Uses of Social Media among Students Pursuing Higher Education in Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

Social networking sites are not only popular for providing a platform for chatting, sharing scraps, videos, pictures etc. but also for discussing social issues. Social networking phenomenon has emerged over the past ten to fifteen years. In that time, social networking sites have grown from a niche to a mass online activity, in which tens of millions of internet users are engaged, both in their leisure time, and at work. However, there has been very little research on the socio-economic impact of these sites in the Indian context. The impact of social networking sites on the youth of India has been both positive as well as negative. Social networking is a phenomenon which has existed since society began. Internet medium is developing with the increased usage and understanding of how to use email, could shop online, and search the web for recipes or the long- lost instruction manual for a piece of equipment in the garage, etc. Now, internet is more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Myspace, and Orkut. These are some of the tools and technology associated with a recent phenomenon called social networking and is present everywhere. Present paper purports to examine the uses of social media among the students pursuing higher education in Uttar Pradesh. The paper is based on mainly primary data collected through field survey in city of Lucknow .

Introduction:

The use of information technology in society and particularly educational institutions has become the fashion today. It has proved to be the most effective mode and delivery mechanism. The educational programmes highlight on the new models, approaches and modes for developing educational contents, conducting of programmes, and delivery of educational inputs. Besides, effective use of technology in education sector has widened the

scope and nature of institutions with cost effective mechanism of administration, monitoring and evaluation of performance. Even, use of ICTs in education sector has improved the quality of education and more accessible to the target population.The application of information technoologies in education system has become common now days The use of ICTs in the higher education system has been also encouraged in the New Education Policy while COVID-19 pandemic has forced educational institutions to think beyond traditional boundaries of education .Thus, online mode of teaching, training and sessions of seminar , examinations, and via voice are being conducted. This may depend upon various factors including existence of ICT equipped labs, workshops, classroom and library; student's their background, nature of subject etc. The e learning process is gaining importance.

In view of the improving quality and outreach of higher education in India, ICTs have brought significant changes in teaching and learning . The traditional mode of teaching and learning are being replaced by the wider applications of ICTs. On line and virtual teaching mode is gaining importance in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. There are enormous opportunities for conducting virtual classes, teaching and training programmes with wider outreach and accessibility during the pandemic. The effective use of ICTs in higher education institutions has ensured the greater success and outcomes in the nominal cost and investment. Even , development of education contents , and delivery of education services are found more effective through the use of ICTs . The students are taking more interest in learning innovative and lucrative educational contents as audio video mode make more attraction to them. The use of information technologies also makes teachers and trainers competent to play crucial role in the educational development and social transformation. The administrators of higher education institutions find more convenient in administration of higher education services such as admissions, conduct of classes, examinations, evaluations of copies, conducting via voice, and closer and wider interactions with students as well as faculty meetings through use of ICTs and digital platforms . It makes them more transparent, with nominal cost and time. The use of information technologies in higher education institutions has positive impact on teaching, learning and research. Use of internet has widened the scope of search of information, data, and pertinent literature besides wider use of statistical and scientific tools in research. It also ensures timely updating, retrieve and access of information and its accessibility to the students and teachers.

Social networking sites are not only popular for providing a platform for chatting, sharing scraps, videos, pictures etc. but also for discussing social issues. Social networking phenomenon has emerged over the past ten to fifteen years. In that time, social networking sites have grown from a niche to a mass online activity, in which tens of millions of internet users are engaged, both in their leisure time, and at work. However, there has been very little

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research on the socio-economic impact of these sites in the Indian context. The impact of social networking sites on the youth of India has been both positive as well as negative. Social networking is a phenomenon which has existed since society began. Internet medium is developing with the increased usage and understanding of how to use email, could shop online, and search the web for recipes or the long- lost instruction manual for a piece of equipment in the garage, etc. Now, internet is more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Myspace, and Orkut. These are some of the tools and technology associated with a recent phenomenon called social networking and is present everywhere

The young and youth are using social media networks not only interpersonal communication but social media sites have emerged as most effective tool for learning, knowledge sharing and education. In the context of Covid-19, the way and methods of teaching and learning in educational institutions from primary stage to higher education have replaced traditional approaches towards ICT. Social networking sites, IT platforms and other ICT tools are gaining momentum for effective information dissemination, knowledge sharing, learning and teaching. Even educational and training institutions are organizing online classes, training sessions, webinars and other academic sessions. This has widened the scope of international collaboration, vast networking, wider interaction and knowledge sharing. Thus, government has also promoting ICT use in educational institutions and providing basic infrastructure for online teaching and learning. The growth of social networking sites shows a significant change in the social and personal behavior of Internet users. Social networking sites have become an essential medium of communication and entertainment among the young adults. Though it has started to affect the daily activities of normal human beings, the popularity of social networking sites is not going to reduce in near future. Everything in this world can be used for a bad purpose as well as for good. The rise of social networking sites connect people in new ways and enable them to empathize with each other online. Moreover, the growth of social networks sites in Indian society show a significant change in the social and personal behavior of adolescents. Even though these sites help adolescents to publicize their personal information, it also encourages them to overstate various aspects of their lives. However, these positive, aspects are not without associated risks such as identity theft and cyber blackmailing. Other adverse effects on adolescents are mood swings, attention deficits at school and addiction. Moreover, these sites serve as a platform for the adolescents to engage in some deviant acts. People can hide their real identities on social networking sites and can play with emotions and feelings. They display their best on these social networking sites creating a false sense of perfection. Social networking sites have also given rise to cyber crime. The crime has become easy, anonymous and effective on social networking sites. Emergence of cyber crime in network society has

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become a concern for researchers and thinkers all over the world. It is essential to analyze various studies and works undertaken in this area

Review of Literature:

Abbas and Singh (2014) opined that media industry in 2014 has moved away from traditional print and audio-visual domination and into the digital age with smart phones being the key to ushering in innovative technology, creativity and high-speed communication. Manjunath (2013) said that the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) has significantly increased in India particularly among the Indian college students and it certainly has far reaching impacts on the academic and other activities of the students. Kavita (2015) has highlighted that in the last few years, social network media have spread widely all over the world and are used by various users for several reasons and purpose. Jain (2017) has highlighted that social media is considered as ultimate tool of marketing communication. It connects with online arena and spread the information of products and services. Ahmed (2011) opined that social network offers people great convenience for social networking. It allows people to keep in touch with friends, reconnect with old friends, meet new people, and even conduct business online. The social network is rising not even in India, all over the World. Deshmukh et.al (2014) opined that online social networking has achieved an exceptional global growth over the last decade by attracting much attention from all age group people. It is a known fact that young adults and teenagers are the most avid users of such sites. Jothi et.al (2011) highlighted that Internet is the emerging information technology with the credibility of immediacy and fastness, thus, it brings globalization in every aspects of communication. Communication through internet is more specified, with effective interactive strategy among its users. In recent days, internet advertising has taken new forms which have more advantages over the traditional mediums like print media, television and radio. Marketing communication is becoming precise, personal, interesting, interactive and social. Different strategies of communication are followed in various social networking sites like Face book, Twitter and Orkut. Bhagwat and Gautam (2013) said that social networks are groups of people, or communities, who share a common interest, perspective, or background. Mathew (2013) opined that the period of 2010 to 2013 has been an eventful period for social media. Several new networking sites became popular (WhatsApp, Google Plus, Instagram), the usage base grew by leaps and bounds, and Facebook bought over some of its competition. The growth of social media along with the rapid growth of smart phone usage has also made a great impact on various facets of our lives. Siddiqui and Singh (2013) highlighted that Social media plays a vital role in transforming people's life style. Social media includes social networking sites and blogs where people can easily connect with each other. Since the emergence of these social

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networking sites like Twitter and Facebook as key tools for news, journalists and their organizations have performed a high-wire act. Bhardwaj et. al (2017) highlighted that the extensive use of Social Networking in India has been on the rise among the new generation youths. In today's world, life cannot be imagined without Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn or Twitter accounts and online handles. Isodje (2014) presented an overview on the use of social media for business promotion, since social media as an online collaborative platform has the power to impact cultures and business. Mamta et al. (2016) tested for affiliation that exists between Higher Education and Social Networking Site. Purva et al. (2015) presented that online social networking like Facebook and Twitter have the fastest means of communication and having gained wide popularity, have revolutionized interpersonal communications by providing a platform to individuals for expressing themselves at a global level, beyond their immediate geography. Davmane et al. (2015) analyzed the factors for the online social networking sites as per users' behavior regarding user friends, the peer groups, access patterns, amount of time spend, the effect on personal and professional life. Singh et al. (2014) presented the research effort in ensuring awareness about the social networking site concept, merits, demerits and meaning. Purti at al. (2016) focused on Big Data Management for Social Networking Sites by review and analysis of how Big Data is being managed for social networking sites by Facebook and Twitter. Kumar et al. (2016) proposed a sentiment analysis method on the tweets in Cloud environment and utilized Hadoop for intelligent analysis and storage of big data on Facebook and Twitter. The reason is that handling huge amount of unstructured data is a tedious task to take up. The current Analytics tool and models used that are available in the market are not sufficient to manage big data. Mittal et al. (2016) analyzed the effects of online shared sentiments of emoticons, interjections and comments extracted from posts and status updates. Shang et al. (2015) investigated why and how people use location sharing services on social networking platforms in China. Muhammed et al. (2017) reviewed research papers from 2010 to 2016 on Sybil attacks regarding use of fake and malicious identities on the online social network. Zhou et al. (2017) proposed a unique system called Pro Guard for detecting malicious identity accounts in financial institutions dealing online with real and virtual currency. Kiliroor et al. (2017) presented a trust analysis system for online social networks to improve privacy and approval process for authentic social network site users. Wang et al. (2016) proposed use of a probabilistic model for detecting identity thefts on social networking when using mobiles over unsecure Internet. Baruah (2012) highlighted that social media can be effective for building social authority; individuals or organizations can establish themselves as experts in their fields, and then they can begin to influence these fields. Jain and Gupta (2012) opined that social networking sites provide a platform for discussion on such issues as

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it is this media which majority mass rely on and extend warm support. Parvathi and Suchitra (2015) have made detailed analysis of what activities the youth population involved with social networking sites. Sarkar et. al. (2015) opined that social networks have undergone an intense evolution in recent years.

Objectives and Methods:

- To study the mode, usage and timings of engagement of students in social media ;

- To examine the attitudinal change among the students regarding information technology and social media, social networking sites and interpersonal relationships.

The present paper is based on a major research study. The study is empirical in nature and based on mainly primary data collected through field survey. Lucknow city has been selected in the study. Overall, about 500 students pursuing different courses from higher education institutions were surveyed with the help of structured interview schedule.

Discussion of Results:

Most of the respondents reported that they have opened their account on whatsApp, face book and youtube. About half of the respondents further reported that they have opened their account on twitter while about more than $1/4^{th}$ respondents had their accounts in skype and LinkedIn. About $3/4^{th}$ respondents revealed that they are associated with less than 10 social networking sites. However, about $1/3^{rd}$ undergraduate respondents were found assonated with 10-20 social networking sites(Chart1).

**Chart 1: How Many Social Networking Sites You Are Associated With**
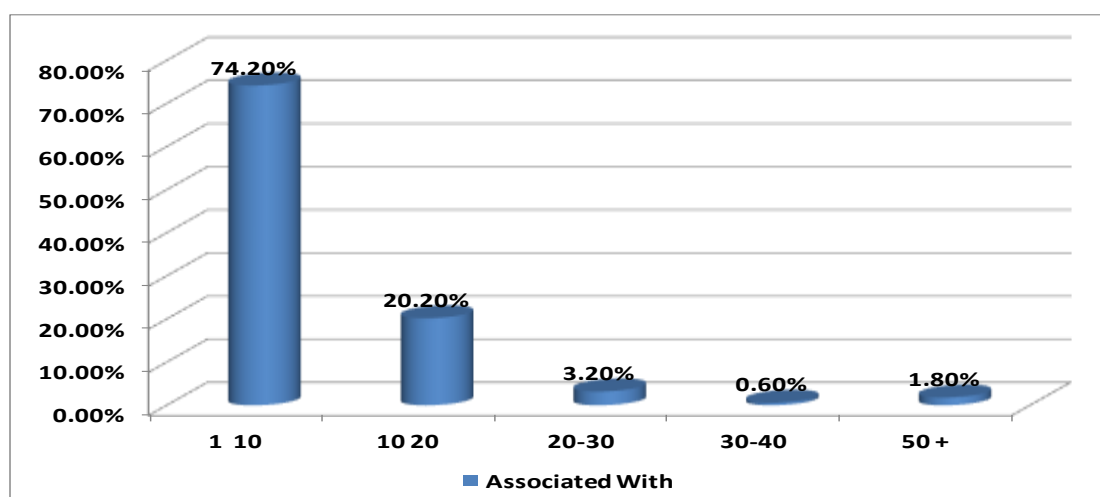
More than $3/4^{th}$ respondents revealed that they are getting access of their social networking accounts through use of smart phone. About 20 per cent respondents revealed that they get access to their social networking account through their lap top. However, a higher proporiton of research scholars revealed that they get access to their social networking accounts through their personel computers and lap top (Chart 2).

**Chart 2: How Do You Access Your Social Networking Account**
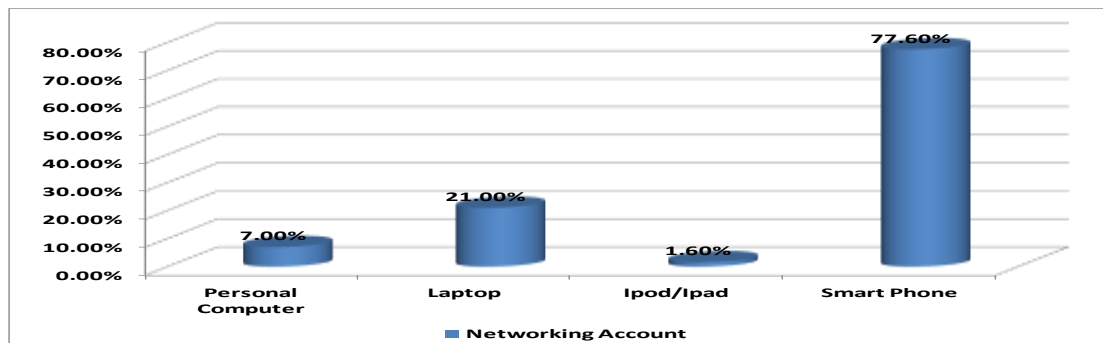
About 1/4th respondents reported that they are using social networking sites for less than one year. It was found more pronouncing among the undergraduates and research scholars. About 1/3rd respondents reported that they using social networking sites from 1-3 years. It was found more pronouncing among postgraduate respondents (38.9 per cent). Thus, about 2/5th respondents were found using social networking sites for more than 3 years. It was found more pronouncing among the graduates followed by diploma holders (Chart 3).

**Chart 3: How Long You Are Using Social Networking Sites**
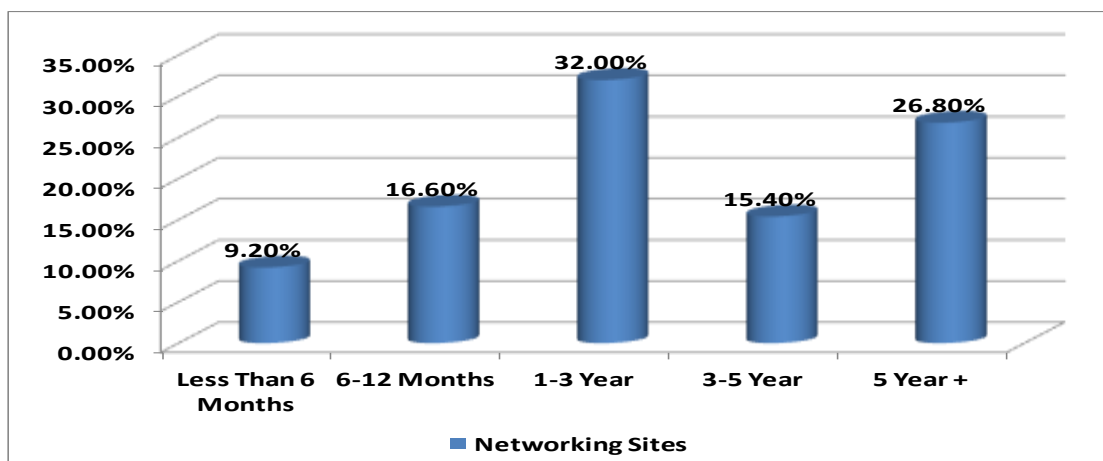
About 2/5th respondents reported that on an average they spend 1-2 hours daily on social networking sites. It was found more pronouncing among the undergraduates (52.7 per cent) followed by research scholars (38.3 per cent). About 1/3rd respondents further reported that they are spending 2-5 hours daily on social netowkring sites. It was found more pronouncing among the graduates (46.5 per cent) followed by diploma holders (40 per cent) (Chart 4).

Chart 4: On An Average How Much Time Do You Spend Daily On Social Networking Sites
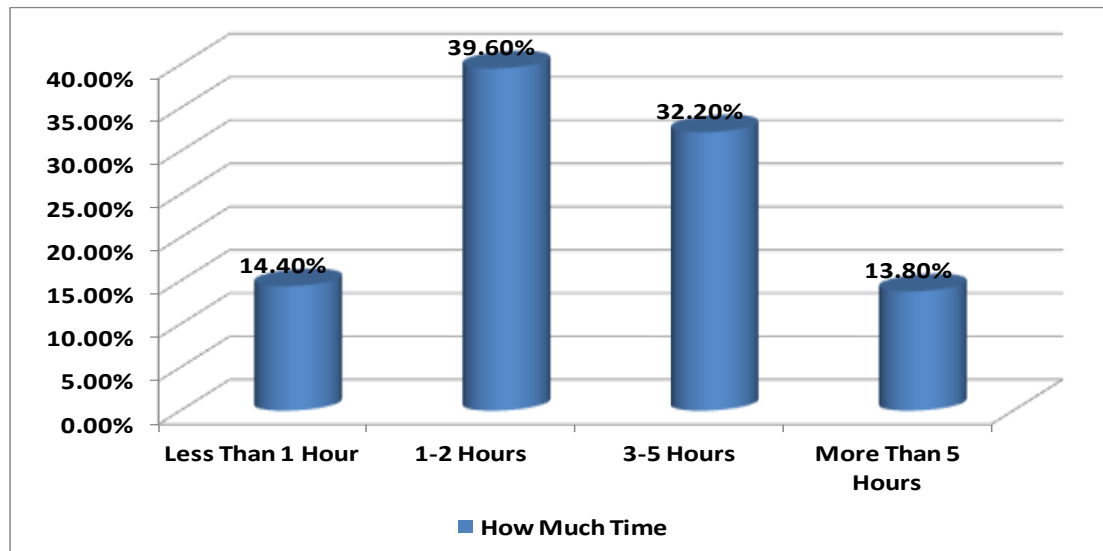
About 61 per cent respondents reported that they have more than 50 contacts / friends on their social networking sites. It was found more pronouncing among diploma holders (85 per cent) followed by postgraduates (66 per cent). About 28 per cent respondents reported that they have less than 30 contacts on their social networking sites (Chart 5) .

Chart 5: How Many Contacts/Friends Do You Have On Social Networking Sites
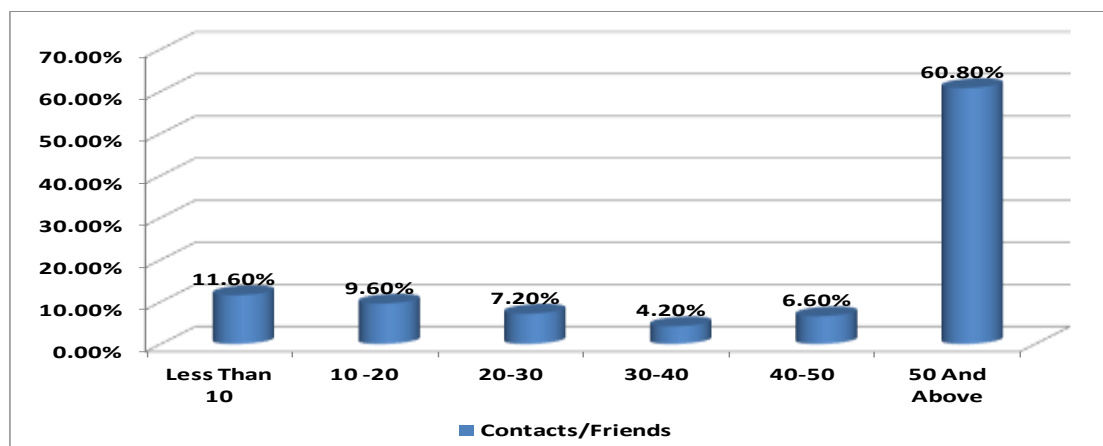
The respondents were asked that how they use online social networking. Information

search, keep in touch with family and friends, making new friends, sharing videos/ pictures and movies, making professional and business contacts and sharing experience of some of the main uses of online social networking. About 47 per cent respondents reported that online networking somewhat effect face to face communication. It was found more pronouncing among research scholars (66 per cent) followed by undergraduates (62.6 per cent). About 1/3rd respondents revealed that online networking does not affect face to face communication. However, about 22 per cent respondents admitted that online networking has replaced mostly face to face communication. It was found more pronouncing among the diploma holders (85 per cen) followed by graduates (25.6 per cent). About 90 per cent respondents were found agreed and strongly agreed on the view point that social media has replaced traditional mode of communication. However, a higher proportion of graduate and postgraduate respondents were against the view point (Chart 6).).

Chart: 6: Whether Social Media Has Replaced Traditional Mode of Communication
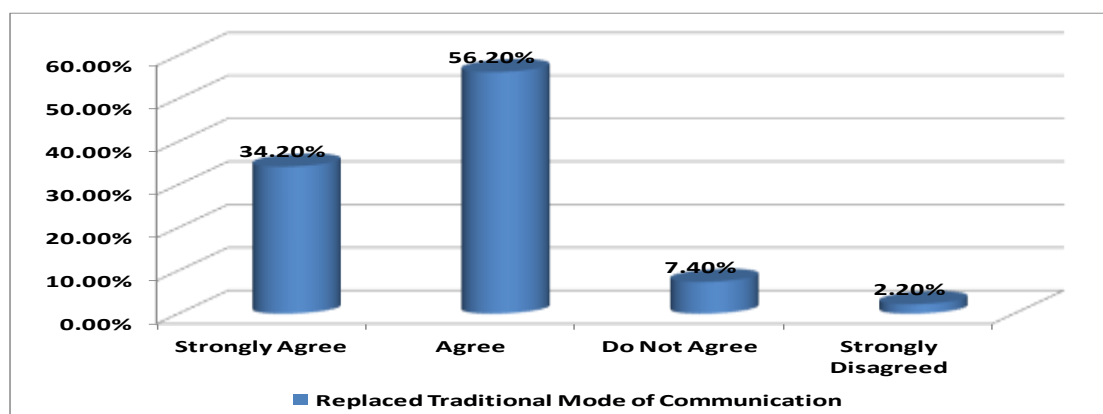
About 87 per cent respondents were found agreed and strongly agreed on the view point that social networking is effective for e-learning and educational development. However, about 15 per cent postgraduate respondents and a significant proportion of under graduate and graduate respondents were against the view point. . About 2/3rd respondents admitted that their parents support them for using social networking sites. However, about half of graduate respondents and more than 2/5th research scholars were against the view point.

Conclusion:

Social media plays a vital role in transforming people's life style. Social media includes social networking sites and blogs where people can easily connect with each other. Social Networking involves the use of the internet to connect users with their friends, family and acquaintances. Social Networking websites are not necessarily about meeting new people online, although this does happen. Instead, they are primarily about connecting with friends, family and acquaintances you already have in real life. These sites allow you to share

photos, videos and information, organize event chat download music and even play games like Scrabble, Chess online. Often each of your friends, family or acquaintances will be friends with several other friends. Just like in real life, the connections between people aren't just one-on-one but a network of connections. This online social networking is very useful in spreading information, pictures and videos. Internet use has grown considerably in the last decade. Social media is influencing every walk of life including social relations, society, politics, economics and business. The technological deterministic view presents the internet as an innovative force that has profound influence on children and youth; technology generates new patterns of expression, communication, and motivation**.**The social media like Blogs, LinkedIn, facebook, twitter, Skype, etc. are playing a very important role in consumer buying behavior, decision making process directly and indirectly. In recent trend of innovation in management and marketing social media become powerful and cost effective approach to promote products to consumer. The social media has affected every walk of life and youth are also not um –affected. Their communication, way of life and social relations have widely affected by social mead.

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