

Unreal World, Real Fears : Social networking sites making kids dumb?

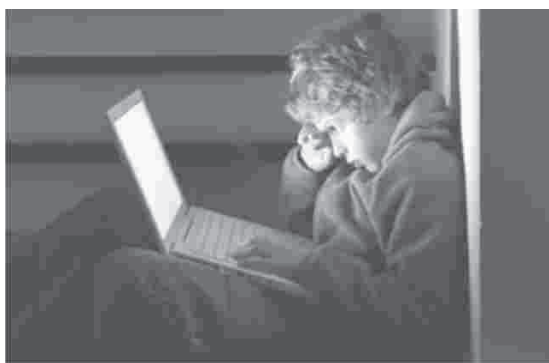
Ms. Shruti Goel

Abstract- *Delhi High court "Worried" that children can be exploited through social networking sites, and asked Facebook and Google to submit within four weeks suggestions on safety measures for online usage of such sites by minors in India. A bench of justices B D Ahmed and Vibhu Bakhru voiced concern about Indian children entering into agreement with Facebook and other social networking sites and then being lured knowingly and unknowing into illegality by adults. In view of this the study consisted that how the kids were addicted by facebook and with help of this social site they were dump in houses.*

Key Words: Social networking, Facebook

Introduction

Online social networks are currently a major way through which individuals interact on the Internet Technologies, such as computers and the Internet, have become enmeshed in young people's lives. A preliminary search on the Psych INFO database for English-language articles published in the past 12 months on youth and computers yielded 212 works. Hooked onto the virtual world, today's kids are living in a cyberspace of their own that is far removed from the ground reality. Masters of their own networks into which the elder generation is often unwelcome, the children have turned addicts of social networking sites – Facebook, for one. Thus busy, the children have little or no time for parents, friends, relative and the society in general.



Technology in moderation gives them an advantage. But many parents and psychologists

worry that instead of being a positive, addiction to networking sites and gaming zones are doing more harm than good to children. School authorities are worried over the overpowering influence of the social networking sites and the ever addictive games have on the children, who slide from being a potential achiever to a problem case.

History of Facebook and Users in India :-

Facebook, Inc. is an American multinational Internet corporation which runs the social networking website Facebook. After having been privately owned by Mark Zuckerberg and other founders, and the shared ownership having been contested in the meanwhile, Facebook eventually filed for an initial public offering on February 1, 2012, and was headquartered in Menlo Park, California.[1] Facebook Inc. began selling stock to the public and trading on the NASDAQ on May 18, 2012.

Smart enough to understand technology and fast enough to master it, the children become net freaks in no time and the transition is so smooth and quick that it is hardly noticeable. Once addicted, very difficult to kick up the facebooking or gaming habits, teachers and parents lament. How can they when they have greater, easier access to net on computers, tablets, phones and now sites which do not need live internet connection to operate (Rajinikanth

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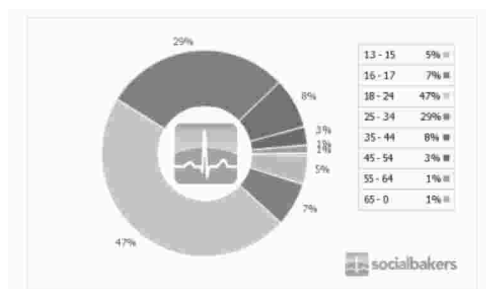
site).

One of the most worrisome negative impact the new media is that it has taken over the generation that cannot live without it – and is becoming slowly out of sync with the real world, real people, real society. Facebook addicts have great difficulty in carrying out one to one conversation even with own friends and feel more at home 'chatting' on FB window.

What this Paper tries to find out the reasons for which children are using the social networking sites these days. Further paper tries to do is to dig deep into this most recent malice and analyse how it was affecting the children – and the resultant impact on the thinking process through the survey method. And ultimately how these are dragging them from real world to virtual world. Psychologists and sociologists are for counselling and therapy that would bring about a change in the mindset of the children to help them take advantage of the technology and not become a victim of it.

Age and Gender Distribution In India

Facebook has been growing in India at a blazing speed and has become THE platform for any social media marketer. Facebook added around 1.9Mn users in past 30 days to reach a total of 28.5Mn users. This is approximately equal to 2.4% of India's population and 35% of total online population of India. India stands at number 5 in terms total userbase for Facebook, after US, Indonesia, UK and Turkey. With the current growth rate India, would be at #3 within the next 3-4 weeks. The demography of Indian Facebook users is pretty much a reflection of web users overall. About 29% of the users are female. 47% users are between 18-24 yrs of age and another 30% between 25-34yrs.



Facebook India Age Distribution

1. 28.5 Mn Users. Growing at 7% monthly.
2. Reaches 35% of online population
3. 47% users between 18-24yrs.
4. MTV India has largest fanbase followed by Tata Docomo.

Risks of Youth Using Social Media

Using social media becomes a risk to adolescents more often than most adults realize. Most risks fall into the following categories: peer-to-peer; inappropriate content; lack of understanding of online privacy issues; and outside influences of third-party advertising groups. cyberbullying is deliberately using digital media to communicate false, embarrassing, or hostile information about another person. It is the most common online risk for all teens and is a peer-to-peer risk.

Although "online harassment" is often used interchangeably with the term "cyberbullying," it is actually a different entity. Current data suggest that online harassment is not as common as offline harassment, and participation in social networking sites does not put most children at risk of online harassment. On the other hand, cyberbullying is quite common, can occur to any young person online, and can cause profound psychosocial outcomes including depression, anxiety, severe isolation, and, tragically, suicide.

Sexting

Sexting can be defined as "sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital devices." Many of these images become distributed rapidly via cell phones or the Internet. This phenomenon does occur among the teen population; a recent survey revealed that 20% of teens have sent or posted nude or seminude photographs or videos of themselves.

Facebook Depression

A New phenomenon called "Facebook

depression,” is noticed in some of the students. It is defined as depression that develops when preteens and teens spend a great deal of time on social media sites, such as Facebook, and then begin to exhibit classic symptoms of **depression.** **22,–,27 Acceptance by and** contact with peers is an important element of adolescent life. The intensity of the online world is thought to be a factor that may trigger depression in some adolescents.

The researchers have the following hypothesis for the research :- the researchers were going to research through questionnaires, and some places by interviews. To carry this research researcher did survey of 100 school children of best schools in Delhi like Springdales, DPS of age group 9yrs to 20 14yrs and also interviewed school principals, psychologists, and parents to know their view.

The hypothesis for the study is as follows—

1. Students using Facebook or social networking sites were addicted with daily using these sites around 10 to 12 hours.
2. These students were dragging away from real social world.
3. Extra use of Facebook and social sites creates non value of our culture.
4. Use of Facebook and Social Networking sites is more for the purpose of fun and friendship not for the development.
5. Because of these sites kids/children's were dumping in houses. With these hypothesis researchers were done survey and conclude as hypothesis were correct.

Conclusion

After discussions, questionnaires, and interviews some of the facts were found. Top reasons for joining Facebook are to keep in touch with friends and for fun. Facebook is the most popular networking social site today due to various applications, games, several functions etc. children like to upload their pictures, videos, post links, comments, and know what is happening in their friend's life.

Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends but somehow it is disconnecting children from real society. At present age the kids or children's are no more interested to attend family functions, parties etc. due to busy in social

networking sites. They think that family functions means they are just waste of time and boring events for them. Everyone chants just one mantra- “mom, what are we going to do there, you and dad go and attend uncle's party, we will stay at home and take care of home” !!!!! Next thing which observed is the shift of games from outdoor activities to indoor games, especially online and Facebook games. Gone are the days when children used to play badminton, cricket, football etc in the park. Today, the games which are discussed among children have changed. These are no new sports but computer games like Farmville, cityville which have caught the fancy of children today. social networking sites not hampers the overall growth of a child but also affects their health. Besides this, no physical activity results in obesity, back pain, headache, depression, frequent mood swings etc. All these factors can be ghastly in the long run if not taken care of an early stage. According to psychologist Mr. Vineet kumar, children are facing from actual psychological conditions like Facebook Addiction Disorder(FAD) On asking in a survey, 98% children said that as they first open the internet, the first thing they type is www.facebook.com. even during the exam times, 89% students login to Facebook for at least 20 minutes. This Facebook addiction increases the distraction level and reduces the attention span among children. It has been found that because of the excessive use of social networking sites, these days children are becoming self centered, which is affecting their personal relationships with parents and family. Around 72% children don't spend more than 2 hours with their parents and this way parents feel left out and children enjoy in their virtual world of mere online friends. Today we need to accept the fact that “unreal world” has become the reality in our children's life. They can't be kept away from the Social networking sites. Young minds that have potential to shape the fortunes of the world are now trapped in the net of Facebook. It is the time children need to be saved by the time they become totally addict. For this, as a parent a liberal scrutiny would definitely be a good option rather strictly boycotting the children from these websites. With the growing trend of technology and gadgets, networking is unavoidable to a great

extent. On one hand, where we are evaluating how children are losing their social etiquettes And their behaviour has become weird but on the other hand, kids have become smarter. Technology and these websites have made them aware about the global world in a way that bookish knowledge even can't make children aware. As it is rightly said, "Fear of fire doesn't mean staying away in aloof forever", thus, children must be shown right way to use these social networking sites as an informative tool and not just leisure and playing tool.

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