



## SNS: A Boon or Curse for Adolescents

MRS. AMAR JYOTI

Asst. Professor (B. Ed.)

S.M.P .Govt Girls P.G. College, Meerut

*“A network is a web of social relationships that links one person with other people and, through them, with other people they kn* ..... (Kendall, 2007, p. 175).





### 1. SNS: Social Networking Sites

The Revolution in SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES has transformed the life and life style, outlook and approach, conditions and quality of life. SNS has transformed the entire world in to a global village where people can interact freely with their dear ones located remotely just via few taps and clicks. No sphere of social life is spared from the influence of SNS especially in case of young generation belonging to urban region owing to their access to internet and online communication and interaction.

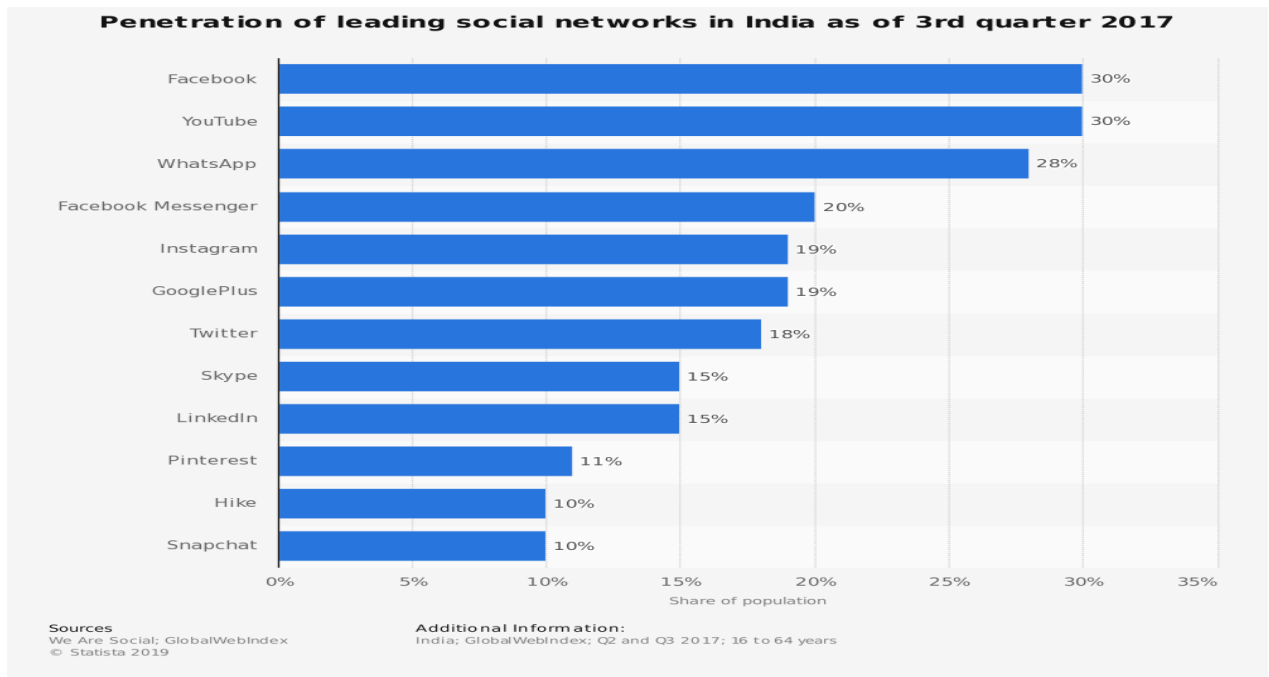
### 2. Concept of SNS

The term social network sites, they are Web based software which facilitate social connections between individuals SNS generally accessible to any device that has capacity to connect and use web services. Users initially join with their close friends and slowly explore friends based on age, nationality, education and many other factors subsequently over the SNS. The main function of creating SNS is well captured by the statement of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. He says, “Facebook was not originally created to be a company. It was built to accomplish a social mission - to make the world more open and connected.”

Social Networking Sites refers to any digital platform, system, website or app that enables people to create and share content, and connect with each other. Here are a few of the most popular sites that teenagers use, and how they work: Popular social networking sites and their mode of work

S.N.	NAME OF SNS	HOW THEY WORK
1	 Face book	A free site where registered users (aged 13 and up) can share pictures, links, videos, and other content with their 'friends'
2	Whats App	you contact friends using internet data (or wifi) on your mobile carrier, which reduces the cost of messaging, it allows you to send text messages and videos to a group of friends at one time.
3	Instagram	A free image sharing service that is used mainly on mobile devices, you can to connect with people you don't know but share common interests.
4	 Snap chat	You can send video or picture messages to one or more people at a time which is only viewable for a few seconds at a time, as determined by the sender.
5	 Twitter	You can communicate with people by posting short messages for anyone who follows you on Twitter, with the hope that your messages are useful and interesting to someone in your audience.
6	Tumblr	A blogging website which allows you to publish your own articles and share it with other people who follow your blog or profile.
7	 YouTube	YouTube is a video sharing service where users can create their own

		profile, upload videos, watch, like and comment on other videos
8	Other sites and games	Online games are also considered social media because of the way they enable social interaction, that is either partially or primarily played through the Internet or any other computer network available.



Since the advent of social networking site (SNS) technologies, adolescents’ use of these technologies has expanded and is now a primary way of communicating with and acquiring information about others in their social network. Overall, adolescents and young adults’ stated motivations for using SNSs are quite similar to more traditional forms of communication—to stay in touch with friends, make plans, get to know people better, and present oneself to others.

### 3. Causes of dependence of adolescents on SNS

There are a lot of reasons of using SNS by adolescents because it is the best way for them to stay in touch with their friends as well as it is an important part of socialisation and connection in the modern world. Adolescents use SNS regularly because they like to talk to friends, meet and chat with new people, join in online group conversations, learn about current events and stay up to date with online content. Using social networking sites is the best way for them to reduce their boredom in their leisure time. Sometimes they are so addictive of using SNS that they feel like they might miss out some very important thing if they aren't always up to date with social media.

“TCS GenY Survey 2012-13 ” conducted by TCS on more than 17,000 students of age group 12-18 years from urban high schools spread across 14 cities all over India to investigate ‘Post-Millennial’ generation. It was found that, Mobile phones emerged as the favourite gadget of the respondents, Used by above 65% of the youths. Mobile phones are used by 18% of the respondents to access internet and above 50% of respondents do so for 30+ minutes every day. More than 62% access internets for social media activities such as chat/connect /blog, etc while 73.65% youngsters surf internet for academic and research work. One more survey report published on Social media chimps depicts that 5 million Face book users are aged under 10. Out of which 58% are the Face book users among children that are from the age group 13-17. 50% of adolescents login to their FB account at least once in a day. Girl users of age 16-17 years are most prone to cyber bullying attacks and 10% adolescents have had their embarrassing photos being posted on social media sites without permission.

It’s a fad these days to be on social networking sites. If you do not have a digital presence than for

some people you do not exist. The ever rising pressure of being on social networking sites and have an impressive profile is effecting the youth in big way. According to statistics average number of hours a teenager spends online is 72 hours per week.

This is very high considering that they have to give time to study, physical activities and other beneficial activities like reading etc. It leaves very less time for other things and hence there are serious issues that arise out of this like lack of attention span, minimum focus, anxiety and complex issues. We now have more virtual friends than real ones and we are losing human to human connection day by day. There are other dangers as well like leaking of personal information to complete strangers, sex offenders etc. There are some positive effects.

#### **4. The Upside of Social Media for adolescents**

On the brighter side, social media promotes socialization of users through collaboration, creativity, communication, technological proficiency and leadership qualities. Social media is very useful to those adolescents who feel them isolated and who are quite introvert because SNS Preferred medium to share ideas, exchange news, etc. in online communities and also provide an Ideal platform to express oneself, without worrying about what others will say, which Helps users as well as the grownups to stay connected with others located distantly and it also Strengthens the relationships between friends, who rarely ever met in person.

- It is a good tool for education.
- It can create awareness for many social issues.
- There is a fast transfer of information online and hence the users can stay well informed.
- It can also be used as a news medium.
- There are few social benefits as well like communication with long distance friends and relatives.
- It can provide great employment opportunities online.
- Hence social media develop better social skills and real world skills that make them more independent for knowing and learning about world events and current affairs outside of their immediate environment as well as being better equipped to be active citizens in society.

#### **5. The Downside of Social Media for adolescents**

A famous Journalist Sydney J. Harris says, “The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers.” Hence besides many of its advantages, social media has some downsides which impacted the youth of modern age negatively as well:

Enables cheating in exams

Dropping of grades and performance of students

Lack of privacy

Users are vulnerable to cyber-crimes like hacking, identity theft, phishing crimes etc.

Cyber bullying: many children have become the victims of cyberbullying that has caused them a lot of harm.

- Hacking: The loss of personal data that can lead to security issues. There are crimes like identity theft and bank details theft that can harm any individual.
- Addiction: Prolonged use of social media can lead to addiction in youth. Addiction causes to lose focus of other important things like studying etc. People get so absorbed that they get cut off from the society and harm their personal lives.
- Scams: Many predators are looking for vulnerable users that they can scam and make profit off.
- Relationship frauds: Honey traps and MMS porn are the most caused frauds online. People are lured in to relationships and love schemes and then they are cheated on.
- Health issues: The excess use of social media can affect your physical and mental health in a big way. People often complaint of becoming lazy, fat, itchy eyes, loss of vision and stress

issues after excessive use.

- Loss of social and family life: Everyone busy on phone is one of the most common sites in a family gathering nowadays.

Adolescents spend much time on social media. Excessive use of social media may affect adversely on them as they will have less time to spend with friends and family. Hence increased time may increase risk. Because of spending more time with social media outlets total dependency and addiction of it, users usually Focuses on likes and Making social comparisons. It may also cause Cyber bullying and electronic aggression among adolescents by having too many unknown fake friends. It is common for teens, especially girls, to experience pressure to appear always “perfect” online. When friends on social media “appear” more popular, attractive or glamorous causes social comparison, loneliness and jealousy, which can trigger depressive feelings, anxiety, self-loathing, poor sleep and self-doubt, etc. As there is no privacy on social media, the more people on the friend list, the more people have access to screenshot photos, Snaps, and updates and use them for other wrong purposes, it may be dangerous also.

## 6. Importance of Social Media in Education

Today platforms like Face book, twitter, LinkedIn etc. are most widely used by( both) teachers, professors and students and they have become quite popular among them. For a student social media plays a very important role as it makes it easier for them to access and share information, get answers and connect with teachers. It is through the platforms of social media that students and teachers can connect with each other and share content thereby making a good use of these platforms.

- Live Lectures: Many professors these days are conducting live video chats on Skype, twitter and other places for their lectures. This makes it easy for students as well as teacher to learn and share while just sitting in their homes. How easy and convenient education can be through the help of social media.
- Increased support: Since we have the use of social media at our disposal at any hour of the day, teachers can provide off hours support and solve queries of students even after class timings. This practice also helps the teacher to understand development of their students more closely.
- Easy work: Many educators feel that the use of social media makes the work easier for both them and students. It also helps the teacher to expand and explore their own possibilities//skills// and knowledge.
- More disciplined: The classes conducted on social media platforms are more disciplined and structured as we know that everyone is watching.
- Teaching aids: Social media can help the students to nourish their knowledge with a lot of teaching aids available online. Students can watch videos, see images, check out reviews and instantly clear their doubt while watching the live processes happening. Not only students, even teacher can make their lectures more interesting by using these tools and teaching aids.

Teaching Blogs and write ups: Students can enhance their knowledge by reading blogs, articles and write ups by renowned teachers, professors and thinkers. This way good content can reach wide audience.

- Building a brand: Quality content, products and services are easily accessible online today. You can market your product online and build a brand.
- Customer support: Before buying and product or service customers can read the reviews and feedback and hence make a smart choice.

Social media is a great education tool. Through the use of social media platforms you can connect with your target audience. It is also a great way to access quality information. Social media can help you to get the news and happenings in just a click. Social media also helps you connect with

friends, relatives and helps you make new friends as well. Parent's help and support.

As the young social media users are still too young to use it and in the nascent stages of their lives, Parental guidance is very important. Parents should have open and free conversations with their kids about the safety of social media, how much personal information should and shouldn't be shared and about cyber bullying, etc also. Parental education and awareness is very important. They should know how much time their Childs are engaged with social media. They should make rules to limit excessive use of social media, for specific time duration /specific place and also bound their child to follow these rules. Parents should have Healthy attitudes with their child and as well as talk about the distorted views of fake and unknown friends' lives that are presented on social media. Social networking sites as Face book, Twitter and others have their own privacy settings. Parents should know how to customize them to maintain utmost secrecy of your kids' account while they are online.

Times have surely changed. The world has been made flat by the World Wide Web. Today, we live in a world where contacting someone, sharing our journeys as well as our thoughts is just one click away. Social networking sites are now available to cater to one's immediate social needs. These networking sites have made it possible for us to chat with friends who live in distant places as well as share with them pictures and videos of whatever we are up to instantly. Today, it is very hard to find a teenager who doesn't have a Yahoo, a Gmail, a Face book, or a Twitter account which they use to keep in touch with friends, to express or share what they have in mind and to use for school-related purposes. No doubt, Social Networking Sites are of great help in the youth's daily life; however, it has positive and negative effects which depend on how a person will utilize it. It cannot be denied that if used wisely social media can make education much better and create smart students and smart youth.

As the above discussion depict the upsides and downsides of social media. 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 Face book, YouTube, Instagram, Whats App, LinkedIn or Twitter accounts and online handles. The new age social networking culture has been well accepted and has met an enthusiastic response and acceptance. It is essential to follow certain effective steps so that your kids may not fall prey to fraudulent or illicit acts happening across the social media.

## References

1. Bhatt, Jagdish "How Social Media is Impacting the Modern Day Youths?"
2. Blog, <https://parents.au.reachout.com/skills-to-build/wellbeing/social-media-and-teenagers>.
3. Clin Child Fam Psychol Rev. 2014 Mar;17(1):1-18. doi: 10.1007/s10567-013-0135-1.
4. <https://parents.au.reachout.com/skills-to-build/wellbeing/social-media-and-teenagers>.<https://www.northshore.org/healthy-you/how-social-media-effects-teenagers-mental-health/>
5. Katie Hurley, LCSW (MARCH 2019). Social Media and Teens: How Does Social Media Affect Teenagers' Mental Health.
6. Prasad,Deva (2015). "Impact of social network sites on perception of sociability and academic performance of college students",shodhganga@inlibnet.com.
7. Spies Shapiro LA1, Margolin G., Growing up wired: social networking sites and adolescent psychosocial development.