

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY: SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The use of the Internet and social media influenced all sphere of life. Social media revolutionized the way we communicate and with whom we communicate. People are able to communicate across geography, languages and cultures. This study is focused basically on social media use as a communication tool, whether or not it is used by female students of senior secondary school as a mean of communication, how the use of social media helping students in their studies. Students share their ideas, thoughts and feelings with their online friends. Researches show teens and young adults are highly active on social media sites such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, MySpace and Quora etc. They use it for communicating with their friends, family, teachers and other members of society. Online sharing of information promotes the increase in communication skills. Social media has the potential to change the character of our social lives both on interpersonal and community level. Social media also has certain pros and cons so students must be aware of it while using it. Privacy issues are huge concern on these sites, it becomes more serious when user is targeted on the basis of his/her location and age.

Key Terms: Communication, Social media, Education, Students.



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INTRODUCTION

Few inventions have transformed the lives of individuals completely, one such invention was the Internet. With the invention of the Internet, social media came into existence, which changed the lives of people and their ways of communication. Information is power and communication is an effective way of spreading knowledge to empower the society. Media is a tool to transmit knowledge from one place to another and from one person to another. (Menon, 2019). Scientific development has changed human civilization completely. Technology is everywhere; it is spread like air around us, now we cannot even

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imagine our lives without it. Our traditions, customs, food habits, eating habits etc. all are influenced and changed by technology. It not only changes our life style but also changes the way we talk to one another, it changes our way of expression and even language too to some extent. Communication skills help individuals to interact with one another effectively. It helps in expressing our thoughts, feelings and conveying our messages or needs through languages and gestures. With the invention of the Internet, face-to-face interaction has been replaced with online communication. Technology such as social media has changed the way we communicate, we think and we behave. The term social media refers to the use of web based service and mobile technology used for communication. (Baruah, 2012). Teens and young adults are heavy users of the Internet. In India, among 451 million users, there are 385 million users belong to the age group of 12 year and above. (Ahaskar, 2019). There are certain pros and cons of everything so with social media, students must be aware of it. Before using any new instrument we carefully study its manual but when it comes to social media researches showed that people agree its terms and conditions without studying it and take it lightly. Students accept friend request of strangers just to increase their friend list and to show themselves more popular and acceptable among friends. Sharing personal information on social networks can be dangerous and it can ruin one's life. So the teens and young adult must be educated about the pros and cons of social media.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objectives of the paper are –

1. To find out the impact of social media as a communication tool.
2. To find out the awareness of students about different social media platforms.
3. To find out the use of social media for educational purpose.
4. To assess the usefulness of social media as a communication tool.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design

The research is qualitative, which enquires the role and importance of social media as a tool of communication. Survey method is used to collect data because it is found most appropriate to find out the growing use of social media as a communication tool.

Population and Sample

All the senior secondary school girl students studying in any school in south Delhi is the population of the study. The school and the sample of the study are selected by random

sampling method. The sample of 100 girl students from a government senior secondary school was selected for collecting data.

Research Tool

The researcher administered an online available questionnaire on the sample to gather data. Data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data collected from the students through a questionnaire and secondary data is collected from the Internet, magazines, newspapers, books and journals etc.

Statistical Analysis

The data received was analyzed qualitatively.

Limitations

1. The study included only the girl students as sample.
2. The study is conducted only on government school students.
3. Only the south zone of New Delhi is considered for data collection.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted survey research on the use of social media as a communication tool. The respondents were asked several questions based on the theme, on being asked about the use of social media as a communication tool 75 respondents agreed it is a major form of communication tool while the rest 25 did not agree with the idea. The data is represented below in figure number 1.

Social media as a communication tool:

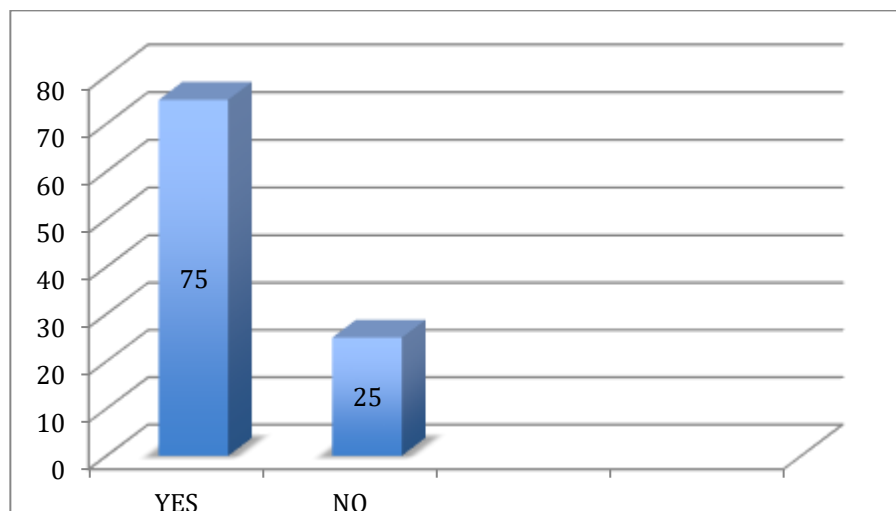


Figure No. 1

The above data is represented below in the form of percentage in figure number I

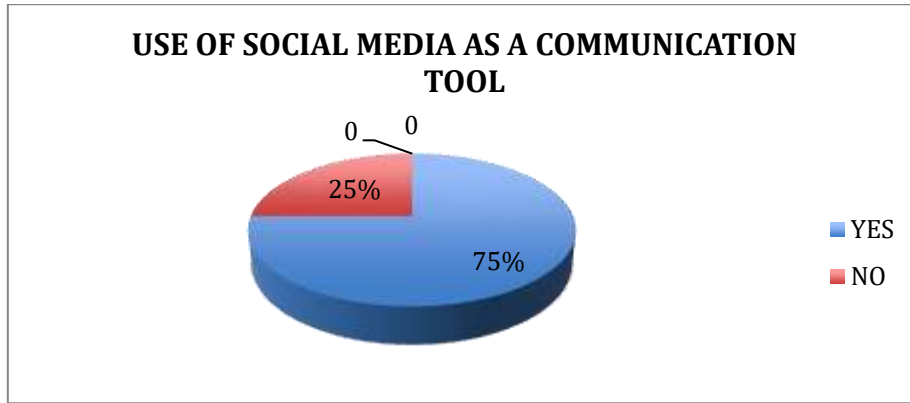


Figure No. I

By analyzing the data it can be easily conclude that social media platforms are strongly favored by students as a communication tool. Most of the students were accepting the fact that social media is a communication tool.

When respondents were asked about the awareness of different social media platforms and its use, 39 respondents out of 100 prefer social networking sites for interaction, 25 respondents were in favor of instant messaging app like Whatsapp, 15 students use video-sharing app like YouTube, 10 students prefer photo-sharing app, 6 respondents showed interest in micro blogging and 5 respondents prefer blogs. Although most of the students (39%) use social networks for communication but all the students were well aware about the difference of social media platforms.

The data received is clearly indicating that respondents are quite familiar with the different kind of social media platforms as shown in below figure number 2:

Awareness of different social media platforms:

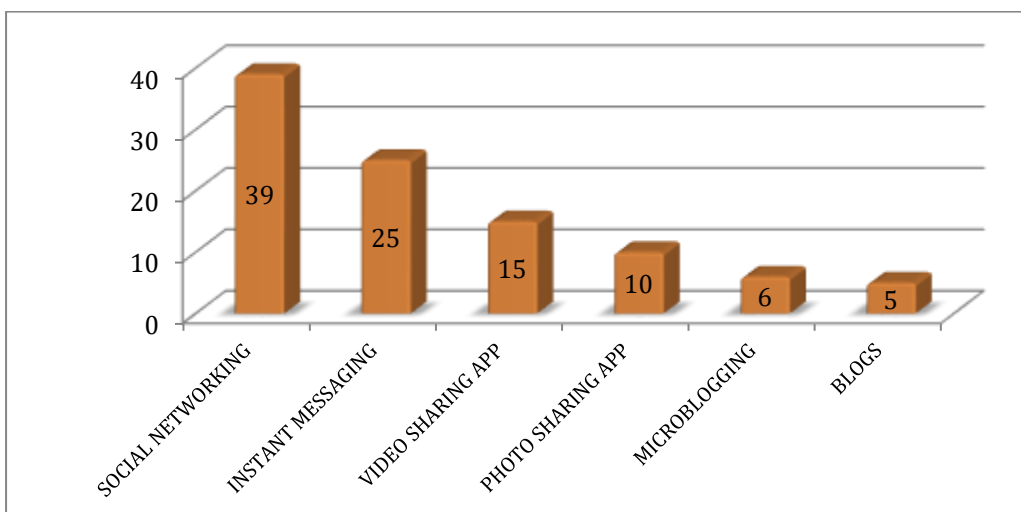


Figure No. 2

The above data is represented below in the form of percentage in figure number ii

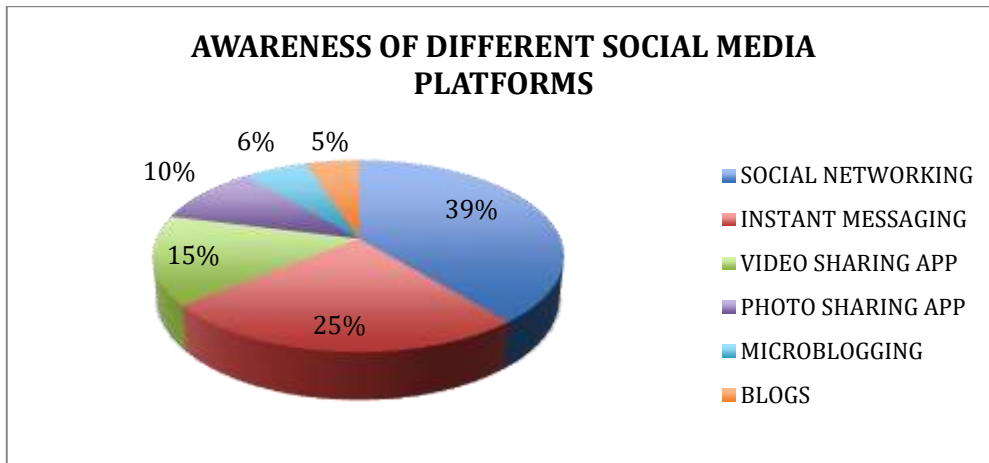


Figure No. II

The use of the Internet for getting information is very common among students when they were asked about the utilization of social media platforms for the educational purpose most of them 70 students out of 100 said that social media is very helpful in education and only 30 students denied its usefulness in education. The data received from the students are given below in the form of percentage:

Use of social media for educational purpose:

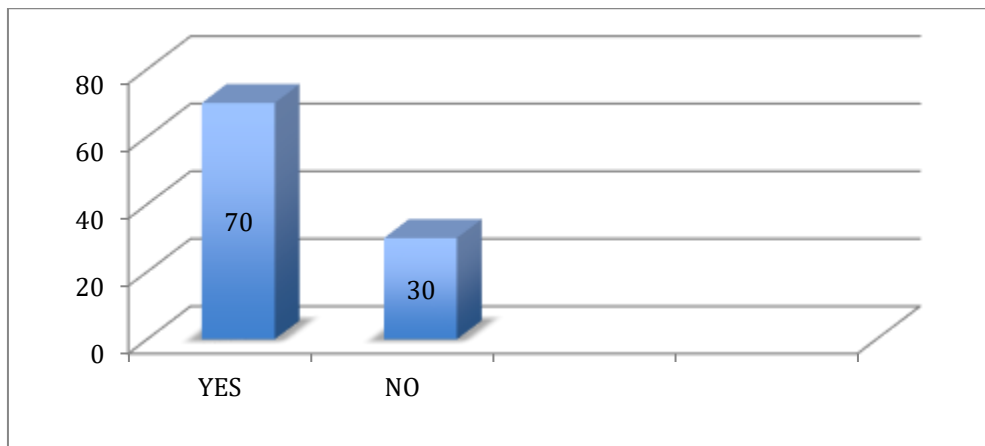


Figure No. 3

By analyzing the data received one can easily find the responses and favor of students. 70% of the students agreed that social media helps in education, only 30% students said it is not at all helpful in education. There are also some studies which concluded that these social media platforms, instead of helping in education, are responsible for lower grades. Academic grades were negatively influenced by the over use of social media. (Carter, 2013).

The above data is presented below in the form of percentage in figure number .III

Use of social media for educational purpose:

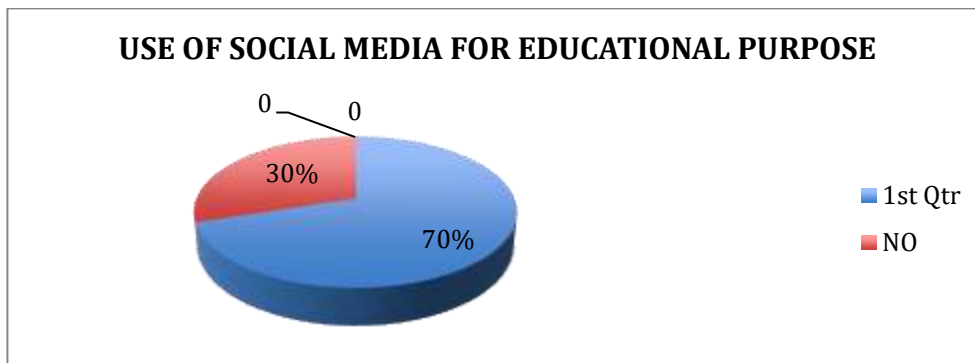


Figure No. III

When it was asked to the respondents about the usefulness of social media, 32% of respondents said that social media is an important and prominent tool of interaction with friends and family, while 26% respondents said it is a good medium of getting information. 17% respondents agreed on the view that social media bridges the gap of communication and 15% students said it helps in sharing ideas. Remaining 10% said social media is a marketing tool, which is used to promote business or products. Now it is a well-known fact that how social media is influencing the lives human beings. Social media platforms are used by students and people for many things such as socializing, shopping, finding information and sharing ideas. The study is based on student’s use of social media and the data received from the students are presented below in figure number 4:

Usefulness of social media as a communication tool:

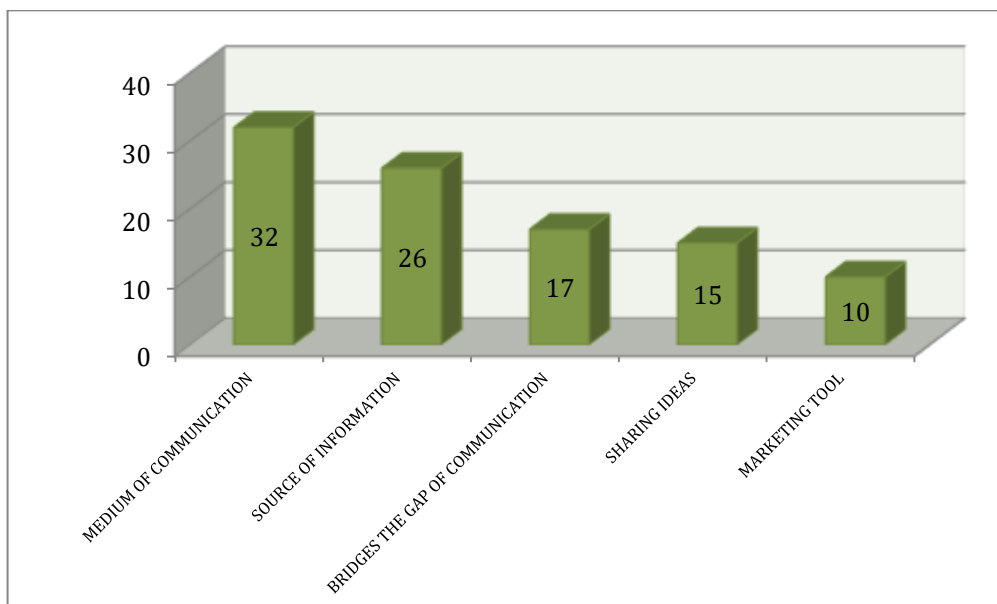


Figure No. 4

The above data is presented below in the form of percentage in figure number IV

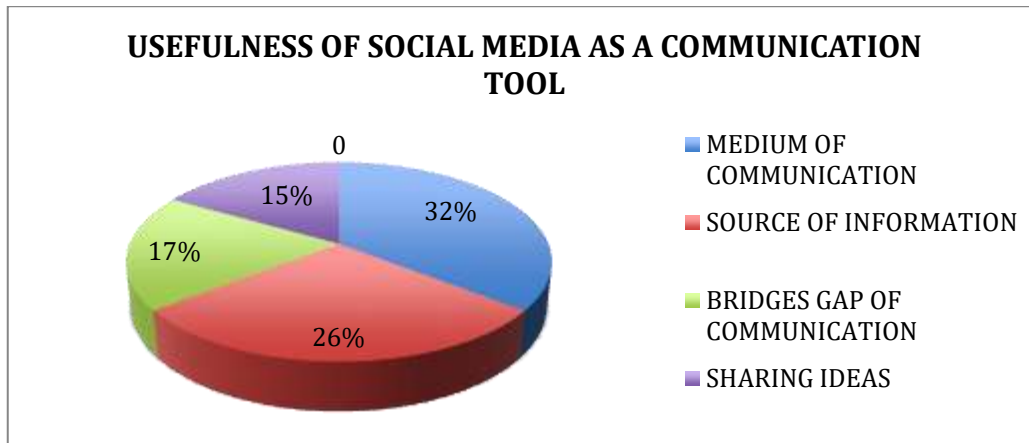


Figure No. IV

A careful analysis of the data shows that social media has bridged the gap of communication among people. Different types of social media platforms have changed the way of communication. Social media has the potential to change the fundamental character of our social lives. Even the senior secondary level female students also agree (75%) that social media is a communication tool only 25% of students did not agree with the idea. Young people and teens are the heavy users of the Internet and they use different medium of interaction to stay connected. Almost 39% of students use social networking sites to interact with one another. Students of senior secondary level are well aware of different types of social media platforms and also use them. There are heavy users of instant messaging app like Whatsapp and video sharing app like YouTube. Photo sharing app, micro blogging and blogs are also well occupied by the users. Social media is popular among teens and young people as a tool of communication; they also believe that it minimizes the gap of communication among people. The usefulness of social media is proved in almost all the fields of life including marketing and business sector.

Despite of numerous advantages of social media, there are so many disadvantages also. Some major advantages and disadvantages of social media are as under:

ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

1. TOOL OF COMMUNICATION:

Since the invention of the Internet, the way of communication has been changed completely. In the field of education, teachers create chat rooms, Whatsapp groups to extend classroom discussion and post quizzes, assignments and test etc.

2. SHARING IDEAS:

A huge population of students and teachers are active on social networks; pupil-teacher interaction is facilitated even after school hours. Teacher and students both

share ideas on this platform, which makes communication among them easier. It makes possible to connect with people of same interest and activities across geographical boundaries.

3. SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

Social media is full of information, if I say it is overloaded and overflowed with the information it will not be wrong. You can get all sorts of information with just one click.

4. BRIDGES COMMUNICATION GAP:

Social media makes it easy to find people of same thoughts, interested, activities etc. people make a profile on social network and connect with people and form a virtual group. It has reduced the gap of communication, now the distance and cost is no barrier in connecting with people across the seas.

5. COST EFFECTIVE:

There was a time when it was too expensive to talk with the person sitting in another state or city but with the invention of the internet it is almost free to talk with a person who is sitting even in other countries.

6. LESS TIME CONSUMING:

It takes only seconds or less than it to send a message to other people with just one click.

DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1. IMPERSONAL:

Social media can never beat face-to-face interaction among people. Fake emotions and false feelings are all overspread on social media. People on social networks show only good part of their lives and the negative side of their personality is totally hidden or lied. It could be very dangerous to trust people whom we met online.

2. SPREADING HATE:

Few such organizations are active on social media which are spreading hatred among people for their political and personal benefits.

3. FAKE NEWS:

There are certain laws by the government but still the social media platform is used to spread fake news to break the harmony among people.

4. PRIVACY ISSUES:

The data shared on these social media platforms is not secure, and it may be misused by mischievous elements that can create a problem in the user's life. Privacy issues are a major concern on these sites. Cyber bullying, cyber stalking and online scams are very commonly being seen in day-to-day life.

5. BREAKDOWN OF FAMILY TIES:

When people get addicted to social media, it may breakdown family ties. Social media is responsible for many divorces and negligence of children.

6. NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON GRADES:

There are so many studies, which indicated the negative influence of social media on student's grades because they hooked to social media and spend quality time in chatting with friends instead of studying. When students search for some information on social media; it distracts them to certain other alluring things, which kill their time of study. The addiction of online gaming also diverts their mind from studies.

CONCLUSION

There is a saying "too much is always harmful". Everything in the world has some advantages and disadvantages; it is up to the people how they deal with. Social media provides simple, inexpensive ways of communication and interaction with each other; students can create groups and chat rooms to enhance their capabilities and can systematically organize their studies. They must be aware of the productive and useful ways of handling social media accounts. Students must be educated about the reality of the virtual world and should learn to minimize the negative consequences of social media. The way we use social media makes it useful or harmful.

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