

Growing power of social media: Prospects and problems

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Thesis statement:

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool and provides many opportunities to the modern world. However, society faces dilemma due to some issues associated with the rise of social media, which requires diligent attention.

1) Introduction

2) Social media has provided various opportunities in the following ways:

2.1: Highlights the core issues related to public safety by ending monopoly of news agencies.
Case in point: Wikileaks published documents related to Iraq war.

2.2: Played pivotal role in national integration during crucial times by curbing communication gap

Case in point: During 2022 floods in Pakistan, social media campaigns united the nation.

2.3: Social media enhances digital democracy by bridging gap between political leaders and masses.
Case in point: Use of social media campaign in the US elections.

2.4: Benefits the local industries to expand businesses by reaching potential client.

2.5: Commercial access facilitates the circulation of knowledge, enabling young individuals to find multiple income streams.

Case in point: Growing concept of freelancing.

2.6: The concept of online learning has made education accessible and affordable, increasing overall literacy rate.

Case in point: Mobile school project in India.

2.7: Governmental uses social media to soften the image of country to increase tourism.

Case in point: Mongolia has initiated a global campaign and increased tourism by 30%.

3) The following issues are associated with the rise of social media:

3.1: The decentralized nature of social media facilitates propaganda campaigns, potentially leading to heightened law and order situations.

Case in point: Riots erupted in France over the killing of muslim teenager on 23 June 2023.

3.2: Infringement of privacy and data breaches cause depression and suicide by victims.

Case in point: According to World Health Organization 782,000 people are affected by such crime.

3.3: Easily available pornographic material causing moral definity, resulting in sexual harassment.
Case in point: Addicted people objectify the women according to Equalities department of the UK.

3.4: Users get ~~scam~~ scammed easily because of unawareness regarding the usage of online platforms.

Case in point: Money lending apps in Pakistan

4) Pragmatic measures to overcome the issues of social media:

4.1: Incorporate tools in social media to identify the propaganda campaigns.

Case in point: Social networking app (X) is using such technology.

4.2: Cyber harassment helplines or online apps connected with police to mitigate sexual harassment cases.

Case in point: "National cyber bullying helpline and app" in the UK.

4.3) Digital hygiene campaigns to avoid online scams on governmental level.

Case in point: Initiated by Rwanda reduction by

Conclusion:

Introduction:

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool and provides many opportunities to the world. It has completely revolutionized the digitalization process and enhanced the concept of globalization by connecting people efficiently and effectively. Social media has benefited the world by highlighting core issues related to public safety by ending the monopoly of news agencies and playing a pivotal role in national integration during critical times by curbing the communication gap in diverse societies. Moreover, it enhances the concept of digital democracy by bridging the gap between political leaders and the masses. Besides, it helps businesses to hire talent throughout the world, and it connects the industries directly to their clients. Additionally, it helps the countries to provide efficient education and fosters the tourism industry. Despite many benefits, it poses some issues. Due to its decentralized nature, it facilitates propaganda campaigns, potentially leading to heightened security challenges. In addition to that, social media infringes on privacy and causes depression and suicide by victims. Moreover, the availability of pornographic material and unawareness regarding the usage of social media has become the root cause of many serious crimes. However, the issue can be overcome through pragmatic measures. First, incorporate tools in social media apps to identify propaganda campaigns.

Secondly, introduce cyber crime harassment helplines or apps and start digital hygiene campaigns. Lastly, international regulations are required to hold technological giants accountable for unethical material. All the above mentioned aspects highlight that social media is a powerful tool and provides many opportunities. However, society faces a dilemma due to some issues associated with the rise of social media, which require diligent attention.

First, it highlights the core issues related to public safety by ending monopoly of news agencies. Media is considered as medium of information for public regarding government policies. It influences the narrative of public, due to which the government in various countries controls the news agencies on public safety issues. Because of freedom of speech people started preferring social applications. Since the last decade, various sensitive issues have been highlighted on networking websites. For instance, during the Iraq war, western media portrayed Iraqi government as a threat to ~~national~~ global security. However, the WikiLeaks website posted some secret documents regarding atrocities by the USA and fake allegations on Iraq. The news countered the propaganda of western media, and people started demanding accountability. The above example shows how social media ended the monopoly of

news agencies on public safety issues.

Secondly, it played pivotal role in national integration during critical times by curbing communication gap between different ethnicities. In countries where societies are divided in various ethnic-religious groups the disintegration occurs between them on different issues. For any like natural disasters or war the main source of power for them is unity over that issues. For instance, during 2022 floods in Pakistan creates the disastrous situations, in rural areas of Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan people lost their homes and faced the hunger and diseases. In many areas the conventional communication systems are collapsed. Through social media activists try to highlight the situations of affected. In response, for the causes of humanity from Karachi to Kashmir entire nation joined hands their to help their people without any ethnic affiliations. This shows that social media play vital role in Pakistan's crises ridden period by connecting the farthest areas of country.

Third, social media enhances the concept of digital democracy by bridging the gap between political leaders and the masses. Social networking sites provide direct connection to masses with the political leaders. This access helps the political

figures to get insights on any aim by posting it. The reaction of masses helps them to understand that how such manifestation will affect their image in masses. For example, in recent elections in the USA, Donald Trump used the social media to highlight the wrong policies of Biden government like rising inflation. This helps the Trump to connect with public sentiment which resultantly, comes as a victory for republicans. The example shows that door to door campaigns are now out dated concept; in new world political leaders can reach and interact with public through such digital means.

Moreover, it benefits the local industries to expand by reaching potential global markets by reducing management and information issues. As globalization fosters global manufactures relied upon Chinese industries to meet their needs because China produce finest products with minimum expenditure. Social media platform like e-commerce website played vital role in it. Manufactures in China list their products on website, anyone sitting in USA or any other country visit the website and place the order by transferring money. The e-commerce website is now responsible to complete the order and ship it to the buyers location, this thing minimize the management and

information burden on both ends. The best example of such website is Alibaba. It is a chinese website that helps the businesses to expand their reach through social networking.

Besides, commercial access of knowledge through networking websites, enables young individuals to find multiple income opportunities globally. After the invention of internet, the information technology industry grows rapidly. Due to which they need those individuals who are expert in the field and created high income opportunities. However, two problems arised with that, one hiring people from different countries physically is not beneficial for new startups and there are limited number of experts available. Social networking sites, solved the both problems. Through sites like google, facebook and youtube people gain knowledge anywhere from best mentors. Second, apps like linkedin and upwork connected them with hiring companies. Now people can work from home and gain knowledge through social networking sites that helps them to explore new income opportunities.

Moreover, the concept of online learning has made education accessible and affordable, increasing the overall literacy rate. In conventional education the proper educational

institutions along with staff is required. But in online learning a teacher from anywhere can teach pupils through one screen and proper internet connection, which is linked with social calling apps like zoom or google meet. In India government took the opportunity and installed mobile education project, which initially covers four states and educating over ten million people living in rural areas. This project is much affordable for government and student as well. This indicates that social networking sites are now converting into powerful tool to end illiteracy.

Additionally, governments use online platforms to soften the image of their country to increase tourism. Traveling and tourism industry has become the beneficial and booming factor for fast economic growth of countries. Grabbing the attention of tourists is major work for any country. People choose to travel those countries where they find purity, diverse culture, modern or unique life of locals and welcoming environment. All of this can be presented to global village through social media. For instance, in 2022 government of Mongolia tried to soften the image of their country through social media campaigns. Prior to such campaigns Mongolia is considered as barbaric society due to literature based on the war.

However, after social media campaign people are fond of Mongolia's natural beauty and unique life style of local. According to general government of Mongolia the tourism industry grows to 30% after such campaigns, which shows the great potential of social media.

Despite of various opportunities provided by social media, it's rise comes with some issues that are creating chaos in the world.

The decentralized nature of social media facilitates propaganda campaigns, potentially leading to heightened challenges in maintaining law and order. Social networking sites are complex to regulate in any country because their data base is located on another place and algorithm of these sites is designed to post anything and can not be checked by system. This makes it decentralized in nature because every person can control their accounts independently. Moreover, any sort of post which is associated with public sentiments spread rapidly and cannot be encountered by the state authorities, which led to the heightened security threat. The same phenomenon happened in France on 23 June 2023, over the killing of Muslim teenagers by police cops. The authorities arrested them swiftly but propaganda campaign was started on social media that

government is trying to cover the police, the campaign worked and people came out for protest and soon it was converted into riots. This shows that how unregulated nature of social media led to heightened law and order situation.

Furthermore, Infringement of privacy and data breach is a serious crime that causes depression and suicide by victim. Most commonly there are two ways through which most of the data breaches happen. Firstly, it happens through the mistake caused by users due to lack of understanding regarding the social applications and posting their personal and sensitive information publicly. The rapid spread of information is not recoverable. Second, is a professional way through which a person which hacker and understand the code of algorithm and find loopholes in it. Hackers use the security lapses in algorithm to penetrate to penetrate in data center, which contains personal and financial information of users. The hackers use the data for blackmailing the victim or they sell the information on dark websites. The blackmailing results in depression. According to World health organization around 782,000 people suffers from this dilemma every year and many of them commit suicide because of infringement of privacy.

Additionally, easily available pornographic material causing moral depravity in society, resulting in sexual harassment. Pornography is a dark filming industry that films the adult intimate scenes. Prior to internet and particularly it is not accessible by the youngsters easily. After social sites every teenager can access such sites easily, that is causing serious damage to their mental abilities and morally depriving the society. ~~According~~ This is now resulting in harassment of girls in colleges, parks and at workplaces. According to the Equalities department of the UK, addicted of pornography usually objectify the women as creature of lust for them and commit rape. This shows that how society is going to be morally deprived because of unethical material accessible on social media.

Besides, users get scammed on networking platforms easily because of unawareness regarding its usage. Social networking sites are now biggest platform where businesses promotes their brands or ideas. Along with that some scammers use such facility to advertise fraud schemes. These schemes are usually connected with the financial frauds. In most of cases scammers offers various schemes through which a person can become wealthy immediately. Moreover, they also offers loans

an unimpaired interest rate. This shining offer attracts many individuals who are under financial tension, and get scammed. The same happens in Pakistan by money lending apps, the person get the required money on loan by downloading the software. The app works as a spyware and get all the private data from the phone. After some days the representative of the app starts the blackmailing of trapped person. In addition, the unaware use of social media is fueling the scams.

Despite of the above mentioned issues, social applications will be highly beneficial if the pragmatic measures to be taken to overcome the problems.

Incorporate tools in social media applications to identify the propaganda campaigns. After the inception of social media the world is now entering into new world of artificial intelligence. Both social applications and artificial intelligence worked on complex coding mechanism. As the companies of these applications incorporate such tool in their coding mechanism, the artificial intelligence can easily detect the source of any news that is spreading rapidly and identify it as a propaganda or false information. Such technology is currently

incorporated by X former twitter. The AI detecting feature of X identify the source of news and highlights it on user interface with caution that such information is not based on reality. Therefore, many of propaganda campaigns can not be successfully initiated.

In addition to that, cyber harassment helplines or online apps connected with police for immediate response can help to prevent cyber bullying and sexual harassment cases. The decentralized nature of cyber social applications can not be regulated until the companies willingly do that. But government of any state or vibrant civil society can initiate the parallel technology in shapes of apps that help the victim to contact police timely to mitigate the growing risk. The police can use the technology to delete culminate the spread of information on initial grounds and can arrest the guilty. The same initiative was taken by the UK by launching "national cyber bullying helpline and app" to counter such criminal activity which helplines mitigate the risk of social media.

Along with that, governments have to launch the digital hygiene campaigns to avoid the scams. Digital hygiene is a practice and behaviour that individuals adopt to maintain the security

and safety while using online platforms. It includes the management of passwords that should be strong, limits the sharing of personal information particularly, financial information like posting of any picture that highlights the details of bank cards. Moreover, it includes the technique to identify which website is secure and which is not like any website starts with "HTTPS" is considered secured. The campaign like that was started by government of Rwanda, which results in reduction of scams by 18%. This highlights that how a aware person can eradicate the risk of scam on online platforms.

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Conclusion:

In a nutshell, the social media is a powerful tool, that helps countries to promote soft image, helps in expand of global trade and highlights the core issues of public safety. Moreover, it played pivotal role in national integration and enhances the concept of digital democracy. Furthermore, it helps to increase literacy rate through convenient nature and provide new income streams to young individuals. However, society faces dilemma due to some issues associated with rise of social media, which includes heightened security issues due to propaganda and infringement of privacy that creates that life risk for victims. Additionally,

It morally corrupts the mind of society through unethical material and fosters the financial ~~scams~~.
Albeit, through diligent attention the risk can be curtailed by incorporated propaganda identifying mechanism and apps that helps to counter cyber harassment. Further, the digital hygiene campaigns on public level helps to eradicate the risk factor of online sites. With pragmatic measures, the social media can become a powerful tool to change the global thinking positively and fosters the ~~conce~~ harmony among global citizens.