A Brief Study On Negative Effects of Social Media On Youth

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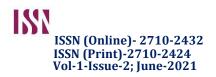*Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow, India*

Abstract
We live in a digital era where social media has revolutionized the way people think and lead their lives. Youths are the most prolific and prominent users or consumers of social media platforms and hence are the most vulnerable to its negative and dangerous effects. There are several physical and psychological effects of social media that have a negative impact on youngsters. Freedom of expression in social media comes with certain responsibilities and when one uses social media to negatively mobilize the youth it kill it's credibility to some extent. Utilization of social media can be as good or as bad the person using it. It's nearly impossible to neglect and ignore the negative and dark side of social media and it's dangerous impact on youth. Negative impacts can plague all strata of a society, i.e. social, economical, religious, political, etc. Youth are vulnerable to the dark sections of cyberspace and social media. With slight negligence and ignorance instead of social media platforms being used by youths the relationship can go the other way round. It's easier for notorious groups of people to sit behind the screens and manipulate and coerce the youth.Social media is a broad term and has become an ever evolving phenomenon. Social media still holds uncharted threatening territories that can have a degrading impact of young minds. There is still lack of digital literacy regarding the dangers it encompasses, among the youths, who are the most active and prolific users of social media platforms.Social media are integrated with almost all social, political, religious and other structures of society and hence have a powerful impact on youths. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, etc. should be used with responsibility.

Keywords: Facebook, Responsibility, Social Media, Youth

1. Introduction

Need for social interaction is so deeply imbedded in human behavior that we thrive on it. Without which any kind of progress seems to remain stagnant. Social Media serves as a platform for interaction with the world. And with interaction anyone is exposed to certain threats as well as benefits. Social media refers to all online platforms that either allow the world to have a conversation with each other or itself establishes a conversation with its consumers or audiences. Social media is the most potent form of mass communication medium in the contemporary time. No doubt social media has established it's benefits, which can never be ignored. But it's easy and convenient access, mobility, technological inclination, a wide and far reaching exposure, digital nature that allows anonymity makes the youth (who are among the largest consumers and users of social media) equally vulnerable to its negative impacts as well. Social media still lack credibility and the youths who are not equipped with the proper education and information to use social media with responsibility and caution often become victims of one or the other cyber crimes. In several instances the mislead or desperate youths become the culprits as well. When and if used without responsibility and accountability, social media can prove to be a dangerous potential weapon with devastating outcomes. Youth of any country are the torch bearers of change, and it depends on them if they use the social media which has such immense potential in a constructive or a destructive manner.With the advent of technological advancements and new inventions in the field of computer and internet technologies, social media has gained a momentum in its use and revolution over the years after the second world war. Social media usage has gained such a momentum that the fabric of

society has now begun to depend on social media for social interaction. But along with the benefits social media brings certain threats in its wake. Youngsters access social media on a regular basis and least concerned about the dangers associated with it. These dangers seem to be less obvious to them, than they are. Identity theft, privacy concerns, national and regional security, spread of fundamentalism and communal discord, cyber terrorism, cyber threats, dangerous effects of fake information, polarization of youth, igniting of life threatening mob behavior, FOMO, unrealistic expectations, etc. are ground realities of social media usage and not just myths or possibilities.
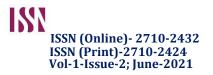
2. Objective

The main aim of this paper is to enumerate and throw some light on the negative aspects and effects of social media and its use on youth. The paper focuses on elaborating the dangers associated with the growing virtual world and the ignorance of people towards the need of having a digital literacy and better knowledgeor understanding of something they use on a daily basis and are still unaware of the dangers it attracts.To established that in the current technological era social media has become an inseparable part of the lives of the youngsters and though it has made the lives of people easy and convenient yet it has exposed the very people to unprecedented threats and crimes, and youngsters are more likely to ignore the obvious signs of approaching dangers that accompany this new and ever evolving world of social media and Internet.Social media attracts all kinds of criminals and crimes and gives them a convenient and easily accessible platform to carry out their evil intentions. Social media affect the youth, both physically and psychologically. Any and almost all modern day technological advancements concerning social interactions have made the world into an integrated and connected network, creating numerous new possibilities. Youngsters use social media and jeopardize their security and privacy in the process. There are a great number of opportunistic vultures waiting for youngsters on social media platforms to take advantage of their naivety and lack of social media usage wisdom and knowledge. Social media is an unmarked and less explored territory, especially in terms of safety. It can cause social, economic, physical, psychological and political damage if not used with necessary precaution. Youth are the future of any nation and social media future of mass communication, it is important to secure the relationship between them and study the negative effects of social media platforms on youth.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA: IT'STYPES AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON YOUTH AND THE DEGRADING PATTERN THAT FOLLOWS

Social media itself is an umbrella term for its numerous application used for interaction among its users, spread all over the internet or web. Snapshot, Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, Twitter, WhatsApp, Wikipedia, Discussion, Forums, YouTube, Blogs, Blogs, etc. are a few very common and popular social networking sites and applications. In a country like India, where a major portion of the population is young and key users of such social media platforms for sharing different types of content, the negative effects of the use of social media platforms are more potent because generally these youngsters are not cautious and irresponsible while doing the same. Knowledge is power and social media by the means of dissemination of information allows or gives opportunity for people to harness this power. Any kind of power is as good or as bad as the person using it or the purpose it is being used for. Similarly, social media holds great potential both constructive and destructive. Social media connects billions of users worldwide through its numerous platforms. Some of them these connections can be dangerous and unpredictable. The pervasive nature of social media. Pervasive nature and wide acceptance of social media all around the globe makes it technology of tomorrow. The future seems to be mobile phone and other new portable media. The convergence of traditional media into smartphones can already be witnessed. Social media now seems to be more strongly integrated with mainstream media platforms, and its highly interactive

nature makes it more acceptable among the youths. It gives voice to those who don't have one on different matters.

3.1 SOME OF THE MOST DANGEROUSAND NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUTH
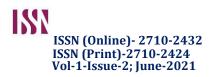
3.1.1 Cyber Bullying-

Cyber bullying is bullying people face on social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, messaging, online communities, discussion threads and forums, etc. via the use of the internet. It includes sending offensive comments, text or images, GIFs, animation, audio or videos to humiliate, intimidate, and ridicule the receiver or receivers. Cyber bullying can further take many forms like trolling, cyber stalking, hate speech, etc. Present era allows almost each and every person to freely and openly express himself or herself through the medium of social media outlets. But at the same time most people are not very good at taking criticism with dignity and they lash out on the criticizer in the most offensive way possible. Practice of search hate speeches very much prevalent among younger users of social media the lack of patience and experience makes a large number of youngsters the offenders of hate speech on different social media platforms. The sheer ignorance of consequences due to lack of knowledge about cyber laws and the country allows certain youths to have an unruly and careless attitude while blabbering insensitive and contagious hate speeches and comments on different social media platforms. Trolling is another type of cyberbullying which can be witnessed in contemporary times. It is kind of a targeting of a person for something said by him/her on social media either by his or her followers or other people on the particular social media platform in an attempt to humiliate and/or threaten the very person for the same. Cyberstalking is also kind of cyberbullying, where the offender stalks or threatens a person through different social media platforms invading his or her personal space and peace of mind. At times such cyberstalking and harassment even leads to drastic consequences such as' Suicide' by the victim, out of fear of humiliation and mental disturbance. The feature of anonymity provided by different social media platforms facilitates cyberbullying to a great extent. It is very difficult for one to identify the offender let alone bring them to justice. Social media still lack accountability and in such a case, it's easier for the bullies carry on their unruly and dangerous behavior on social media without considering the grave consequences it can have on others lives. Cyber bullying of turn leads to the development of inferiority complex among the youngsters who fall prey to these bullies.Victims of cyber bullying like hate speech and trolling often refrain themselves from further using this social media platform. Such youngsters who are the victim of one or the other kind of cyber bullying become emotionally isolated and are frightful in expressing their fears and bad experiences out of the fear of being ridiculed if they did.

3.1.2 Jeopardizing Privacy-

Social media has made it possible and easier to share anything and everything happening in one's life. Youths are more likely to share their entire life of on social networking sites. Moreover, each and every application that the tech savvy young generation downloads or installs on their android devices or computers seeks permission to access to or the other crucial information, like –one's contact's details, storage permission, location access, etc. Certain application even seek permission to access the camera and mic. Most of these applications won't even work if not granted these permissions. Since most of the users or consumers of social media are youngsters and they lack the experience and do not understand the dangers that are associated with dissemination of one's private information to unauthorized and notorious people and organizations. This makes these youth vulnerable and most of the times victims of certain cyber crimes, such as –
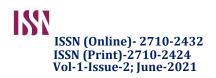
a) **Spoofing** -Where the receiver of the email has no idea about the actual source of the message.Almost every social networking site needs one to log in to use it. The user in such a case needs to have an account and will eventually have share his/her mail id. The notorious elements this way can easily prey on youngsters, as they are easily fooled and believe such mails to be from the original source and without a second thought share private and important information or details about themselves in the provided form. Sometimes the main aim of email spoofing is to get the recipients to open, and possibly respond to the mail. Which can be a threat, blackmail, solicitation, or any other threat that might somehow intimidate them.

b) **Spamming -** Various automated programs that fish for email addresses and with their help it becomes easy for the spammers to create a message distribution list and send no. of mails or messages at once in bulk, with the hope of getting possible responses and manipulate the responder into providing valuable information like contact details, bank details, work related information, etc. Spams are generally called junk mail, because technically that's what they are. These don't only waste the youngsters time, but also make them the victim of different kinds of online scams and forgery. Since, the youths are not wise enough to think twice before responding to any mail or message and the Internet is all public so it's practically near to impossible to prevent this. Spamming is not just limited to emails, comment spamming very much prevalent on Facebook, where one can witness unnecessary and unrelated comments on posts in the comment sections, once in a while one or the other person falls prey to them. Messages spamming is also a problem on WhatsApp and other messengers. Though several applications now provide the option of reporting such messages as spam. Some of the most common type of social media spamming are keyword and mega tag stuffing, mirror websites, hidden links or hyperlinks, unsought page redirects, gateway or doorway pages, link spamming, code swapping, etc.

c) **Cyber Stalking -** Youngster who are new to social media hardly anyone is not there for parents from a very young age provide their children with smartphones, which keeps them engaged or busy and they can carry on their business as usual. Cyber Stalking is yet another type of threat associated with the use of social media by the youth. It is a serious crime where the offender harasses or threatens his or her victim via. Different kinds of cyber communication tools. Unlike spamming cyberstalking focuses on a single victim at a time and is more threatening in nature. The perpetrator might attack his/her victim through different social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Instant messaging, WhatsApp, Emails, Text Messages or any other online method. At times this online threat leads to serious real life dangerous as well, where the culprit, studies the victim through his/her social media profiles on different platforms to get the idea of their whereabouts, before actually attacking or harming him or her in real life. Since most of the youngsters have a very detailed online profile and post even the most minute details of their day to day events on social media, therefore it becomes easier for the criminal to follow his/her victim and facilitates the crime. Such a threat forces the young victims to isolate themselves from others, even their own families and kills their confidence and peace of mind. This harassment and mental torture hampers their productivity in their work. It also creates a social distrust among the young social media users, since these young adolescents have the only real contact with their online connections and when betrayed by them, they perceive the real world to be the same. This makes such youngsters to refrain from having any real life contact as well due the fear of being misused or cheated.

3.1.3 Identity Theft–
Identity theft is basically posing as someone else in front of others, stealing someone's identity refers to forging someone's credentials as one's own by an offender.Social media is no more limited

to just connect with people of similar interests. With technological advancements and up gradation of social networking sites, they have been now integrated with almost all the social, security, and financial aspects of life. Youths are nowadays more dependent on social media for almost all kinds of activities. And for social media has now become a playground for criminals, it's very easy now for perpetrators to forge false identities or steal someone's social profile and pose as them to either commit fraud against them or anyone they know. A fraudster has all the information from your bio on social networking sites and can easily make a fake duplicate account. Most of the young generation is tech savvy and uses social media very often for net banking, where through phishing it is very easy to trick them into sharing certain confidential details, like bank account details, Aadhaar details, Pan Card details, Driving license details, etc.with the fraudster posing some other person or organization.Most of the youngsters do not understand the gravity of Identity theft on social media it is more than just posing as someone else on social media for fun it has some serious consequences like being glued into word trap and losing all your hard earned money to some perpetrator if someone forces your identity and a crime say draining someone else's bank account into their , forging someone's identity to harass someone onlineand/or blackmailing them to pay a certain amount in exchange of not sharing personal details online, for example – Personal Images, Personal or Private Chats, or any other official details to intimidate the victim.

Defamation through identity theft is a very common occurrence and embarrassing for an individual or organization. Though India has pretty strong defamation laws, yet the cyber nature of formation makes it difficult to distinguish relation from other crimes related to social media. When it comes to youths, defame or attack on their identity to post vulgar or threatening content, often leads to suicide attempts out of the fear of shame and ridicule that follows. If some offender posts explicit or other personal details, images, chats, etc. online, it would become an unnecessary and embarrassing spectacle for the person who's fake or forged identity has been used to do so. Hacking into someone's social media accounts and posting as that person is also a kind of identity theft.
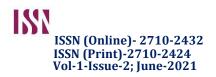
Offenders of identity theft very often create fake accounts on social networking sites with imaginary details, like name, contact and address details, profile pictures, etc. to create an image of legitimate account. Inexperienced and naïve youth are the most vulnerable to fall victims to dangerous and notorious motives of these criminals.Many a times no. of trolls on social media create false social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc. to harass and torment people. The youths are not just the victims of threats associated with the irresponsible and extensive use of social media, but sometimes also the perpetrators of such crimes. And most of the times due to being exposed to cyber media from quite an early age these young offenders a quite good and experts at evading the justice or police and laws. They know all the loopholes within the cyber laws of the country and are meticulous while forging social media accounts or creating fake accounts.

3.1.2 Negative Effects of Social Media in Education-

Youngsters nowadays are almost at all times glued to their smart phones or computers, specifically on social media. Long gone are the times when children and youngsters used to read stories in books, newspapers and magazines the traditional way. Now the convergence of different media on a single platform, i.e. one's smart phone and technological advancements have created such an interactive multimedia platform that students are more attracted towards.

a) **Poor Time Management** – Though there is a lot of information present on different websites and social media platforms but it's not always useful. Many youngsters waste their precious time surfing the net and scrolling social media news feeds watching or reading unnecessary and
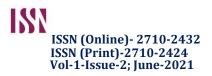
unimportant content. Youngsters of certain age are not wise enough to evenly distribute their time to both studies and other activities, specially while using their smartphones for either purpose. Though youth are the most prolific users of social media yet they get carried away and loose the sight of real purpose of using social media and instead of feeding their need of keeping in touch, social interaction or to gain information they get addicted to social media and all they want to know what's happening online, irrespective of if it should concern them or not. Young students in general rely on several websites in social media to find answers to what intrigues them, but due to their dependence on social media specifically for these answers they lose their learning and retaining ability to some extent. Rather than remembering by the habit reading and analyzing they start depending on readymade solutions and explanations.

b) **Youth are Unable To Differentiate Between Credible and Non-Credible Information -**One can never be sure of the credibility of the source providing the information on social media or the internet in general and hence for students it is not wise to rely on the information provided by them. But several students depend on social media for news and other valuable information. Youngsters turn to social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp for news, because that's what is convenient to them. But the unregulated nature of the content of these social networking sites tends to misguide the youth. If a youth is exposed to misleading or false information, it can act as a detractor later in life affecting the quality of education one is receiving, because most of the youths rely more on smartphones and social networking websites, E-Books than traditional books to study. Which can very easily kill their confidence in their knowledge and education.

c) **Social Media Acts As a Distraction -** It is another issue that affects the concentration of youngsters towards studies. The urge to constantly and continuously look at the mobile screen, in the fear of missing out something important makes their studies suffer as it makes it impossible for them to focus on their education. As a result, many students score considerably low scores in their academics, which further affects their higher education. A great number of adolescents fail to develop reading and grasping abilities. Since social media is omnipresent, it's almost impossible to evade it's tight grip for teenagers and youth, and as a result, they are caught in the loop of jumping from one social networking site to another without any scope of breaking free. Social media being an ever expanding and ever evolving territory, makes it impossible to not be attracted to it. The multimedia facilities make social media more attractive and easy to lure youngsters into spending more time online.

3.1.3 Drastic Effects on Youth of CheapGlory and Insensitive Content on Social Media-

Attention seeking behavior on social media is very common for youngsters nowadays. Since we humans are a social species and it is necessary for our sustenance. But extreme attention seekers very often go to unhealthy lengths and become a danger not only for their own self but others as well. The social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc. have provided us with the tools to quantify the amount of attention one gets on different social media platforms (for example - the number of likes, shares, comments, etc.). The number of followers on any social media platform simply means how many people will come across anything and everything one post online. Though no technological advancement can ever be blamed for human stupidity, but when one sees people going into a frenzy for 'likes', 'shares' and 'comments' on their post on different social media platforms, in a single peek it seems like social media does more harm than good to youths. But utility of any social media platform or tool to a great extent depends on the user. Many users of social media post gory, explicit, and other insensitive content, images, videos and text on social media only to set their attention seeking desire. Some of the
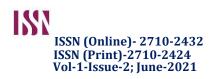
attention seeking practices followed on social media for garnering cheap glory is as follows-

a) **Accidents and/ Natural Disaster Images and Videos –**It is important not to confuse irresponsible sharing of insensitive graphic images or videos by citizens with the sharing of difficult images taken by specialized and trained photojournalist.For example –Sharing of graphic images of road accidents is totally different from sharing of war images/video or other sensitive content, with a possible prior warning. The two things are not one and the same. The latter is a trained personnel and equipped with sufficient information to understand the gravity of any situation, and what effects it would have to share such content. They can differentiate between the content that will create awareness and content that will be too graphic and create a frenzy. While the former usually has no idea about the far reaching effects of sharing such content without proper precaution. Citizen journalism is quite a popular and the most misused term used for such unaccountable and inexperienced sharing of this type of content, especially in social media. Nearly everybody has access to smartphones now, and almost every smart phone has a camera and mic. Youngsters are the most active contributor of social media content, but on the other hand, they lack wisdom to distinguish between what might pump up some adrenaline into them can actually be psychologically and emotionally harmful to others. Unlike the photo journalists the youths don't understand the courtesy of seeking permission from the deceased's family, before taking images of a dead body. These youths don't understand the gravity of psychological or mental damage such content do to not only family members of the deceased but the viewers as well. This also makes these youths lose their empathy in the excitement of getting maximum possible likes, shares and comments on different social media platforms. Matter of life and death becomes a game of likes and dislikes for them.Apart from this certain youth without giving a second thought to the fact that what an immense emotion turbulence certain images or imagery can create in the minds of sensitive audiences, share images ofnatural disasters or the victims ofthese natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, storms,, etc. and or man made ones, like Terrorist Attacks.Firstly, such careless sharing of images of causalities of any kind of natural or man made disaster and putting a number on them without any official confirmation creates unrest and an atmosphere of fear. Secondly, it also acts as a threat to national security, both internal and external of a country.

b) **Indulging in Cheap Glory and Dangerous Thrills –**Almost each and every youth goes through the selfie fever. The rise in popularity of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and Snapchat has created a desire in people to capture and announce moments and events of their lives and moreover share it with a picture that serves the purposeof drawing people's attention and garnering likes and shares on Social networking sites.And the ever evolving Smartphone Technologies have converted the mobile phones into a high end camera to take still photos or make videos which has provided these youth with the perfect tool to be able to do so at their own conveniences. Very often get involved in dangerous and sometimes illegal acts to do the same. Online challenges are very popular among youth, like the Blue Whale Game, which claimed at least three lives in India. After the government intervention most of the social media platforms removed the links related to this challenge from their websites.This atrocious and challenge based online game forced the youngsters to take a 50 challenges streak, some of which are self harming and at the end one has to attempt suicide in order to complete the game. The KiKi Challenge, which involves jumping out of a moving vehicle and dancing to music along side it.Many youngsters did so with trains as well, resulting in fatalities. The sole purpose of this game seemed to garner likes and praises from followers. Though it is nothing more than a stupid and dangerous self harming act, but still many youths fell victim to this idiocy, some were fatal.
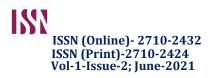
c) **Addiction To Glory and Popularity** - Apart from the online challenges there are other careless and life threatening acts that youngsters adopt to receive some cheap glory, like –Teenagers and Youth often indulge in dangerous bike and car stunts, while one of them records it and posts it online.India has one of the busiest road in the world and even the slightest mistake results into a severe accident, most probably a fatal one, because most of the youngsters are reluctant in wearing protective gears while riding bikes.Youngsters also try to make selfie livevideos while driving a car or riding a two wheeler, as result their attention gets diverted from the road or terrain and the entire thrill comes to a not so thrilling halt.Since there are no properly implemented speed limits youngsters get the high by crossing the safe limit, all for the sake of a thriller video to post online and get highest number of likes and shares, to become a sensation.Youngsters also attempt to make video of a train passing over them while they lie on the track, and friend makes the video. Taking selfie videos on high altitude places and dangerous water streams and fall is also quite popular and since no one can accurately predict the nature, it results into s foolish invitation to danger and death. There have been reported cases where entire families have been washed by a sudden rise or flow ofwater in the water streams, trying to take a selfie image or video. All this only to get some extra like and shares on different social media platforms. Youths are more susceptible to all these dangerous simply because they are the most prolific and active contributors and consumers of social media. Social media is able to have such dangerous effects on youth because the trend of it being dependent on its users has changed to the social media consumers being dependent on different social media platforms for different kinds of gratifications.

3.1.4   Loosing Real World and Family Connections –

Through social media everyone is connected with everyone but no is really having a legit connection with other. The generation gap and youngsters keeping things to themselves is nothing new but with the advent of social media and internet now they have a more appealing alternative of social networking sites where they socialize with their virtual friends in the virtual world rather than having an interactive connection with the real life family members.Youngsters are almost always at war with their own identity and place in the world and most of the time it is impossible for them to share their feelings with their family members out of the fear of being judged for how they feel or think. To such youngsters the online world seems to be more welcoming and accepting than the real world.Moreover through different social media platforms one can have interaction with number of people at any given time, like –

a) **DiscussionForums,** vast online communities are formed with several members. Thanks to the internet youngsters nowadays use such forums to have discussion on number of topics. There are many internet based interactive gaming platforms such as Counter Strike, PubG, Pokémon, etc.Where youngsters from all Around the world initiate discussions about different aspects, stages or rounds of these games. There are certain discussion groups where youngsters are very fond of talking about upcoming or popular movies or TV series. For example, there are quite a number of online forums where young fans discuss about the potential plot or twist in one of the most popular TV series in current time that is the Game of Thrones.But apart from some innocent discussion there is a DarkSide to internet there are certain online forums youngsters nowadays discuss extremely unconventional as well as dangerous topics number of discussion forums revolve around and encompass topics like suicide, where emotionally vulnerable youths get trapped into the imploding trap of self harm. Some, to the point of actually commuting suicide, while what they need the most is human interaction and help not some virtual catharsis. Many youngsters going through identity crisis or struggling with one or the other mental issues often get highly unqualified advice from these forums and if and when they act out on them, it's almost always and invitation for danger, not just to them but everyone else around them as well.
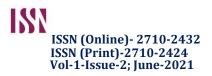
Youngsters are also susceptible to certain notorious interactions like, terrorist cells, religious fundamentalists, separatists, etc. who are always self serving and work towards mobilizing such youths with immense potential, in a wrong and possibly terminal direction with no hope of returning back. These victims of one or the other kind of manipulation, either psychological or economical are the youngsters who don't get enough attention at their homes, schools and other surrounding by those who are supposed to love them and make them feel emotionally and physically secure. When they are met with the much needed attention and affection elsewhere, the social insecurity in them makes them accept it without much thought. A big issue here is that these social media spaces are highly unregulated by responsible authorities and it is difficult to trace the source of origin of such contents. The youngsters are either overwhelmed or sucked into this wormhole of certain uncertainty to discover something self soothing or better than what they have. These forums lack proper moderation and transparency and parents or guardians are almost always unaware of what youths are getting exposed to, they have no idea about the kind of people they talk to on the forums. A youth could easily be talking to a pedophile, extreme sociopath or psychopath without even having the knowledge of what threats they are walking into by engaging with such people.

b) **Dangers of Inclination of Youth Towards Internet For Getting Rid Of Sexual Awkwardness–**Youngsters special if we talked about the youth from teenage to early twenties are in a stage of exploring the sexuality and physical needs, develop completely untruthful image of what sexual interaction is supposed to be and their expectations in turn become completely unpractical and unprecedented. Since they have a source to gather information in the particular respect or at the very least that is what many youths perceive, such discussions don't happen within the family, which is already difficult to have in an Indian household. Social media interactions in the first instance seem to be harmless and normal, but they gradually transcend into the more explicit talk. Quite a great number of youths are never properly educated about right sexual conduct and expectations, and often resort towards wrong sources for the same.In almost all the cases the interaction begins as a harmless act on the web and then evolves into inappropriate sexually explicit conduct. Sexual predators target young individuals and often migrate from one platform to another as their victims.

c) **More Inclined Towards Virtual World Than The Real One** –There is a sort of race among youngsters to post everything online, either their Facebook accounts or YouTube accounts, even Instagram nowadays. But while doing so they actually miss important movements of their lives or those around them.There is an important event in the family and youngsters are mostly focused on posting videos another other stuff on to their social media accounts instead of actually being there in that moment. Suppose, there is an educational seminar or workshop going on in a college or university, but most of the students are busy uploading the videos of the same instead of actually listening to what the orator has to say or what he is trying to explain them about.Youngsters very often block their family members from their social networking accounts, only to prevent them from knowing what they are doing there because that might land them into some trouble at their homes. But this almost always backfires on them because apart from all the stupid things that they don't want their families to know about, the parents or guardians also don't get any knowledge about what the children are engaging into or to whom they are talking to. Youngsters are not wise enough to between what is good for them and what is'ntand since social media provides the convenient feature of being anonymous it's almost always hard to find the source of any misconduct or mishap that happens.At the very least one can only find the culprit after a particular crime has already happened and there is no way to prevent that without knowing while something like that is happening to their children.Apart from this the age from teen years to mid twenties is such a vulnerable age and the problems that youngsters face during

this phase of their life needs to be addressed to their family members who understand them very well but this does not happen out of the fear of being judged and this problems rather get exposed to certain types of vultures sitting behind screens with set onlinetraps to grab on these youngsters if and when they see an opportunity. Such interactions at times prove to be life threatening and create a sense further insecurity in young individuals. Such a complex further prevents youth from even interacting with real humans. Youngsters are

3.1.5 Exposure Of Youths To Untrue or Fake And Manufactured News And It's Drastic Effects

A great number of youths tend to fall for fake or manufactured news, deceptively presented as legit news on social media. And it's convenient because there is no proper scrutiny on social media platforms, people and organizations post whatever they like or whatever is more profitable in terms of grabbing the attention of audiences; specifically youth (who are among the most prolific users of social media) and generating revenue. The existence and rise of manufactured news on social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp are quite evident and there is no denying the fact that with the rise in social media users this will further gain momentum. A big reason for this is that a pretty big portion of the population is unable to differentiate between quality news and fake content. Social networking sites connect like-minded people. The networks of 'friends' on Facebook, and 'followers' on Twitter or Instagram, even the groups people on WhatsApp generally consist of people who are mostly like minded and share the similar values and beliefs; be it social, economical or political. The information or newspeople share through the social networking sites helps to define who people are and what they believe in. Specifically talking about youth, they are more susceptible to the manufactured news due to the lack of wisdom and experience to differentiate, and moreover youth are the most active users of social media and hence the central target of the notorious online sources who generate their revenue out of fake news dissemination. The youths very frequently share such news as well, and this reinforces the fake content further to more audiences.
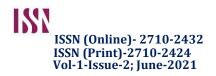
It is very important to note that fabricated news is very often spread through fake news websites. And these websites impersonate as -known news sources, which deceives the audience into believing that they are accessing legit news sources. For Example – During the Rohangiya crisis in Myanmar, social media witnessed a great number of fake videos claiming either Rohangiya Muslims to be a threat or Buddhists in Myanmar a threat to Rohangiyas, and performing an ethnic cleansing in a certain part of the country. Certain rumors were witnessed revolving around cow vigilantism leading to Mob Lynching of certain people, infuriated by a few provocative social media posts.

Youngsters very easily and quickly share such videos on social media platforms without giving it a second thought and as a result, such social media platforms loose their credibility to a great extent and the youths also lose their trust in social media.

3.1.6 Youths Very Often Experience Depression, Anxiety As The Effects Of FOMO i.e. Fear Of Missing Out

People are always concerned about where they stand socially, and the thought keeps them in constant terror of maintaining a connection to seek belongings.It's not just the fear of missing out, but the fear of missing out something that everyone else is a part of i.e. **Fear of being left out**. Youths constantly keep checking and rechecking their social media accounts fearing that if they don't, they might miss something very important or interesting while everyone else will become a part of it. It almost strikes a sense of tension as well as fear in the minds of youngsters to the extent that they are compelled to check their social media accounts more often than actually required. Moreover, teens and youths earnestly hope that there is something interesting going on social media platforms and are disappointed several times.The fear of missing out leaves certain youth in the tight grip of social media addiction. Social media turns out to both the disease and the cure, more like an
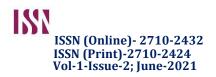
addictive pill.As soon as a youth post something online, either on his Instagram or Facebook account he or she hopes to get as many likes shares a common source possible and to ensure that keeps checking and rechecking that post again and again almost like a compulsion and when the particular post doesn't get likes or other responses so expected by them, the youths are hit by anxiety and an inferiority complex. They keep wondering what could be the reason behind the fact and dread that they might loose their followers and appreciators.

FOMO and resulting Depression and Anxiety can result into the feeling of loneliness, and further degrade a person's mental health. An individual is on several social networking sites at any given time, and in order to maintain a presence on each of them, he or her expense huge part of his time on these sites, for if regular engagements are not made on these sites it might result in losing popularity and attention. The Live functions on most of the social networking sites has now made the users of these platforms more active than ever. Be it any event, party, game, social gathering, seminar, workshop, etc. youngsters are keen to do a Facebook or Instagram live rather than actually utilizing the moment to learn something or gather the quality and authenticity with consideration of possible negative or positive effects of any event, incident or accident. The fear and tension of missing out the opportunity to do a live stream of an important event keep the youngsters on the edge. Social media causes FOMO as well as actually missing out of things by the users

3.1.7 Unrealistic Expectations and Distorted Body Image Established By Social Media In the Minds Of Youth

Youngster uses social media for a sense of gratification and emotional as well as psychological needs fulfillment too. But at the same time the same social media can create a deficit of contending and happiness among the youth. When they see other people posting pictures of happy life, travel, extravagant expenditures, parties, etc. it creates a sense of wanting or need among them and when and if they are unable to get the same personal experience, it creates social isolation. Youngsters very frequently compare their lives with the life people share on social media. The life that other person leads can be very different from what he poses to lead on social media platforms. It can extremely unhealthy to judge one's life on the parameters set by social media platform. Celebrities constantly post their camera perfect images and also the pictures of their characters on screen on their social media platforms, but if an individual judges real life on the reel life scale, he/she will definitely be disappointed. The social media establish highly unrealistic and distorted body image, youngsters in an attempt to achieve perfect body fall prey to hazardous practices. It kind of idealized what life is supposed to look like, while reality is almost always far away from it. Videos, Text, Advertisements and Sponsored Material on social media platforms showcase dangerously unrealistic standards of success and beauty. The youngsters very easily begin to idealize the standards set by them. There can be actresses and models seen praising size zero figure, flawless skin, what should be the perfect height and the weight of a person. This leads to the development of unhealthy lifestyle patterns among the youngsters to achieve a perfect body. What such youngsters forget in the process is that the people in these ads. Are just models or actresses who can very easily do touch-up in between the shots, these people don't wear the particular clothing or makeup 24/7. Social media platforms generate unrealistic beauty standard as well as cultural expectations of womanhood which results in eating and health disorders among young girls and boys. The social media with its display of distorted body image enforces modern day societal or cultural stereotypes around body expectation, and youngsters in order to seek **validation**, try to desperately fit into the parameters set by several social networking sites. Validation from the virtual world is what effects the youth negatively, they always put more effort to get unproductive things in order praise through likes, shares and comments on social media.Youngsters who have body image complexes and concerns, feel worried, disturbed, distressed and unhappy about their height, weight and body shape. For ex –
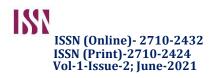
Slim body figure attracts more likes, Fair skin tone attracts more compliments, piercing and tattoos are considered cool and expressive; though they have cultural and emotional value but social media trending and popularity results in an obsession. Discontent with one's own body makes youngsters uncomfortable in their own skin, which results in serious and dangerous physical and psychological issues. Sometimes in order to achieve a perfect body many youngsters often resort to unconventional, untested and untreated remedies or methods. Such practices can lead to drastic health complications causing damage and since the comments and responses on these platforms are unfiltered and unregulated to a great degree they can sometimes be extremely demeaning and intrusive in nature causing severe unrest in the minds of youngsters.

3.1.8 Social Media Glamorizes Drugs And Alcohol

Almost everything youth has made social media an important and inseparable part of their life. Not only this they depend on social media for all kinds of gratifications. Social media platforms are brimming with advertisements, news, videos, short movies and other impactful visuals. Huge alcohol and tobacco brands nowadays use social media to target their consumers and sell their products to generate profit. Liquor manufacturers use social media as a medium to promote their alcohols, cocktails, and offers and special deals. Social media is youngsters get to know about parties and get-togethers that take place not just in a city but anywhere and everywhere in the world.Whenever one wants to host a party, they simply make an event on Facebook, which easily and economically accessible for youngsters. Since these events are unregulated and most of the times parents have no idea where their child is going, the young and naïve youths become victims of distance use. Consuming intoxicating substances is not an issue or should be a taboo but it is necessary to use and consume such products wisely. Facebook and other social media platforms are easily accessible to underage youths, who should not be exposed to certain products like alcohol another intoxicating substances but due to the fire racing nature of social media which both knowingly and unknowingly glamorizesthe consumption of suchdangerous products and motivates the youth to indulge in them.Since the teenagers and youth in their early twenties are the most prominent and prolific uses of social media platformsare the most vulnerable parts of society who get influenced very easily by the influential and enforcing images and videos shared on social media mostly for commercial benefit resulting into a mental as well as physical degradation in them. Several media outlets on television and newspapers don't advertise intoxicating products directly but in a representational form but in the case of social media its highly and regulated nature makes it extremely difficult for authorities to mark and prevent the advertisements that promote the use of drugs and alcohol either directly or indirectly.Brands however minute or Mammoth in size have access to social media to sell and promote their products and these social media platforms provide them with the benefit easily target their audiences and since it saves money as well as the effort search platforms are more likely to be used for the same since social media is highly pervasive in nature the big brands are taking the approach to market the product on these platforms because eventually it seems like the television newspaper and other traditional media platforms will convert into a more integrated and interrelated social media platform in the near future in the contemporary time only it can be witnessed that the smart televisions and portable televisions on the mobile phones are on the Rise they are the future of broadcasting in telecasting industries and most of the youngsters have the mobile phones before they can easily become the victims of glamorized and healthy and intoxicating products like alcoholunauthorized an untrusted drugs tobacco products and other products that are extremely harmful in nature more than that now it can be witnessed on both YouTube and Facebook that one cannot block certain advertisements on promotional content that is one will have to watch the sponsored videos images or text in order to view other content on these platforms currently any video on the Facebook is easily broken in several parts by these advertisements and sponsored videos just like it was already being witnessed on YouTube do there
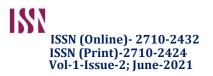
is almost always some advisory on explicit and disturbing content on social media platforms especially Facebook but it's quite an easy task to ignore them and look at them anyway youngsters are always intrigue to explore something new different and challenging and in that strive d10 to see insensitive and disturbing videos and images on such platforms without giving it a second thought they don't understand or want to understand what kind of psychological are mental effects it can have on their psyche regularly being exposed to addictive products can motivate any user of social media let alone and youngster to at least once try such products and trying is the first step towards developing an addiction which turns out to be highly destructive both mentally as well as physically youngsters at a very young age get addicted to tobacco products and alcohol without actually having any knowledge about the drastic Side Effects it has on one's productivity or General Health they don't measure the benefits and negative aspects of these products before trying them just because the social media has already glamorize this product so much that they want to consume them there are certain government regulations that prevent developers of social media content tocreate and disseminate their products with responsibility and consideration to what kind of audience they are targeting for a certain product be it an advertisement, a promotional video, a sponsored video or any other content available on social media platforms. But the young consumers of social media are equally clever and very much intrigued to explore the undefined dimensions of social media and get exposed to such products however careful the government and the developers are.

3.1.9 Notorious And Irresponsible Use And Consumption Of Social Media Kills Media Activism

Traditional protest sites and the traditional way people used to register their discontent wouldn't always be available due to environmental, security, availability and a possible riot or bloodshed that it can cause in it's wake and become a spark of utopian situations. Now the activists have started reaching out to the masses through alternate mediums like the internet and social media to make their voices heard. And with its massive and far reach, the social media platforms have now become the go-to choice for all kinds of protests. The increasing number of online petitions is proof of the growing popularity and acceptance of the medium. It has a plus point that the attempt to suppress an issue on social media actually ends up publicizing it further. Media activism generally includes publishing news or articles on web portals or websites, sharing video investigations into the issue, dissemination of information about protests, and organizing online activist campaigns for a cause. The highly responsive and interactive features and widespread adoption among the users facilitates quick and effective understanding of the cause to rally supporters. The most current example of media activism is **#metoo** campaign that took India by a storm of courageous walking out of the closet example against gender centric abuse. Another such example is the online petitions and upload that afterwards hit the roads of Delhi after the **NirbhayaIncident** in 2012, where hundreds of protestors gathered on the roads of Delhi and marched to attain justice for the victim of brutal gang rape. The brutal rape by six men in a moving vehicle afterwards leading to the death of the victim, mobilized people out on the streets, not just demanding safety laws by the government, but also motivated to take part in the protest of otherwise tabooed issue of gender violence in India. But it is also important to note that media activism looses its credibility if it results in a disaster like a **MobLynching**. There have been incidents in the country where people gathered after falling prey to rumors of cow slaughter and in a fringe of cow vigilantism several people were mercilessly killed by the crowd. When people fail to understand the difference between activism and propaganda they become the victim of ulterior motives of a few for their benefit rather than a social cause. Rumours on WhatsApp mobilize people negatively and often cause human and property loss creating social unrest. Another fine example where social media killed activism was when during the trial and verdict of Gurmeet Ram Rahim, guilty of raping two of his female followers and murder as well. Where misguided, misinformed and manipulated mob of his supporters rampaged across the city of

Haryana leaving at least 30 people dead and more than 350 injured and tensions flared across other parts of northern India.

The differences between opinions and facts are easily blurred on social media platforms. Different types of content on social media often create narratives where the people's opinions manipulates an uninformed as well as misguided general public to serve the purpose of a certain person or organisation.
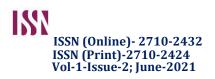
Youth doesn't know how to differentiate authentic information from rumors. The rumors make people's biases to be believed as legit truth by uneducated, uninformed or misinformed youngsters and further spread among millions of people accessing social media platforms.Social media users very often create their own echo chambers on social media, they tend to only interact and communicate with the people that agree with them and ignore the people of different faith or opinion. It can easily witnessed on social media that online discussions quickly turn into angry verbal lash outs. The lack of time and patience among the youngstersjump to conclusions and in turn displayharsh opinions in a few characters about such complex regional, national or world affairs. Such youths develop a harsh stand or opinion on extremely fragile issues without having a proper knowledge of the actual facts or sensation of a situation or problem. Their social media experiences are plagued with bias and manipulation.

3.1.10 Vulnerable Youths Often Fall Prey To Cyber Terrorism

Cyber Terrorism is very hard to define due to the undefined yet so obvious nature of terrorism.The dangers of cyber terrorism lie outside the conventional paradigm of terrorism and has the potential to do unprecedented damage to a country on a number of fronts. Cyber terrorism can roughly be described as **electronic attacks** using one or the other form of cyberspace, using either the internal and external networks, sometimes even both, very often by a number of terrorist organizations with dangerous and a number of motivations or motives. These are mostly directed at a specific target, that can either be a nation, an organization or even an individual to do materialistic as well as psychological damage. Such kind of terrorism aims to damage, misuse, or compromise a country's financial structure, political stability, social infrastructure, and jeopardize national security and integrity. The hackers seem to be the first line of attackers who apart from all said may also aim to attack a small but important organization of a nation in order to make it further unstable and vulnerable to its enemies.

Now, since youths are the most dedicated and frequent users of social media and at the same time easy to manipulate, they often become the victims of cyber invaders and attackers, to further perpetrate a nation's organization and individuals. They become the working hands of cyber terrorists. Cyber terrorists are criminals who use computer based technologies, computer and internet terrorize people. Youths are generally less equipped to evade manipulation and understand the gravity of a cyber attack and its broad spectrum. Such perpetrators often use social media to radicalize young deprived and troubled youths for their own agenda or benefits. For example – Certain parts of Kashmir valley are vulnerable and plagued by terrorist attacks of all sorts. When the terrorists cannot pass through the borders in person they try to manipulate youngsters of the region for their benefit and radicalize their thought process to do so. Some trained and negatively dedicated cyberterrorists, often skilled in hacking can cause massive damage to government systems, hospital records, and national security programs, which might leave a country, community or organization in turmoil and in fear of further attacks.Cyber terrorism has a front that aims at recruitment of youngsters as terrorist to do their dirty work, by misguiding and manipulating them against the existing governments and generating general hatred toward the governmental institutions. When

these youngsters are unsure and in psychological pain, it's easier to drift towards the gruesome and easy methods that such terrorist groups offer, without giving much thought to the after effects or consequences of the proposed actions. The terrorist killed and one caught in **26/11 Mumbai Attacks** of 2008 were quite young, and it's easier to coerce such youth into committing such atrocities as were committed. Before laying the actual groundwork such perpetrators hit the internet and web space to have an idea about their target. Information about nearly anything and everything is available nowadays on Social Media. Youngsters are quite used to posting pictures of places and personal information on their social media accounts, exposing themselves to a possible dangerous fundamentalist approach by terrorists or terror organization. And moreover, if manipulation or coercion doesn't work for any individuals, threat will definitely work.

Social media can easily be used for premeditated and systematicconducting of disruptive activities against an individual, organization, or nation. The use of social media platforms with the preconceived intentions to do harm in the forms of social, ideological, religious, political, other radical objectives or to threaten a youth into doing such activities isa fact that threatens the negative impact on youth of a country like India, all because of the vulnerability of youth to unregulated and pervasive nature of social media.This way the youths don't only spoil their own lives in the process but also cause irreparable physical and psychological damage to others as well.Youth are the building stones of India and India is a young country, which uses social media on a daily basis, so such perpetrators have quite a huge fishing ground in that respect.Apart from the national or international level of cyber-terrorism, Youths are also vulnerable to internal tensions between security forces and Maoists, Separatists, Extremists, etc. who have now begun to use social media to target youths and governmental institutions.
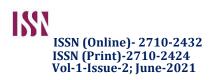
3.1.11 Social Media And Enforced Opinions On Youth
Since social media bring like-minded people on the same platforms, the youngsters forget to understand and value diverse opinions and enforce their opinions and thinking about a specific topic or issue. Such a frenzy is created that people cannot tolerate criticism of their beliefs and retaliate in the form of verbal abuse and inappropriate commenting or even trolling until the youth or person agrees to the point or simply backs off from the debate or discussion. Diversity and individuality are two important pillars of any society and when one talks about India, it is such a diverse country in all respects yet keeps it's individuality intact as a nation. Social media sometimes tries to impose things on its users, which might prove to be inappropriate for a culture so diverse.
Social media platform tends to manipulate public opinion into what would benefit the business, sometimes with the same motive and sometimes unknowingly. This can very often prove to be a threat to public opinion, where an individual might lose is voice and get dissolved into the identity of a group. For example – During an election campaign, and that too in a country like India where there are elections in one state or the other almost all times of the year, social media can prove to be a powerful tool to coerce people into taking a certain action or even vote. It is not a direct method of manipulation, but it sabotages people's opinion to a great extent. Though young generation is quite active toward the promises as well as responsibilities of those who represent the people in the political arena yet they can sometimes be mobilized for personal benefits of political leaders. Social media plays a big part in making youth the forefront of any election campaign by providing a common platform to both political leader and youths.
But it has a dark side where youngsters tend to lose their individual voice and become a part of the shadow of the collective of people with a common mindset. An actor or actress posts an image of themselves in a new or different kind of attire and suddenly it's an outrage on social media platform, youngsters start collectively calling him or her out for his or her weird sense of clothing, with giving

it much thought, instead because everyone else has that particular opinion. Someone calls a policeman or policemen corrupt, soon a few more will agree with them and this will keep on going until it becomes a hue and cry, without actually realizing the other aspects of the situation. Another such example can be, suppose someone abuses an enemy state on social media and quite a great number of people follow, not only because that certain emotional cry coincides with theirs but also because social media fuels that emotions and vulnerability. A public figure requests his/her followers on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or any other social media platform for a social cause, say to lead a tobacco free life and then a few weeks or maybe months later are seen smoking in a movie or video and people start calling them out on social media for being a hypocrite. Some actor or actress decides to marry a foreigner and spends extravagantly (which is totally their right) and people, including youngsters start calling them out for being unnecessarily extravagant and careless with money while some people die of hunger or question their patriotism or love for the nation for the same, which is quite stupid and time wasting. Collective expression of thoughts gives a sense of acceptance and power to such people. This steals the sane thinking of young individuals and makes them a faceless part of the crowd. Social media provides the advantage of being anonymous and in turn being untraceable after causing psychological disturbances in the minds of people.

3.2 SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Different social media platforms are now easily available in a number of languages, which makes it more popular among younger users as they can easily understand what the texts or messages have to convey to them. Specially in case of India, where a large population doesn't speak English and though Hindi is understood by a considerably large portion of the population. Yet, having regional languages gives it a benefit.
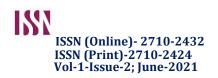
S.N	Social Media Platforms	No. Of Active Users
1.	Facebook	2, 234 million users
2.	YouTube	1,900 million users
3.	Instagram	1000 million users
4.	WhatsApp	1500 million users
5.	Facebook Messenger	1300 million users
6.	Twitter	335 million users
7.	Skype	300 million users
8.	LinkedIn	303 million users

Above mentioned statistics are famous social networking sites worldwide as of October 2018, ranked by number of active users (in millions).1 At any given time a huge number of people register their presence on social media and social networking sites by either loving in, visiting, sharing or creating social media platforms.

4. Conclusion
If one throws light on the negative end of the spectrum of effects and impact of social media platforms on youth, it is evident that they are vulnerable and susceptible to the dangers and threats

that surround such platforms. Social media is quite a new territory yet most explored by the youngsters. Anything new and consisting of immense potential requires study and due attention to properly consider its negative aspects and do they outweigh the benefits it has to offer. Similarly, the social was quite a revolutionary invented and when Facebook came into being, nobody knew one day it will stand side by side with mainstream media platforms like Television and Newspaper. Now every organization, governments, individuals and businesses aim to have its presence on social media to attract more and more consumers, users or people. Youth are the potential market future and social media greatest means to use that market. More and more organization have been registering their presence on social media platforms to initiate a dialogue or to target these youths. The advantages in the form of easy and fair access, connectivity, information, etc. that social media provide can never be neglected in today's technological times, but along with those benefits it also exposes the youth to unknown, unpredictable and unprecedented threats. One needs to acknowledge these threats while accessing and using social media platforms.

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