



Using Facebook: A Double Edged Sword

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Abstract: Times have dramatically changed in the last few decades; many people have to relocate and travel for employment, so it's rare for one to stay in the same city they grew up in. Because of Facebook, many of us can easily stay connected with family and friends. But excess of everything is bad. The excessive use of Facebook has given a setback to every aspect of life. As a result of addicted use of Facebook, the literature is found to be loaded with new and latest terminologies like Facebook addiction disorder, sexting and bullying. Sitting in the kitchen, the younger generation is found to be busy in typing. Chatting till late night has become the norm of the day. How can the moral values survive and nation prosper, when the so called future of Nation is found to be engaged in sending and receiving illegal materials even in dead night. The author is not against the use of Facebook or any other social media but the point is that there is need of proper usage. On the one hand, Facebook helps us to develop secondary and virtual relations but on the other hand it is a big factor in contributing towards failure of primary relations. So, there is need for using properly otherwise a day will come when we will have no one from primary relations. If we see the growing statistics of Facebook users in India, we can say the FAD is a big concern for us. So for the bright future of India use Facebook as a tool of Social interaction not for personal revelations. Further, the author suggests some recommendations for parents, users and policy makers for promoting the usage of social media in the proper direction.

Keywords: Sexting, Chatting, Facebook addiction disorder, Primary relations.

Introduction

"I fear the day when technology will surpass human interaction and the world will have a generation of idiots" (Albert Einstein)

Mark Zuckerberg, with the help of Andrew McCollum and Eduardo Saverin, launched a website www.facebook.com in February 2004 that would change online social interaction forever. The Facebook started on the campus of Harvard University, where the three friends were students, Zuckerberg being a psychology major of all things. Within 24 hours of going live, The Facebook was a community of 1200 Harvard University students. Now it is a biggest network for social interaction having more 800 then million active users. In which 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day. They are spending more than 55 minute on Facebook. Average users have almost 150 friends. You can find here More than 900 million objects that people interact with

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(pages, groups, events and community pages). Average user is connected to 80 community pages, groups and events. On average; more than 3 billion photos and 14 million videos are uploaded per day. More than 3.5 million events are created each month. More than 6 billion minutes are spent on Facebook each day (worldwide). That is twice as much as the time spent on Google. Facebook has undoubtedly changed the world we live in today. In fact, it's hard to imagine life without it now. It essentially revolutionized how we communicate and connect as a global society. Many have weighed in on the costs and benefits of social media and its' impact on society, but one thing we can all agree upon is – it's here to stay.

Times have dramatically changed in the last few decades; many people have to relocate and travel for employment, so it's rare for one to stay in the same city they grew up in. Because of Facebook, many of us can easily stay connected with family and friends. In a truly remarkable series of events, a woman who was forced into marriage when she was just eight and went 'missing' over 60 years ago has been reunited with her family, all thanks to social networking websites; The Express Tribune May 4, 2017. Social media can be used as a powerful platform for change and awareness. Because of our need as a society to share, information can be spread very quickly. Viral campaigns can be incredibly influential too. Some have raised millions of dollars for charities (The Ice Bucket Challenge), and another even assisted in freeing a man wrongly convicted of murder, (Ryan Ferguson) more than ten years ago.

So now days Facebook is becoming a tool to spark, stir, and set in motion social movements. Proponents argue that Facebook is encouraging young people to become involved like never before. For example, President Obama used Facebook and other social media sites to rally support for his Presidential run.

Facebook's dominance is truly extraordinary. Not only does it take the top spot, its other platforms also take 2nd and 3rd respectively. Facebook Messenger has an impressive 47 penetration, and Instagram (also owned by Facebook) comes 2nd for engagement.

Face book: where it leads

Social media definitely gives people a voice that can be heard, but unfortunately this is where it can turn destructive very quickly. Because information spreads so rapidly, it can easily turn into a virtual game of telephone. With each share of a story, it can become more and more fabricated. Excess of everything is bad. The same principle applies here. The addicted use of Facebook has not only faded the social and emotional relations, but the privacy of users has also received a greater setback.



Phenomena of Facebook Addiction Disorder (FAD)

As it is commonly said, excess of everything is bad and therefore by spending too much time on the Facebook, we are going to lose the status of being social Animal. The rapid rise in the use of Facebook has given birth to a new term in the social world commonly known as Facebook addiction. Facebook Addiction Disorder (FAD) is a term introduced by US psychologists for those who are addicted to Facebook and their life is really affected by their uncontrolled activities on Facebook. According to US psychologists the number of patients suffering from FAD is increasing. Not only US but also millions of South Africans may also be at risk as they search for long-lost friends and relatives, share photo albums and stay abreast of gossip. In India **Facebook penetration** is **3.53%** compared to the country's population and **51.11%** in relation to number of Internet users, having **3rd** number in the world. The **total number of FB users in India** is reaching **41402420** and have grown more than **12821860** in the last 6 months. The largest age group is currently **18 - 24** with total of 19,873,162 users, followed by the users in the age of **25-34**. There are **73% male** users and **27% female users**. The average time spent on social networks per day: 1.72 hours (in 2015). The average number of hours a teenager spends online per week: 27 (2015).

Bullying

Facebook is the worst social networking site for internet trolling, and bullying is now more prevalent online than anywhere else, a study has suggested. Some 87 per cent of teenagers who reported cyber abuse said they were targeted on Mark Zuckerberg's site, while around one-fifth of youngsters were picked on by Twitter trolls, the report showed. According to the report, 49 per cent of those targeted by bullies were victimised off-line, while 65 per cent of teenagers were subjected to abuse in cyberspace. Further, the most frequently victimised were 19 year old males.

Cases in India

- A 21-year woman committed suicide in Salem, Tamil Nadu after facing continuous harassment on a social media website and the lack of police action in the matter. The Indian Express, June 28, 2016
- 17-year-old schoolgirl of a top south Kolkata school committed suicide on Tuesday night after one of her 23 year old friend uploaded a morphed picture of her on a social networking site. (Times Of India, June 24, 2014)



- In J&K Police on 5 January 2014 arrested a cyber stalker who was harassing a girl by putting objectionable contents on the internet. The youth was disseminating obscene material and comments against her in cyberspace. "The youth resides in Srinagar. He was running a fake Facebook account under the name "waseemdarokhil@yahoo.com on yahoo platform. In J &K every day around 50 women are harassed over internet or via mobile phones, but 90% of sexual crimes get unreported. Most of cases are reported in Jammu, Rajouri and Srinagar..

Facebook and depression

From the very beginning of the Internet age, researchers have been investigating the link between spending time online and emotional well-being. According to the first Home Netstudy in 1998, there was a statistically significant relationship between Internet use and depression though the actual cause of that link remains open to debate. The study authors originally argued that Internet use actually causes depression due to replacing strong off-line relationships with "poorer quality social relationships" online, something they dubbed the "Internet paradox" since social technology intended to make people less isolated apparently reduced well-being. According to University of Houston (UH) researcher Mai-Ly Steers, this kind of social comparison paired with the amount of time spent on Facebook may be linked to depressive symptoms. Steers' research on the topic is presented in the article, "Seeing Everyone Else's Highlight Reels: How Facebook Usage is Linked to Depressive Symptoms" published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology. Blease found that 25 percent of college students with Facebook accounts admit to feeling depressed at times. Compared against users that viewed social media less frequently, participants that use social media very frequently have 2.7 times the likelihood of depression. As compared to people that spent less time, participants that spent the most total time on social media throughout the day had 1.7 times the risks of depression (Choudary, 2016).

Facebook and academic performance

Students who use Facebook while they study get significantly lower grades than those who do not, according to psychologists. A study has found that the exam results of those who used the social networking site while working, even if it was on in the background, were 20 per cent lower than non-users. The Facebook users among them had a typical grade point average - a score from zero up to four - of 3.06. Non-users had an average GPA of 3. Facebook users reported studying fewer hours per week than non-users (Kirschner, Karpinski and Fleming, 2010).



Facebook and sexting

Sexting is sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones. The term was first popularized in the early 21st century. Sexting is a prevalent and normalized practice among youth in many western, liberal democracies. Many couples engage in sexting. In a 2011 study, 54% of the sample had sent explicit pictures or videos to their partners at least once, and 1/3 of their sample had engaged in such activities occasionally. In a 2008 survey of 1,280 teenagers and young adults of both sexes sponsored by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 20% of teens (13-20) and 33% of young adults (20-26) had sent nude or semi-nude photographs of themselves electronically. Additionally, 39% of teens and 59% of young adults had sent sexually explicit text messages. A recent Harris Interactive poll found that one in five Americans sext or share racy text messages with others on their smart phones.

Divorce

Although it may seem quite surprising and unbelievable that Facebook can be a significant factor in contributing to increased divorce rates but research has proved it. Lately, there have been a flood of studies suggesting how social media is bad for us, but now it appears it's actually breaking up marriages. According to research that was commissioned by a law firm, social media, especially Facebook, is a factor in one out of seven divorces. Researchers from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and Boston University found a link between social media use and decreased marriage quality

Recommendations

Recommendations for policy framers

- Awareness campaign must be arranged from grassroots levels such as schools and colleges about cyber ethics and probable cybercrimes like economic cheatings, stalking activities, defamatory activities, misusing email and social networking websites etc.
- Police, social workers, lawyers and NGOs must be invited to educational institutes, corporate offices, clubs, social awareness - campaigns, workshops and seminars to talk about legalities and illegalities of cyber conduct among adults inclusive of both the genders. Reporting of cyber victimization must be encouraged at all levels directly to police and also to NGOs working for the cause
- The umpteen advertisements shown by the advertisers and various shots in films should be banned because eve teasers try to imitate such acts in real life.



- To get the society free from crimes, the spate of pornographic materials must be strictly banned. The media, TV channels and cinema which present and publish vulgar materials must be censored.

Recommendations for Users

- **Turn off email notifications.** Receiving constant notifications every time someone sends you a message only serves to (unnecessarily) pull you back to Facebook. Ask your friends to use traditional email, text, or phone if they have an important message.
- **Make a list of the things you no longer do because of Facebook.** Who do you neglect because of Facebook? What hobbies, interests, sports, or other activities have you lost interest in because of the amount of time you spend on Facebook? Ask yourself if you are truly happy about all the sacrifices you have made just to spend more time online.
- **Clarify the value of Facebook in your life.** Make two lists. One lists outlines how Facebook adds to the quality of your life (e.g., staying connected with family in another part of the country, meeting new people, promoting your business, etc). The second list describes how some aspects of Facebook detract from the quality of your life (e.g., excessive gaming, wasting time hatching eggs or competing surveys, etc.). Facebook can certainly be a part of a well-balanced lifestyle when used appropriately - make a conscious decision to only use Facebook in ways that add to the quality of your life.
- **Set a predetermined amount of time allowed for Facebook per day**
- **Keep track of just how much time you are spending on Facebook.** Keep the list next to your computer (take it with you if you are on Facebook at work, school, or other places). Take note of how often you log on, how long you stay connected, and what you are doing (e.g., posting, commenting, reading news, games, etc).
- **Reduce how often you change your status.** It probably isn't necessary to broadcast your random thoughts and changing emotions multiple times throughout the day. Set a goal of only updating your status once per week as you slowly decrease your time on Facebook.
- Don't add strangers who send you friend requests

Recommendations for Parents

- Research has found that there is a correlation between parent's usage of social media sites and their children's usage. It is therefore more important to educate children on social



media and teach them how to navigate it safely, especially as you can often tailor what you see by un-following specific people.

- Parents should guide against social media obsession among their children, by ensuring that they are not allowed much time to surf the internet or their phones especially at home.
- Parents should also consciously contribute to the building of a morally viable society by instilling strong moral values into their children right from their homes which is the microcosm of the larger society. This will curb the level of moral decadence in the country.
- Maintain an open line of communication. Keep an active interest in your teen's life by encouraging open and honest conversations. This can help build mutual trust and may help you identify cases of sexting involving your teen.
- Initiate conversations about sexting because sexting is such a sensitive and possibly embarrassing topic for your teen, do not approach it in an accusatory or hostile manner. Start by talking about something else first and then transition into a conversation about your teen's exposure to or involvement in sexting.
- Monitor computers and devices. Place your family's communal computers in a public area of your home, such as the living room or kitchen. Make sure your children know that you monitor their devices for what websites they are viewing, which may help prevent them from curiously looking up sexting or engaging in it online
- Obtain monitoring software. Install monitoring software on your teen's and family devices which can track different types of content including images.

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