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## *Impacts of Social Networks: A Comprehensive Study on Positive and Negative Effects on Different Age Groups in a Society*

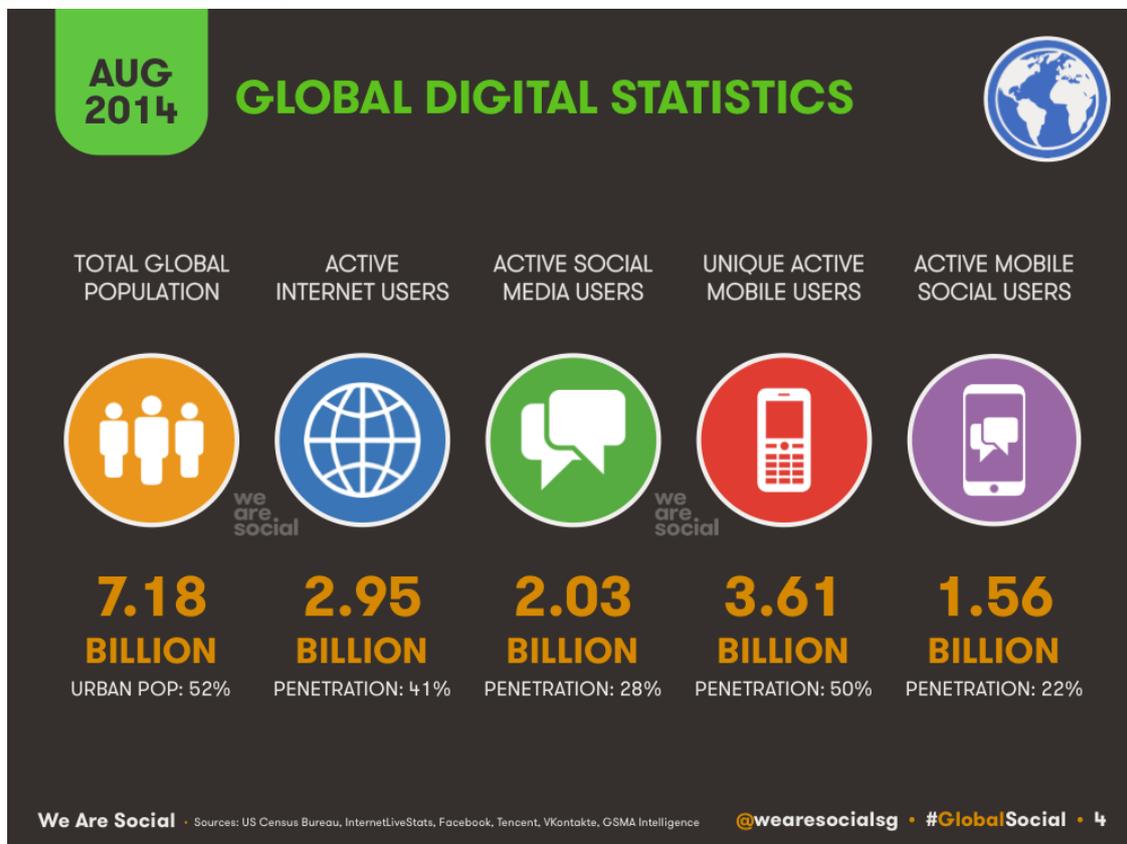
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**Abstract:** *Social Networks have undergone an intense evolution in recent years. Such networks provide an extremely suitable space to instantly share text or multimedia information between two persons or their neighbours in the social graph. Social networks give us a powerful reflection of the structure and dynamics of the society of the 21st century and the interaction of the Internet generation with both technology and various other people. Indeed, the dramatic growth of social multimedia and user generated content is revolutionising all phases of the content value chain including production, processing, distribution and consumption. It also originated and brought to the multimedia sector a new underestimated and now critical aspect of science and technology: social interaction and networking. The social area networks have both merits and demerits. In the present paper, the authors have tried to explore both merits and demerits of social networks.*

**Keywords:** *multimedia, social networks, internet, Facebook, Twitter, Blog*

### I. INTRODUCTION

A social network can be defined as a platform to build social relations among people who share interests, backgrounds or connections in real life or participate in similar activities. A typical social networking site consists of a representation of each user (referred to as a profile), the social links of that user to other users and various additional services. Such social networking sites are web-based services that allow their users to create a public profile and connect to a set of users with whom they can share different kinds of information. According to Boyd and Ellison's (2007) article, "Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life", social networking sites share a diverse array of technical features that allow individuals to: create a public or semi-public profile, define a list of other users that they share a connection with, and examine their list of connections within the system. The most basic of these are visible profiles with a list of "friends" who are also users of the site. Typical services provided by social networking sites include instant messaging, sharing of photos and videos, and blogging among others. Social networks can be both category-specific with users connecting with a particular goal in mind or they may be general. For e.g. LinkedIn is a social network whose primary aim is to allow users to publicly share their CVs and resumes in order to make various professional connections. General social networking sites include the widely popular Facebook and Twitter where users make use of the services provided for various different purposes. Thus we may also define a social networking site as an online entity that attempts to simulate a specific aspect or general aspects of a person's societal life by allowing the person to develop a virtual representation of their identity and use that identity to form connections with similar virtual identities of other people within their online society.



The aim of this paper is to do a comprehensive study to find both merits and demerits of social networking. The authors will try to discuss the gravity of adverse effects of social networks.

## II. MERITS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

The merits or the advantages of social networks can be categorized as follows:

### (i) Worldwide Connectivity

Social networks offer the fastest way to connect to other people. In addition to the popular Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, there are numerous other social networking communities that are dedicated to allow people to interact and make connections over the Internet. This allows people to make new friends and business connections which can help them in many ways:

- Finding jobs
- Finding companionship
- Locating assistance
- Receiving advice on various issues

### (ii) Commonality of Interest

Social networks allow us to choose the individuals who have matching likes and dislikes and thus build a network around those commonalities. Since the connections are made digitally instead of physically, it provides the luxury of joining many more groups and communities.

### (iii) Real Time Sharing of Information

The instant messaging feature of social networks allows exchange of information in real time via chat. This real time sharing of information facilitates classroom discussions. A study by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has demonstrated

that social networks can be used as effective vehicles for students to pursue self-paced online learning. Moreover, social networks can be used by managers to conduct team meetings and by business executives to interact with prospects and clients.

#### (iv) Free Advertising

Social networks offer an effective means of getting one's message across to millions of people and usually free of cost. One can promote a product, service or idea and not have to invest large sums of money in advertising costs. In coming days the concept of advertisement will be changed dramatically using social networks.

#### (v) Increased News Cycle Speed

Social networking has accelerated the traditional news cycle. Many news organizations partner with social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to both share and collect information. Trending topics on social media help to disperse information about various events in a short amount of time leading to the development of an almost instantaneous worldwide news cycle.

#### (vi) Guaranteed Meeting Places

Access to social networking sites offers an expanded set of options for available times and places in which meetings can take place. People can meet each other and chat over Facebook or Google+ rather than have to travel to specific locations or try to work out a schedule and location that is suitable to all parties involved.

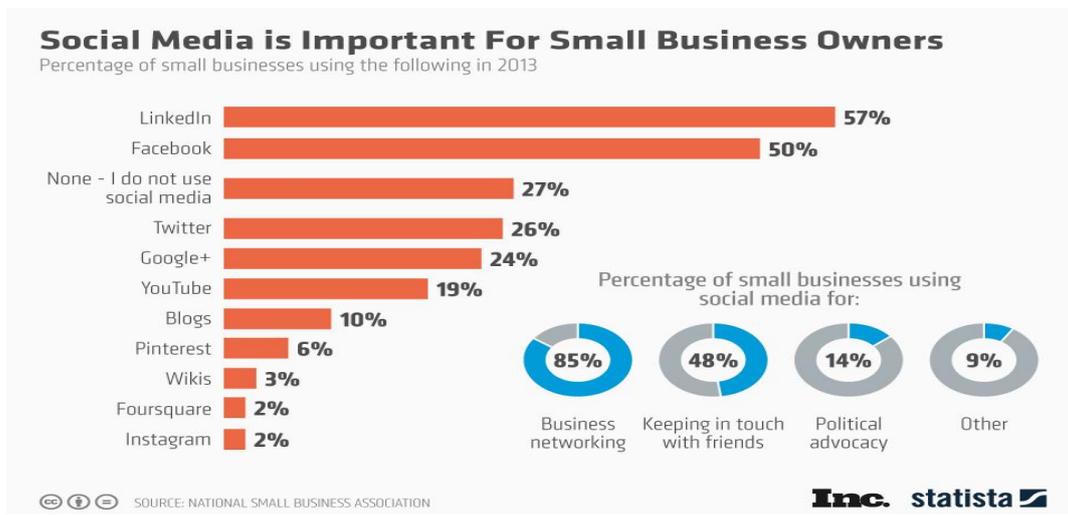
#### (vii) Business advantages

Business advantages of effective social media use include:

- compelling and relevant content will grab the attention of potential customers and increase brand visibility
- you can respond almost instantly to industry developments and become heard in your field
- it can be much cheaper than traditional advertising and promotional activities
- social content can indirectly boost links to website content by appearing in universal search results, improving search traffic and online sales
- you can deliver improved customer service and respond effectively to feedback
- customers can find you through new channels, generating more leads
- increased loyalty and advocacy from the customers you've connected with

There are five major uses for business and social media:

- (i) To create brand awareness,
- (ii) To use as an online reputation management tool,
- (iii) For recruiting persons,
- (iv) To learn about new technologies and competitors,
- (v) A lead generation tool to intercept potential prospects.



### (viii) Science

Social networks also find use in the science communities. Julia Porter Liebeskind et al[ ] have published a study that demonstrates how biotechnology firms use social networking sites to exchange scientific knowledge. They state that by doing so they to "increase both their learning and their flexibility in ways that would not be possible within a self-contained hierarchical organization." Thus, social networking is allowing scientific groups to share ideas and expand their knowledge base and thus avoiding their theories from becoming irrelevant and isolated. Researchers frequently use social networks to develop and maintain professional relationships. Such networks allow them to consolidate social ties and professional contact and keep in touch with colleagues. This helps them to stay updated on the activities of their colleagues in order to form collaborations on common fields of interest. Social networks also find use in communicating results of scientific research and as a tool for public communication to connect with people who share similar professional interests. Social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and ResearchGate allow users to join professional pages and groups, share papers and results, publicize events and engage in debates.

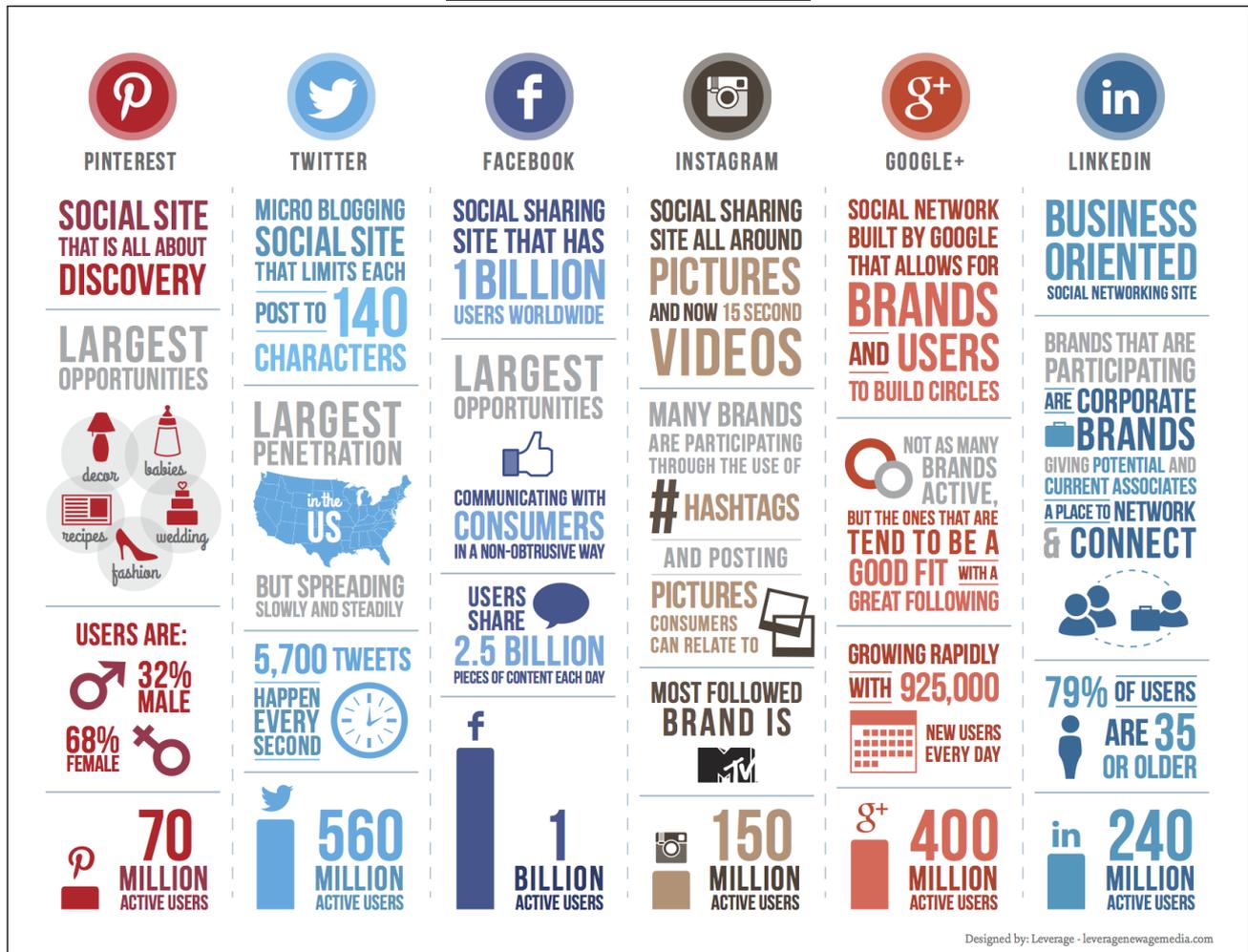
### (ix) Learning

The Web 2.0 technologies that have been built into most modern social networking sites allow conferencing, creation, interaction and research on a global scale thus enabling educators to share and produce curriculum resources. This allows social networking sites to become learning networks. Some educators believe that social networking encourages the development of technical, transferable and social skills of value in both informal and formal learning. Tweeting, blogging and instant messaging enhance student involvement and students who wouldn't normally participate in class discussions are more likely to do so through social networking sites. When learning experiences are incorporated into such sites which students access everyday for fun, they realize that learning can be an enjoyable part of everyday life.

### (x) Employment

College students often use the services of social networks to network with professionals for job opportunities and internships. A notable study on the effectiveness of social networking in a college setting has been done by Phipps Arabie and Yoram Wind, published in Advances in Social Network Analysis. Many colleges have implemented online alumni directors which function as social networks that both past and present students can access for career advice.

## POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORKS



## III. DEMERITS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Although social networking offers various advantages, as specified in the previous section, it also suffers from a number of disadvantages, which will be the main focus of the present paper. The common disadvantages of social networks can be categorized as follows:

- (i) Cyber Bullying
- (ii) Decreased Productivity
- (iii) Identity Theft
- (iv) Negative impact on mental and physical health
- (v) Negative effects on children
- (vi) Poor language and grammar
- (vii) Rapid and extensive spread of misinformation

Each of these will be discussed and studied in detail in the following section.

## (i) Cyber Bullying

Cyber harassment may be defined as bullying through social media that includes but is not restricted to

- Posting negative comments on pictures
- Posting abusive posts on a user's wall

- Using pictures or videos to make fun of other users

Social networking sites are some of the most used types of websites by teenagers and thus it is important for parents to identify what constitutes social media bullying and to identify if their children have become victims.

A majority of this bullying takes place on Facebook as its open platform and allowing of users to make open posts and send private messages facilitates cyber bullying. According to report by the Washington Post, 9 out of 10 teenaged Facebook users have reported to have witnessed some form of bullying on the social networking site.

Another report by Ditch the Label showed that 54 percent of those surveyed had experienced bullying on Facebook.

Another social networking site, Ask.fm, has also caused serious problems among teenagers leading to cyber bullying behavior. The popular app SnapChat can also contribute towards bullying by creating pictures that make fun of individuals.

The central issue is that unless specific measures are taken, teenagers and children will always find ways to bully others through any site that is dedicated to social interactions. A number of particular issues aggravate the frequency and impact of cyber bullying

#### Easier to bully online

Hiding behind an internet screen often give users powers they don't have in real life. When people aren't interacting with others on a face-to-face basis, they are less likely to understand the implications of what they are saying. It is a lot easier to direct negativity to a person online than it is to do the same when the person is standing right in front. This thus makes it easy for children to bully others on social media.

#### Constant access

Unlike traditional bullying in which children would be bullied in school but would be able to seek refuge at home or in the library, cyber bullying can take place in any and all places. The proliferation of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets has contributed to this issue. This constant connection to the online world has created a platform for cyber bullying. Contrary to before, now children do not have any place to go to in order to get away from the bullying.

#### Bullying by committee

Social networking sites offer each user a larger reach than they would have in real life. This unfortunately means that it is easier for children to gang up on a particular victim and keep on attacking. Due to the fast communication offered by such sites, a child who wants to bully someone else can quickly alert several of his or her friends who can then start harassing the same victim.

#### Impact

The consequences of cyber bullying are numerous and diverse, the most serious of which is the increasing rates of suicide. This is because a lot of the teenagers who are bullied do not have the emotional capacity to handle bullying when it becomes particularly serious or severe. For this reason alone, it is vital that we do all that is possible to put an end to cyber bullying. Aside from suicide, there are many other alarming negative effects that cyber bullying has on children. A lot of the victims develop self-esteem issues that can last for many years. They can also fall into depression and suffer from other mental problems. Additionally, many victims who are unable to cope with the bullying, may even resort to causing physical harm to their own bodies.

#### **(ii) Decreased Productivity**

According to a survey of 237 employees conducted by Nucleus Research, an IT research company, companies that allow their users to use Facebook in the workplace lose 1.5% in total employee productivity on average. The survey also demonstrated

that 77% of workers who have a Facebook account, access it during their working hours. The study also found that some employees use the social networking site for as long as two hours a day at work. Another finding of the study revealed that of those employees using Facebook, 87% had no clear business reason for accessing the site. The vice president of research for Nucleus Research, Rebecca Wettemann, said in a statement, "If your company is facing tight margins and low profitability, as many are now, then how can you accept any work distractions that drain your overall productivity?" She added that, "While it won't make you popular, restricting Facebook can reclaim lost productivity. If your profitability is say 2%, this could be the difference between staying open or closing shop."

A study conducted by Ohio State University showed that college students who use Facebook spent less time studying and consequently had lower grades than students who didn't use Facebook.

The issue of decreased productivity is of serious concern because of the following factors:

- Extent of the problem

A 2010 article in Tech Journal cited a study that showed that companies whose networks provided access to Facebook experienced a 1.5% drop in employee productivity. In a February 2012 piece for Forbes.com, Peter Cohan used statistics on Facebook's growth during the interim to calculate that using Facebook within the workplace could cause a 9.4% decrease in productivity, which would collectively cost businesses as much as \$1.4 trillion.

- Cost Beyond Lost Productivity

If a worker makes an offensive comment on Facebook while identifying himself or herself as an employee, it reflects negatively on the company and can lead to a public relations nightmare. There is also the risk that employees disclose confidential information through their Facebook posts.

### **(iii) Identity Theft**

Identity theft affects millions of people every year, costing its victims countless hours and money in identity recovery and repair. In 2012, more than 12 million people became victims of identity theft and fraud, with an estimated total of \$21 billion losses for the year alone, proving that these issues are growing problems in the US. A lack of consumer knowledge regarding identity protection online, unjustified trust in social platforms and a lack of standards or policing all contribute to the problem of identity theft. Social networking in particular leads to identity theft in the following ways:

- Eliciting personal information

Social networking sites generate revenue through targeted advertising which is based on personal information of the users. Thus, they encourage their users to provide as much information as possible. Due to limited government monitoring, industry standards, and user education on security, privacy and identity protection, users are exposed to identity theft and fraud. Moreover, these sites contain a ton of confidential user information which may be vulnerable to outside attacks.

- Crimes of opportunity

The increased global use of social networking has given more opportunities to criminals to steal identities or perform fraud over the internet. Status updates on Twitter and Facebook are often enough for criminals to gain access to confidential information. If a user posts that that he or she is out of town on vacation, then his or her house is immediately at risk of being burgled. Social networking sites also facilitate stalking or stealing an identity as they often provide deep insights into the user's personality, family, friends, hobbies and interests.

- Phishing attempts using this information can be used to gain trust in order to obtain non-public information through online conversations.

- GPS-enabled phones sharing user location can reveal sensitive information like home address, work address, places visited, etc.

- 95% of Facebook profiles have at least 1 application, many of which are not reviewed and can be used for malicious and criminal purposes

- False profiles can be used for resume fraud or defamation of character.

#### **(iv) Health**

Arguably the biggest disadvantage of social networking is the way it can adversely affect both mental and physical health. While it may not be surprising that social networks can negatively impact mental health, it may not be immediately apparent how our physical health is also affected by excessive usage of social networking. The health issues are as follows:

##### Depression

Social networking often exposes users with low self-esteem to profiles, often artificially enhanced, that may appear to make the users of those profiles seem successful or desirable to be with. This can lead to many adverse affects:

- Those with less social confidence may be led to believe that they have less worth than others

- Constant reminders that your life does not measure up to those of others can greatly damage a person's self-confidence.

- Moreover, the already discussed effects of cyber bullying and related hurtful and critical interaction further damage a person's self-esteem and confidence

These feelings of inadequacy and social isolation often times lead to varying degrees of depression and related mental health problems.

##### Social Media Addiction

There have been several studies that have shown that excessive usage of social media and social networking sites can lead to an actual addiction. Numerous individuals are spending so much time on social networking sites that it interferes with their normal, daily lives. Increasingly, people are turning to such websites to interact with other people, play games, receive their news or simply to kill time. Throughout the day, people feel the need to post something or to see what others have posted.

Though people apparently use such sites for varied reasons, however, at the basis it serves two basic purposes – distraction and boredom relief. Features such as 'likes' and flattering comments serve as positive reinforcement for making more posts and thus make it difficult for people to stop posting, leading to addictive tendencies. This addiction has grown into such a problem that researchers have develop a special scale to measure this addiction – the Berge Facebook Addiction Scale.

Psychologist Michael Fenichel has described FAD as “a situation in which Facebook usage overtake daily activities like your normal function, eating, working, waking up, sleeping and many more” ("Facebook addiction disorder," 2010). Dr Mohamad Hussain Habil, director of university Malaya Center of Addictive Sciences, defines it as “a brain disorder as a result of neurochemical dysfunction where normal behavior becomes abnormal”. Dr Hussain says “parents brought their teenage children thinking that they were under the influence of drugs when the teenagers perform poorly in school and not interacting as usual. The teens were so obsessed with virtual activities that they were willing to forego their meals, sleep, responsibilities and leisure activities. The fact was these children were addicted to the Internet” (Renganayar, 2010).

##### Isolation

Due to the increasing degree of online and virtual interactions, the interactions at a human level have become a lot less frequent in the day-to-day lives of many individuals. This has led to an isolation of sorts of many people behind their online identities. As a result, social networking and social media are increasingly removing human qualities of communication and

interaction such as – basic verbal communication, tone of voice, body language and facial expression. Since the current generation of children are being brought up in a world where online communication is rapidly replacing real world human interactions, there is a danger that many of these children will not be able to develop the necessary skills to communicate and socialize in a real world setting.

Aric Sigman, fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, says that “social networking sites have played a significant role in making people become more isolated. Lack of face-to-face contact could alter the way genes work, upset immune responses, hormonal levels, function of arteries and influence mental performance. This could increase the risk of health problems like cancer, strokes, heart disease and dementia ("Online networking harms," 2009)". His research ‘Well connected? The biological implications of social networking’ reveals that since 1987, face-to-face social interaction has fallen sharply with the increasing use of electronic media. It reported the first evidence that social isolation can lead to alterations in human gene transcription. DNA analysis showed 209 genes were differentially expressed for people with high levels of social isolation (Sigman, 2009).

#### Decreased Physical Activity

Spending time sitting at home and accessing social networking sites leads to a necessary decrease in physical activity and exercise.

#### Restlessness

A sizable amount of people have complained that it is difficult for them to relax when they are unable to access their social media accounts.

#### Drug and Alcohol Use

A study that explored the relationship between teenagers, drug use and social media found that 70% of teenagers aged 12 to 17 use social media in some form or the other, and those among them who access such sites on a daily basis are five times more likely to use tobacco, three times more likely to use alcohol and twice as likely to use marijuana. Additionally, 40% of them admitted that through social networking they had been exposed to pictures of people under the influence which thus suggests a correlation between the two factors.

#### Genetic Effects

Research conducted by the UCLA School of Medicine has found that the aforementioned social isolation, which may be caused by social networking, affects the level to which genes are active in white blood cells. People who suffered from high levels of social isolation had 78 genes that were more active and 131 genes that were less active than in people who suffered from lower levels of social isolation.

The less active genes include those that are involved in the body’s response to illness and stress, whereas those which were more active include those involved in promoting inflammation during illness and stress. The authors of this research report that their findings possibly explain the “greater risk of inflammatory disease and adverse health outcomes in individuals who experience high levels of subjective social isolation”.

#### Sleep Effects

In another adverse effect related to the social isolation that may arise from excessive social networking, a study has reported that people who feel lonely and isolated sleep less efficiently and spend more time awake which in turn leads to a number of other adverse effects on health.

### Morbidity

As social networking serves to reduce our level of interaction with others on a human level, it leads to the various ways in which reduced social interaction negatively affect our health. Several decades of research has found that greater degree of social contact is related to reduced morbidity, with fewer contacts leading to increased morbidity. This is due to increased or decreased risk of blood pressure, susceptibility to colds, cognitive functions and dementia.

### Miscellaneous Risks

Psychologist Dr Aric Sigman is concerned that a reduction in personal contact could increase the risks of heart disease, stroke and dementia. In this article, he refers to a selection of studies that have informed this opinion.

#### **(v) Effects on Children and Teenagers**

Larry D. Rosen, PhD, professor of psychology at California State University, Dominguez Hills has said that, "While nobody can deny that Facebook has altered the landscape of social interaction, particularly among young people, we are just now starting to see solid psychological research demonstrating both the positives and the negatives,"

Rosen has stated several potential adverse effects of social networking including:

- Teenagers who use Facebook more often show narcissistic tendencies while those who have a strong presence on Facebook show more signs of psychological disorders including antisocial behaviors, aggressive tendencies and mania
- Overuse of media and technology on a daily basis has a negative effect on the health of all children, teenagers and preteens making them more prone to depression, anxiety and other psychological disorders
- Facebook can also distract children and negatively affect learning. Studies have shown that middle school, high school and college students who accessed Facebook at least once during a 15-minute study period obtained lower grades

Child psychologist Dr Richard Woolfson believes social media has removed the barriers between a young person's public and private self, leaving them vulnerable and exposed to danger by compulsive sharing online. "Children are gaining access to social media sites at a younger age, which could expose them to content, people or situations that are out of their depth and which they're not emotionally prepared for," he said. "Parents need to maintain an open dialogue and encourage children to share both good and bad online experiences, and make sure they keep up with the latest social media crazes and work with their children rather than trying to control them."

Oxford University neuroscientist Baroness Greenfield has expressed concern that repeated exposure to social networking and similar technologies will result in shorter attention spans (Derbyshire, 2009). With shorter attention spans, the brain will be over time be rewired to seek the immediate fulfillment provided by these sites. As a result, children are liable to lose the ability to form relationships and therefore suffer socially. According to 2009 data from Pew Research Center, 73% of all teenagers accessing the internet used at least one kind of online social network (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith & Zickuhr, 2010). Since social networking is becoming the preferred mode of communication, teenagers who would normally develop social skills through face to face interactions, now attempt to do so online with other adolescents.

According to a study by Dr. Larry Rosen which involved 1000 adolescents who used Facebook during studying times, he found that teenagers who used Facebook demonstrated narcissism, antisocial mania and various other aggressive tendencies. The most frequent users also had more school absences. Besides these, there are also various physical effects. Rosen has stated that "overuse of media and technology has a negative effect...by making them more prone to anxiety, depression...as well as making them more susceptible to future health problems." (Rosen,2011).

Thus one can conclude that excessive use of social networks by teenagers both reduces positive social interactions through antisocial behaviors and also diminishes the opportunity to practice positive social interactions with fellow teenagers due to increased school absences.

#### **(vi) Language and Grammar**

Social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook have led to an increase in poor writing, grammar and spelling. Sending messages which have little or no grammar are at the base of this problem. Thanks to mandatory character limits, students shorten words and leave out punctuation to get their point across.

Aside from poor grammar, there is also a decrease in general language proficiency. According to professors and administrators at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, there are some cases of happy faces, sad faces and other emoticons appearing in the written work that is handed in.

Waterloo University requires an English proficiency test. Managing director of the English proficiency exam, Ann Barrett identifies that, "thirty per cent of students who are admitted are not able to pass at a minimum level". This is up by 5% from 25% in the past few years.

This usage of poor punctuation, bad spelling and grammar reflects negatively in a professional setting. Prospective employers may view such bad language as indicative of the fact that the person has not taken time to check their spelling and grammar.

Internet chatrooms and social networking sites are encouraging children to spell words incorrectly, research suggests. A paper released by the English Spelling Society concludes that the internet has revolutionised the English language, and made misspelling the norm.

As people type at speed online, there is now a "general attitude" that there is no need to correct mistakes or conform to regular spelling rules, it says. But this means that children who have been brought up with the internet do not question wrongly spelt words.

The study says: "The increasing use of variant spellings on the internet has been brought about by people typing at speed in chatrooms and on social networking sites where the general attitude is that there isn't a need to correct typos or conform to spelling rules."

The report's author, Lucy Jones, a former student at Manchester University, said: "We are now witnessing the effect these linguistic variations are having on children born into the computer age with such a high level of access in and out of schools. They do not question their existence."

The paper, which surveyed a group of 18- to 24-year-olds as part of the research, found that the majority believed that unconventional spellings are used on the internet because it is faster and has become the norm. More than one in five (22%) said they would not be confident in writing an important email without referring to a dictionary or spell checker. Despite the widespread use of so-called "variant" spelling, almost a third (31%) of those questioned said that alternative non-standard spellings were "unacceptable". Two thirds (66%) believe that dictionaries should contain variant spellings.

#### **(vii) Spread of Misinformation**

The spread of misinformation is another significant negative impact of social networking. Computer science academics from BITS-Pilani have conducted a study looking at the diffusion of misinformation, exploring ways in which wrong information can quickly spread through social networks. A focus of their research was the deliberate insertion of false information into a network with the aim of causing confusion and panic. The popularity of social networks they state has made the detection of such attacks challenging since the tight coupling present in such networks causes misinformation to be spread

swiftly. The researchers cite the swine flu outbreak in 2009 and how panic spread quickly online. Their study suggests that the degree of connectivity within a network is a strong indicator of how rapidly wrong information can spread.

A more recent example of such spreading of misinformation is in the case of the Ebola outbreak which was the first major outbreak in the current era of social media. Due to misinformation, fighting the disease often means fighting against misconceptions spread through platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Bad information found online is often worse than no information at all.

Bad medical science is ever present on social media and false cures and conspiracy theories are common after outbreaks of various diseases. For every Facebook group posting true information about disease prevention, one can find others that prescribe superstitious cures.

For example, on Facebook, many groups suggest that “God’s language of repentance” has caused the Ebola outbreak and not bushmeat, which the United Nations warns may often be contaminated. Since the illegal sale of bushmeat is estimated to be a multi-million dollar industry, many West Africans are not eager to give it up and thus often buy into false information. As another example, after a Nigerian leader stated that saltwater baths are the cure for Ebola, Twitter was filled with posts about how people should gargle and bath with a salt solution. Such claims became so rampant that the World Health Organization was forced to post a tweet that debunked the rumour.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

From this discussion and the various statistics about social media and its usage one can conclude that social networking is here to stay for the foreseeable future and will continue to be a significant part of most of human lives. Thus, it is more important than ever before to identify, manage and control the numerous ways in which social networking and the social media can negatively affect us. Though social networking offers several benefits, as has been mentioned in previous sections, it is clear from this paper that the evil effects of social networking sites are considerable and abundant and it is crucial to proceed with caution and curb the excessive usage and dependence on social networking sites.

Although there are many serious negative effects of social networking, but one cannot categorically conclude that the social networking should be removed from our lives. Social networks offer numerous benefits and its negative impacts can be brought under control with careful planning and management.

Perhaps the most important take away from this paper is that the computer scientists must evolve new methods and techniques to limit the adverse effects that social networking poses so that the cons of social networking don’t outweigh the pros such that we have to give up social networking and thus be deprived of many of the important benefits that it has to offer.

In this paper the authors have made a pilot study on both benefits and evil effects of social area networks. But the authors propose that more detail study is required especially on health issues. Sufficient number of data and then suitable statistical analysis is required. Future research into preventing cyber bullying, policing identity theft, monitoring workplace social networking, tools to improve language usage on social media, online safeguarding of children and young adults, curtailing the spread of misinformation and above all protecting the mental and physical health of users will go a long way in establishing social networking as beneficial rather than detrimental to the overall good of society.

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