variable: acceptance of social networking advertising						
b. Predictors: (Constant), usage period, age, residential location, occupation, family type, marital status, gender, size of family, education, monthly income						

The table 2 ANOVA "F" statistic is 13.710 with "p" value of 0.000. Hence it is inferred that this level is maintained so that all the variables included in the equation are not considered again for removal.

Brand attitude of social networking user's factor analysis:

Brand association and brand attitude strength share several similarities. Both are psychological constructs that reference a brand. Both involve assessments of 'strength' (i.e., of the bond or the attitude). Both assume that high levels of their respective constructs are based on substantial processing regarding the brand. Both have implications for marketing relevant consumption behaviors, such as brand purchase, repeat purchase, and

willingness to recommend a brand. Use social media platforms to publish information that will help consumers understand the mechanics of a brand better. New media are continually offering new opportunities for identity programs. Social media in particular is ripe with new places for innovation. Hence, the brand attitude of social networking users was studied with the help of factor analysis. Variables relating to brand attitude of social networking users are given below.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics – Brand Attitude of Social Networking Users

S. No	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
1	I can recognize brand features through Social Networking advertisements	4.21	.966	664
2	When I see advertisements in Social Networking, many featured products immediately come to my mind.	4.02	.868	664
3	The symbols/logos of brands seen in Social Networking remains in my mind	4.04	1.011	664
4	Brands in Social Networking are trustworthy	4.02	1.091	664
5	I rely on the brands that are shown in Social Networking.	3.71	1.147	664
6	Brands in Social Networking are enticing	3.47	1.202	664

The number of cases used in the analysis is 664 sample users of social networking. The factor analysis is being conducted on the correlations (as opposed to the covariances), it is not much of a concern that the variables have very different means and/or standard deviations (which is often the case when variables are measured on different scales). In this analysis all the brand attitude factors put together to 6 items given in the questionnaire were selected for factor analysis by using principle component extraction with an orthogonal (Varimax) rotation. For the sake of convergent validity, 0.50 was used as a loading factor cut-off point. The researcher rotated the components 3 times to get the significant variables under six factors. The following KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measures of sampling adequacy in the study are 0.618 and hence the factors that form the variables are most suitable.

Social Networking is a Bane:

Nowadays people are involved so much in the virtual world of Social Networking they tend to forget about the real world. The valuable and face to face interaction, i.e. the social life of the people are weakening. Many a time people spend time talking to people on Facebook than to someone sitting next to them because of which interaction between the family members in their own house has been reduced. People have lots of friends in online media, some of whom they might have never met in real life, i.e. strangers, which in turn may be a threat to some. Certain peoples misused the social networking to abuse and bully another person.

Social Networking which has a negative impact on the health of users. Reduction in physical activity affects the health. Prolonged watching, adversely affecting eyes because of the glare from laptop, mobile, tablets etc. Hacking into the personal information creates a real problem nowadays, they fake the Id's, get bank details, etc. Some of the fake news has created lots of unrest in the society. The Celebrities are the regular victims of such fake news. Business has also tasted the side effect, consumers can post negative comments which will affect the prospects with the new client even the competitors can spread false news of the company in terms, tarnish the

image of the company. Person's life has become an open book to anyone who is interested in getting the personal information about a person have become much reachable, in short, a person's privacy is compromised.

Constant Comparison:

People use their social profiles to project their lives as "perfect", and people increasingly compare their lives with others and think of themselves as low. It decreases their happiness levels and leads to self-esteem issues.

Threat of Hackers:

Privacy is a major drawback of Social Networking platforms and their increased use. Hacking accounts and using other person's personal information for malicious intentions has been an issue since the usage of Social Networking started and it has been only increasing passion. Social Networking helps them to enhance and manage their social lives.

Addiction:

People are becoming so addicted to Social Networking that they are spending most of their time on it instead of doing any other productive or significant work. Lots of people now prefer online conversations rather than meeting in person, which is weakening their relationships. It also affects communication skill and socialising abilities.

Health Issues:

Health is the most important aspect of one's life, and it is getting badly affected as many people spend all day in front of their computers or on their mobiles phones.

Credibility:

There are no reliable measures to check the credibility of the news and videos present on Social Networking. People easily believe and don't even think twice to check whether the news or piece of information is credible or not. Hence, thoughts of the innocent people get easily shaped and influenced by distorted information.

Online Bullying and Harassment:

Also known as cyberbullying, it's the biggest danger for people and affects them badly, especially teenagers. There is a high risk for children and teenagers from cyberstalking.

Depression:

Anxiety and depression is the most underrated disadvantage of Social Networking. Anyone who gets trolled over Social Networking or is harassed easily get into depression. The person who is trolled by Social Networking can't get out of depression easily.

Every man made invention have their own positive and negative side to it. Let us take a simple example of a knife, which is an essential tool in your household, kitchen, but it can also be used as a lethal weapon to hurt or even kill someone. In the same manner, Social Networking, if used in a properly can be a boon, If not a curse. It all depends upon how we use it and how much information we share.

When the internet was created, perhaps no one was aware of its potential. It was just a convenience for sharing of information across some computers. Starting from ARPANET in 1960, passing through TCP/IP technology, today there is a Social Networking system which brings us so close that as if time and distance stand reduced almost to zero.

Social Networking has brought the world so close that political and geographical boundaries are crumbling. Time may come when netizenship may surpass citizenship. The more people-to-people communication is, the more is the strengthening of relationships. This is the basic principle of the political concept of nation-building. In an information society, bonds grow stronger. We are now heading towards a world-order of Net-state or states. In between, an ominous development of misuse of Social Networking has cropped up.

A serious problem is that the spread of misinformation can severely impact the decision-making process. This is because we are closer in the virtual world but far away in the physical world. It was way back in 1993, a cartoon appeared in the New Yorker with the caption, "On the internet, nobody knows you're a dog". Digital culture has become so widespread that whatever appears on the Net, is readily accepted. Cross-check is almost nil. It is a dangerous trend. The children today believe more in the popular search engine than anything else. That is why fake news goes viral almost instantly through Social Networking forwards. It has a cascading effect. Not only is the problem of magnitude but also in not being able to find its source also.

In India, general elections are in progress. They are being conducted in phases because of the vastness of the area and high population density in some parts. Every political party is using Social Networking to spread information on

its policies and programs. It will be unfortunate if it, later on, turns out to be remotely controlled misinformation campaign. Social Networking is an important tool put into the hands of an ordinary person. He or she can express views without going to conventional means of mass communication like TV, radio, etc. Of all the creatures, only human beings have the faculty of expressing themselves through language, written or spoken. It is for this purpose, freedom of speech is the most basic rights protected in all democratic setup. But at the same time, it should not eat away other rights through the spread of misinformation. A coordinated regulation is necessary so that it is put to good use, not the bad.

The enthusiastic embracing of digital channels, especially those that are powered by the Internet, by users across the world is a reality today. We may refer to such technology-mediated communication as that which is carried out by the use of information communication technology (ICT), and can be contrasted to face-to-face communication. Prominent among such ICT is Social Networking.

So, what is Social Networking? A definition is probably in order. Social Networking are computer-mediated tools that allow people to create, share, or exchange information, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks (facilitated by the Internet/Intranet). Such tools provide users of the Internet unprecedented access to information, freedom to collaborate or build relationships, as well as to create and exchange user-generated content. Social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) may be considered as a subset of Social Networking. Social Networking may also include blogs and community pages that are part of company-specific websites. The enthusiastic embracing of digital channels, especially those that are powered by the Internet, by users across the world is a reality today. We may refer to such technology-mediated communication as that which is carried out by the use of information communication technology (ICT), and can be contrasted to face-to-face communication. Prominent among such ICT is Social Networking.

Users on Social Networking often wear different hats... one may choose to disclose a lot of information about oneself (e.g., blogs), or none at all (e.g., assume an avatar on a social networking site). Broadly speaking, there are probably two kinds of interactions that occur on Social Networking: a) between groups/organizations and an individual user, and b) among individual users. The nature of interaction on Social Networking often imparts a feeling of empowerment to an individual user, who is now able to find a voice that can be heard over the "might" of specific groups/organizations (e.g., companies, governments). The individual consumer/user has greater control over messages, there is lower information asymmetry, complaints are easily voiced, and the complaint redressal often speeds up (to the advantage of

the individual). While the above may be true, there may also be a sense of heightened pitch, tension between the conversing parties (e.g., companies and users), and can lead to outright aggression and trolling. Communication or interaction among individuals, similarly, may lead to productive collaborative effort, and social inclusion; but, can also spin out of control where individuals hurl hurtful messages at each other.

Let us add another layer of complexity to the above discussed scenario. Websites often collect granular data on consumers in a seamless and an unobtrusive process. Specifically, on various social networking websites, the promise of the website is that of allowing unprecedented reach and connections that is made possible by the use and adoption of information and communication technology by the firm and the user. Today, with a plethora of tools and methodologies at the disposal of these firms that operate in the virtual domain, these businesses can dip into a large ecosystem of methodologies and tools to obtain an increasingly comprehensive view of the user/consumer by capturing each click made, archiving each word ever written and noting each image posted on their websites. Companies can now use social listening tools, semiotics, and analytics to understand how consumers interact with media, messages and with each other. Such companies include virtual social networks and e-commerce firms. Such data gathering allow the website to serve personalized content to their users.

What are the implications of increasingly personalized content? Such personalized content creates “echo chambers” or “filter bubbles” for every user on that particular Social Networking or social networking website. An echo chamber is essentially an environment in which a person is likely to encounter only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own; it is an environment where an individual’s existing views are reinforced, and alternative ideas are not considered. For example, the recent series of television advertisements about the search engine Google (i.e., the “Pata hai” series) reinforce the idea of personalization of content...an individual gets to see only what interests her.

In sum, is Social Networking a boon or a bane for the society in general? Certainly, Social Networking has much to offer to the society, and we have benefitted from increased convenience in information acquisition, collaboration, conversations and communication, dialogue, engagement, purchase, and a lot more. At the same time, Social Networking has also made individuals and groups communicate in a manner that is unbecoming of them as individuals, and which has led to unwanted outcomes online as well as offline.

As a society, we need to understand that Social Networking is still new media; it is still in its infancy. For the first time, individuals have an unregulated media, where norms and laws (if any) are still evolving. So how

do we ensure that we use Social Networking that is acceptable to all? First, the responsibility of using the media rests with each of us. Every time an individual uses Social Networking, she needs to ask whether she is using the media responsibly or not. Second, are we aware of the consequences of the communication/message that we put on Social Networking? We need to think through the consequences of anything we put out or “post” on Social Networking. Third, we need to develop personal norms for what is acceptable and not acceptable communication on Social Networking.

Conclusion:

Social networking whether a boon or bane depends upon the usage of a person. If the usage is positive, the user may gather many ethical information and transaction. If not so, the user wasting their time in the social networking, the user may not grow in their field of activity as well in the relationship of family and friends. Life can be better at the time of less usage of social networking and more time in the real world.