



# CHRONICLE OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURAL STUDIES

A Peer Reviewed Bimonthly International Journal

Special Issue On  
**IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SOCIETY**



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IMPACT FACTOR: 4.197 (IIJIF)

ISSN: 2454-5503

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OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURAL STUDIES (CHCS)

VOL. 5

NO. 5

SPECIAL ISSUE

OCTOBER 2019

A Peer Reviewed Bimonthly International Journal

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## IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SOCIETY (Book 1)

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**Full Journal Title:** Chronicle of Humanities & Cultural Studies (CHCS)

**Print ISSN:** 2454-5503

**Impact Factor:** 4.197 (IIJII)

**Frequency:** Bimonthly / **Language:** Multi language / **Journal**

**Country/Territory:** India

**Publisher:** Centre for Humanities & cultural Studies, A-102, Sanghavi Regency, Sahyadrinagar, Kalyan (W) (MS). Email: chcskalyan@gmail.com

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## Impact of Social Media on Society: An Overview

**Dr. V. D. Satpute**

Principal,

Late Ramesh Warpudkar ACS College, Sonpeth Dist. Parbhani.

The term 'social media' is most frequently used in the recent past. The advent of the internet in the 1990s led to major developments in the world of communication. The revolution in the accessibility of the world of communication. The revolution in the accessibility of internet provoked the use of social media at great extent. Presently no field is untouched by the social media. It is being tremendously used by teachers, students, businessmen, politicians etc in their day today life. It is often talked that the 2014 parliament elections are won by the BJP by the use of social media. Today we will find hardly any young man who hasn't used such media at least once a day. Internet and mobile based communications have been increasing day by day and becoming part and parcel of our personal life. The various networking sites are referred to as 'social media'. It helps us to create content, share it, bookmark it and network at the very cheapest rate. The reason behind adopting the social media in a great extent by the people and making it so popular is its easy access, convenience, functionality and flexibility in technology. It is difficult to provide any fixed definition of social media since it goes on changing continuously. The Oxford dictionary defines social media as, "Websites and applications used for social networking". Social Media is a web or mobile based platform that enables us to communicate or share our content with others in electronic form. In recent days the word social media has been used synonymous with social networking sites such as facebook, twitter, whatsapp, vikis, vlogs etc.

This paper attempts to define the meaning of social media, its characteristics, types, its positive and negative impact on society and suggestions to stop the abuse of social media sites for the welfare of human beings. The assumption or hypothesis of the paper is that people use social media to communicate but its impact can be positive or negative. It can be proved boon to society, if used with great care.

**Characteristics of Social Media:** The first important characteristic of social media is its **connectedness** to people interested in same topics. This feature enables users to remain 24x7 hours in contact with others with the help of PCs, laptops, mobile phones etc. The second characteristic is the **collaboration**. The connectedness helps people to collaborate and create knowledge. For example Wikipedia helps us to create an open web based encyclopedia through contribution from



hundred of thousand people. The third characteristic of social media is **community**. Connectedness and collaboration helps to create and sustain communities. Such communities help us to create awareness about various issues. Such communities are used to receive inputs of various policies making process or seeking feedback into delivery of public services.

**Types of Social Media:** Social networking is an online service that enables its users to create virtual networks with likeminded people who are close in real life. Following are some of the frequently used forms of social media:

1. **Facebook:** It is an American online social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos, videos and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. The purpose of facebook is to make the world more open and connected. It was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. Facebook with 2.3 billion users is one of the topmost well known social networking sites.
2. **Twitter:** It is online news and social networking site where people communicate in short messages, i.e. upto 140 characters, called tweets. It is a free micro blogging service that allows registered users to broadcast short posts. Tweeter is the most well known micro blogging site. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and services.
3. **Wikipedia:** It is a free, open content online encyclopedia created through the collaborative effort of a community of users known as Wikipedians. Anyone registered on the site can create an article for publication.
4. **Blogs:** These are descriptive content pages created and maintained by individual users and may contain text, photos and links to other web sites.
5. **Videoblogs:** These are blogging sites that mainly use video as the main form of content supported by text. You tube is the largest video sharing site.
6. **LinkedIn:** It is a social networking site designed specifically for the business community. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people you know and trust professionally.
7. **Pinterest:** It is a social network that allows users to visually share and discover new interests by posting images or videos to their own or others board. Clicking on an image will take you to the original source. For example clicking on a

picture of a pair of shoes might redirect users to a purchasing site.

**Positive Impacts of Social Media on Society:** The advent of any new technology has two sides i.e merits and demerits or has its pros and cons. In present context, social media is tremendously used by people and hence along with benefits, it has some bad effects on society. Here are some of the major pros and cons of the social networking sites.

The very fundamental merit of the social media is its **ability to connect other people** all over the world from anywhere. Your facebook account will keep you in touch with your old friends or close relatives living abroad. Your twitter account will help you to meet new people to whom you have never heard before. In past times we will have to depend on landlines or snail mail to connect with others but now we can simply use our laptop or mobile and immediately start communicating with anyone by using the platforms like twitter, whatsapp, facebook etc. This **instant communication** made our life easy and comfortable. **Real time news and information discovery** is another positive thing of social media. In past people used to wait for hours together for news bulletin broadcasting on TV or wait for news paper boy in the morning for latest updates but today if you simply jump on social media, the updates are available on a single click. Social media is a great asset for business owners for they can connect with their customers and sell their products. Today's market is totally depending on such platforms. In fact those owners who are not taking the assistance of such platforms they are lagging behind the other business owners who do use such platforms. **Fun and enjoyment** is another good thing about the social media. In fact lot of people just use these mediums for purely entertainment purpose. Now it has been possible for us to listen the songs of our liking and watch movies whenever we desire to watch. The use of social media in education provides students with the ability to get more useful information. Social network tools afford students and institutions with multiple opportunities to improve learning methods.

**Negative Impacts of Social Media on Society:** Along with these pros, we do have some cons of the social media. We are receiving **information in overwhelming form** which results in getting burdened with it and unable to choose the correct one. We receive many messages, images and photos via whatsapp, facebook, twitter etc with which we get overwhelmed and browsing it becomes very difficult. We receive many such things, where we are not at all interested. **Privacy** has been the issue of great concern in the use of these platforms. Sometimes we don't want to reveal our personal issues but it doesn't remain in our hand once you post such information to others. If you

share your geographical location, you will get tracked and mischievous people will find you in trouble. Sharing too much with the public can open up all sorts of problems that sometimes can't ever be undone. Social peer pressure and cyber bullying many times can result in serious stress anxiety and depression. Distraction and procrastination is another adverse side of the frequent use of social media. The face to face conversation is being distracted when someone looks into the phone again and again. Most of the time, the officials in the office are so busy in browsing the irrelevant things that they procrastinate and avoid doing certain assigned responsibilities. This results in someone's insincerity in doing his duties. In the classroom, students are busy in chatting with each other which results in getting distracted from their studies and ultimately affecting their grades. Most of the parents complain that the invention of the cell phones have destructed the life of their kids. The college students, instead of using the mobiles for academic purpose, they are using it for surfing the pornography websites. Most of the time, social networking need too much sitting down in one spot staring at the artificial light of the cell phone or monitor which results in sleep disruption. The excessive use of social media is driving young men towards unrest and depression. The provoking messages are proving to be the cause of social disharmony. The riot in the Bhima Koregaon is the recent example of making the sensitive messages viral and thereby creating disorder in the society. Wrong doers are using fake accounts to create such situations in the society. Sometimes the sensitive posts on social media are becoming the cause of murder and bloodshed.

We have seen that the arrival of the social media has its pros and cons. The very objective of any technology is naturally the welfare of human beings. The technology itself is not bad; its use by us makes it bad or good. Likewise the various platforms of social media are not bad by themselves. People are very much addicted to use social media and now it is impossible to stop them from using such platforms. In fact one should not try to stop them; instead we should educate them about the best way to stay safe on social networks. The appropriate use of social media will stop us from possible dangers. Many of us are using social media accounts like facebook, twitter, whatsapp, LinkedIn etc but we are not sure whether these accounts are safe or not. The following precautions will help us to keep our accounts safe: 1. Keep your password long and strong by using mixed characters. 2. Use different passwords for each social media account. 3. Set up your security answers. 4. If you have social media apps on your mobile phone, be sure to protect your device with password. 5. Be selective with friend request, if you don't know the person, don't accept their request. It

could be a fake account. 6. Click links with caution. Social media accounts are regularly hacked. 7. Be careful about what you share. Don't reveal sensitive personal information: home, address, financial information, phone numbers. The more you post the easier it is to have your identity stolen. 8. Become familiar with privacy policies of the social media channels you use and customize your privacy settings to control who sees what. 9. Protect your computer by installing antivirus software to safeguard. Also ensure that your browser and software are kept up to date. 10. Remember to log off when you are done. 11. Do not check your cell phone immediately after getting up from the sleep since it increases our stress or anxiety. 12. Do not share the photos of your children because its misuse may put your children's life in danger. 13. Use social media whenever it is essential, otherwise it's just a waste of time.

By keeping in view the various above referred platforms of social networking, its characteristic, its positive and negative effects on society and ways to keep us safe while using the social media, it is confirmed that technology itself is not bad, but its use can be good or bad. Popular columnist Mr Sandeep Waslekar Quotes one report from Prof. Payal Arora from Netherland where she has surveyed that the use of social media is increasing in rural and small towns of India due to the following three reasons: First to communicate with the relatives living in distant places, second to see programmes on entertainment and third to pass the time. People like to express their living style, eating habits and what they feel about the world around them. They also expect that people should like their posts. If they don't get sufficient likes, they get distressed. In short the media is not used at great extent to enhance ones knowledge and make progress in their life. Further Waslekar quotes the reaction of IIT topper student of this year who says that he lives away from social media. Sensible use of the social media will save our young generation from destroying their lives.

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