

Social media has destroyed real life communication.

Outline:

1- Introduction.

2- How has social media destroyed real life communication?

(i) Less interactive communication

(a) Absence of <sup>human</sup> interactive communication due to virtual interaction.

(ii) Fake relationships

(a) Quick access to social media is destroying real life relationships by replacing them with fake ones.

(iii) Loss of human-values and empathy.

(a) Social media is destroying human values like dignity, respect and empathy while communicating.

(iv) Fake-news and disinformation

(a) Communication on social-media has been reduced to disinformation and fake news, that affect real-life communication negatively.



## (V) Violation of Privacy

Social media is violating the privacy of individuals communicating on it.

### 3- How social media has helped mankind?

#### (i) Gave voice to voiceless:

(a) Social media has given a virtual platform to people, who were previously marginalized to express themselves.

#### (ii) Reduced territorial boundaries in communication

(a) Social media has reduced barriers, which affected communication earlier.

#### (iii) Highlighting of social evils

(a) Social media is acting as a platform, where people can highlight prevailing social evils.

#### (iv) Strengthened public opinion

(a) Social media is strengthening both democracy and public opinion.

### 4. Suggestions:

(a) Balancing between social media and real-life communication.



- (b) Promoting ethical use of social media through education.
- (c) Putting a time-limit on social media screen-time.
- (d) Ensuring social media is not being used to violate fundamental human rights.
- (e) Protecting individuals from fake-news and disinformation by strengthening defamation laws.

**5- Conclusion.**

There is no denying the fact that social media is destroying real-life communication in myriads of ways. However, it is a great setback to its imagined purpose, which was to act as a great equaliser in communication. Similarly, it was thought that social media will improve human interaction and communication through easy and quick access to communication. However, it seems a dream gone sour as social media has become a threat to not only its primary cause but to quality of life. Social media has given rise to less human interactive mode of communication. It is destroying the most cherished human values, like being empathetic. Similarly, social media is acting as a mill of producing fake news and disinformation, that destroy the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. In addition, social media is being used as a platform to infringe upon people's fundamental human rights like privacy and free speech. However



this is just one side of the picture, as social media has the potential to be a game changing phenomenon in myriads of ways. For instance, it has reduced or perhaps, eliminated the barriers affecting access to both communication and information. This is just the tip of iceberg. Social media is strengthening both democracy and public opinion. Furthermore, social media is acting as an agent of social change by highlighting the prevalent social evils in society. Thus, it can be deduced that social media is a double-edged sword. It has both positive and negative impacts. However, if it is used responsibly and productively, it can still deliver on the promise of being a greater equalizer.

This essay is divided into four sections. First section deals with factors, which are making social media to destroy real-life communication. Second section explains some of the positive

impacts brought about by social media. Similarly, third section gives some policy suggestions to make social-media more effective and productive. However, last section concludes the essay.

Social media is destroying real-life communication due to less human interaction on this platform. The virtual interaction on social media can never replace real-life interactions. For instance, less human interaction on social media can completely change the content of communication or it can raise ambiguity in the communication. The real life communication is not a mere exchange of words; instead, body-language, gestures, features and intentions are also required to convey the message. However, if even a slightest of ambiguity is found in human communication, it can be addressed. This is not the case with social media, which means



Inability to comprehend the message on social-media can make the whole exercise vague. Therefore, 'emojis and stickers' used on social-media can never be an alternative to human-interactions, based on gestures and body-language. Furthermore, social-media is also changing or perhaps, ~~changing~~ <sup>destroying</sup> the entire purpose of human-interactions and communication.

Social media is also giving rise to fake relationships. For instance, quick access to social-media is getting people addicted to it. Consequently it destroys real-life relationships and replaces them with fake-ones. There is no concrete evidence or possibility of social-media friends, being an alternate to real-life friends. Furthermore, social media is destroying mental health and quality of life. Several scientific studies conducted show that excessive use of social media causes several psychological issues.

such as anxiety, depression and feeling of being left-out. In addition, a social-media addict is unable to look after or unable to give time to his family, which can result in a toxic relationships. Thus, social-media is destroying human relationships.

Similarly, social media is destroying the most cherished human values, such as, empathy, respect and dignity, which are essential for real-life communication. For instance, people abuse each other on social media on disagreeing on something under discussion. Thus, exchanging valleys of abuse on social-media is the sign of a barbaric civilization and rotten society. Furthermore, nationalist perspective induced communication on social media is devoid of any empathy towards other nations. The debates on social-media regarding Russia-Ukraine war is a case in point. These debates are charged with extreme nationalism.



that overlooks the atrocities of war on both people and instead it glorifies the miseries and sufferings of other people. Thus, debates and communications of ideas on social media are devoid of cherished human values.

Furthermore, social media is destroying real-life communication through false-news and disinformation, which polarize ~~are~~ society and politics. Instead, of being a medium for political discussion, the social media has been reduced to a battle arena for different political ideologies.

In order, to satisfy one's ideological appetite, people victimize their political opponents, either through disinformation or through abusing. Thus, it fails the very purpose of communication on social-media and weakens social bonds. For instance, two friends engaging on social-media debates are likely to become enemies, if they do not agree to disagree.

Moreover, social media platforms not only fail or destroy real life communication, however, they also violate the fundamental rights of individuals. What is then the purpose of communication on social media, if it is being manipulated through algorithms or AI, which is more concerning. The Cambridge Analytica <sup>disclosure</sup> is a case in point. It explained how social media is used to manipulate both flow of information and decision-making abilities of individuals. The Russian interference in US President Donald Trump's elections is another factor, that reiterates this fact. Furthermore, revelations by a former US intelligence operative, Edward Snowden is another example of this. Snowden became a whistle blower and revealed shocking information about how is the US government using technology to keep an eye on every citizen, which is violating their constitutional



rights. Adding more to it, is the case of social media sites stealing personal data of their users and selling to corporate firms for profit.

The preceding paragraphs discuss the negative impacts of social media, which destroy real-life communication. However, the following paragraphs deal with factors, which have made social media a game-changer in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Though, social media has destroyed real-life communication. However, it has also given voice to millions of voiceless people, who were marginalized earlier. Furthermore, social media has ended the monopoly of governments over flow of information. For instance, earlier people were more dependent on traditional media for information, however, in case

of censorship, the information was compromised. Consequently, people were presented with a distorted or unreal information. However, social media has changed that. Nowadays, social-media is taking over as primary media, due to uncensored flow of information. Thus, atrocities committed in ~~France~~ Palestine or Kashmir cannot be hidden from outside world. Therefore, social media is empowering people by giving them a voice for demanding their rights.

Earlier, communication was done through either telephones or letters, which were both expensive and time consuming. It could take even months to take a letter from one country to another. Similarly, postal service too had many structural constraints, which hindered the posting on time. However, with the emergence of social-media, it can take only seconds, for a message to be transferred



from one place to another or from one country to another.

Social-media has overcome territorial restrictions, with the help of it, people from different cultures are getting together. Thus, social-media is playing a key role in the modern-day globalisation of world and interconnectivity between nations.

Social-media is also acting as a great educator to many people. Earlier, the governments had absolute monopoly over both means and flow of information, which means a great deal of information was censored or was kept hidden from people. However, that is no longer the case now. On the contrary, social media has ended absolute monopoly of governments over information by ensuring the free flow of information. Thus, social media is highlighting prevalent social evils in society, is educating people about them and is possibly working for their redressal.

Moreover, social media is strengthening both democracy and public opinion. Nowadays, every political party ensures its presence on social media in order to tap electorate and garner support. It has given rise to the notion of digital democracy, where social-media is used as a platform for political process. Furthermore, social media is also ensuring the accountability of public office holders by closely monitoring their activities. Social-media groups hold government and government officials by highlighting their performance. In addition, social media also shapes public opinion about matters concerning to masses, which keeps people informed, educated and helps them to make informed decisions. Thus, social media is a productive political platform, guaranteeing, it is used positively.

The preceding paragraphs discuss some positive impacts of social-media on society. However, the



The following paragraphs discuss some policy suggestions, which can help to make social-media more productive, to prevent it from destroying real-life communication.

To begin with, individuals need to balance between their daily life and use of social-media. People should be encouraged to give importance to human interactions over virtual ones. There is a general tendency that social-media is considered an alternative to real-life communication. However, in the long run it leads to fatal results, as close relations get compromised. Furthermore, a lot of productive time gets wasted due to excessive use of social media. Therefore, individual efforts are required to strike a balance between personal life and social-media.

Similarly, education systems should inculcate ethical use of social-media in students. Social media should be a mean to an end, not an end in itself. Thus, parents and teachers

Should guide students in this regard. Parents need to be careful themselves with social-media, as children get familiar and adopt the habits of their parents. However, if parents themselves are not aware about ethical use of social media, why expect the children to be any different, then. It is generally observed that children, who are mostly affected by academic burdens are more prone to social-media addiction. Therefore, it is imperative that schools adopt goals oriented learning and soothe their students by incorporating extra-curricular activities. Learning should be made a fun-exercise not a tiresome ritual.

Furthermore, individuals should put some self-imposed limitations upon themselves. For instance, there is a feature called limiting screen-time, which can help to cut excessive use of social media. Furthermore, digital health watches are designed in a way to encourage



individuals to undertake physical activities, instead of laying on bed and using social-media. For example, health watches remind individuals about their goals constantly that keeps them motivated to steer clear of bad habits like excessive use of social media.

Moreover, on governmental end, there is a need to regulate social-media platforms, so that they may not violate fundamental human rights like of privacy. Social media platforms and companies should be made to comply with this, so that they may not steal either personal data or information for corporate ends or purposes. Similarly, regulation of social-media should not violate the fundamental rights of citizens, such as that it may not resemble to an Orwellian-"Big-Brother is watching" surveillance. In addition, social media should not be given a free-hand to trample upon human sanctities, either.

Last but not the least, governments should protect their respective citizens from the scourge of fake-news and disinformation, which is a global phenomenon in contemporary age of social-media.

For instance, social-media led fake-news and disinformation are a threat to both democracy and civilization.

Additionally, social-media led propaganda wars pose serious health related implications for individuals. For instance, a coordinated campaign on social-media based on fake-news can put safety of individuals at risk also that of their families. Similarly, individuals face psychological issues like depression due to fake-news. Thus, it is imperative that states throughout the world take fast-track policy actions to mitigate the intensity of social-media induced disinformation by strengthening defamation laws.

The preceding paragraphs discuss some humble policy



Suggestions to help social-media be less destructive. However, the following paragraph concludes this essay.

In conclusion, it can be said that social-media has destroyed real-life communication in myriads of ways. However, this is just one side of the picture, as social-media has also helped mankind in multiple ways. However, the negative effects of social-media still cast a long shadow over its positive impacts. In the age of globalization, as people, countries and economies are interconnecting with each other, so are the challenges. The cyber-related crimes are a case in point. Furthermore, the recorded history of civilization suggests that mankind is an intelligent species if it can conquer natural disasters through cooperation and knowledge, then come what may, it can survive the destructive age of social-media, only if there is global cooperation.