

Social Media has Destroyed Real Life Communication

1. Introduction

Thesis Statement:

Social media, while revolutionizing the way we connect, has paradoxically contributed to the erosion of real-life communication. The pervasive use of social media platforms has replaced in-person interactions with virtual connections, diminishing the quality of relationships and altering the way we communicate. To address this, it is crucial to foster a balance between online and offline interactions.

2. Understanding the concept of real life Communication

3. Facts that Prove Social Media has destroyed real life communication.

- Strangers residing in one house.
- Unfortunate shift from Parks and Cinemas to cellphones and laptops.
- No more window shopping or altercation with the shopkeepers.
- Online education; murder of canteens, libraries and hostel life.
- Work from home has ended political discussion, jokes and quality time with colleagues.

4. Factors responsible for making people social media crazy.



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Day: _____

- a. Absence of awareness and Sensitization
- b. Easy accessibility
- c. Poor monitoring and accountability
- d. Changing requirements due to paucity of time

5. Recommendations for creating a balance in life by Promoting Real life Communication.

- a. Introduction of necessary checks and balances.
- b. Spread of awareness in educational institutions and through the media
- c. Provision of alternatives.
- d. Imposition of taxes to check immoral use of social media

6. Conclusion .

Imagine sitting in a room full of your closest friends, yet not a single word is spoken. The familiar hum of conversation has been replaced by the rhythmic tapping of fingers on screens. Not long ago, this room was alive with laughter, stories and debates, but now, the glow of smartphones has eclipsed real life interaction. As Philosopher Marshall McLuhan once warned, "The medium is the message" - and today the message is clear: digital connections have overshadowed genuine human relationships. Social media, once heralded as a tool to bring us closer, has turned us into digital strangers, replacing deep conversations with fleeting likes and emojis. The irony is unmistakable - while we are more connected than ever before, we have never been more disconnected from the people sitting right beside us. Social media has destroyed real life communication. Families despite being in one room have become strangers to each other as they are constantly involved in their cell phones. Parks and cinemas are replaced with cellphones and laptops. Shopping is replaced with online shopping, face to face communication has declined. Online education, though has many benefits but the fact that even the class fellows are unable to meet each other and have one on one live conversations leaves a question on utility of process.

Many factors are responsible behind this -
There is lack of awareness among people about how social media should be used in proportion and for meaningful activities. The easy accessibility and poor monitoring and changing requirements due to paucity of time have further intensified the issue. Social media while revolutionizing the way we connect has paradoxically contributed to erosion of real life communication. To resolve this, it is crucial to foster a balance between online and offline interactions.

Social media has dramatically transformed the landscape of communication. According to a 2022 study by American Psychological Association, 45% of adults report feeling more isolated since the rise of social media, while 61% of teens admit to feeling less connected to their friends despite being constantly online. Platforms that were designed to foster communication have instead replaced deep connection. As relationships become mediated by screens, skills like empathy and active listening are compromised, leaving us with shallow bonds. This disconnection is stark, rather than gathering to share experiences, people often prefer the isolation of their devices, highlighting the paradox of our hyper-connected age where genuine connection has become a rare commodity.

2

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When it comes to the facts that prove social media has narrowed the scope and margin of real life communication, there are many and quite easily detectable. First of all, the communication among members of family has decreased to an alarming level. Despite being sitting in our room, family members are far and away from one another because they are engaged in social media. A survey conducted by Common Sense Media in 2022 found that 54% of teenagers were spending too much time on their phones, resulting in communication gap with family members. Just a decade ago, when social media had not so deeply penetrated into the lives of people things were altogether different. At that time siblings would play games and grandparents would narrate stories to kids before asking them to go to their bed. The sense of disassociation that oozes from wall of our houses today was never there before the advent of social media.

Similarly social media has brought a perceptible shift in the recreational activities of people as a result of which real life communication has faced a serious blow. Before the advent of social media, people would go for a walk in parks, watch movies in cinemas and play games on playground. According to a study by Nilsen, the average U.S adult spends over 11 hours per day on digital devices. The number is quite

high from a decade ago. This has resulted in fewer social interactions. Online music, movies and games have curtailed the need for outdoor activities. A more surprising fact is that the people who go for outdoor activities too spend most of their time on their cellphones.

Likewise, social media platforms have changed the mode of shopping as well, and resultantly, another avenue of live communication is gradually leading towards complete closure. Ali Baba, Amazon, Daraz, Telemart, Gotu and many such websites provide online shopping facilities to people due to this face to face contacts and communication opportunities in markets and shopping malls have decreased significantly. Shopping for events like Eid, birthdays and marriages has always been an outdoor activity and family and friends would plan it exuberantly. The present situation has, however changed as many, if not most, people place orders online. The opportunity of meeting friends and family has been reduced, if not completely destroyed.

Social media also provides a number of online educational platforms, due to which the possibilities of face-to-face communication face a decline. The provision of online education certainly has a number of benefits yet the fact that even the class fellows are unable to meet each other and have a live communication and interaction is also a big question mark

on the utility. No one can deny that learning is not confined to lectures and bookish material only, it is much more than this. Online learning platforms deprive students of opportunities to interact with, and learn from, one another, and they don't let them grow the way they could if they had been getting education in physical classroom. A report by National Education Association (NEA) shows that 47% of students miss social aspect of school life such as eating in canteens, participating in school activities, due to online education. The interaction in school create indelible memories that are no less than a treasure. Unfortunately, social media has snatched this treasure from young students by depriving them of opportunity for live communication.

Moreover, social media has changed the professional lives of people in such a way that real life communication has significantly shrunk. There are number of websites and applications that have made possible for people to perform different types of professional activities while sitting in their bedrooms.

The way technology is experiencing advancement and innovation, it seems likely that physical presence at workplaces will soon become rare, and most people will prefer doing work sitting inside their rooms. This shift

would deprive the people of memories that develop at cafeterias and canteens when colleagues sit together at break time and discuss everything ranging from domestic lives to national politics.

Now, before delineating some measures that can be helpful in liberating people from the shackles of social media, it is relevant to shed light on some factors that have played a catalysing role in enhancing gaze and demand for social media.

First of all, there is a lack of focus on educating the people regarding the pros and cons of social media that deserves to be held responsible for the situation. For every other thing that is developed, invented or manufactured in this world, there is a user manual that guides consumers regarding ways in which product should be used for getting optimum result. Even on the box of cigarettes, many responsible states declare it mandatory to mention the perils of smoking, however this is not the case with social media. Despite being highly pernicious, social media is easily accessible even to five year olds and there is no system of sensitizing the users to the drawbacks that is wrong or overuse may entail.

Moreover, there are zero or very few checks and balances on the accessibility

of social media. Everything is easily accessible and even without anyone's knowledge. According to statistics, there are 4.76 Billion social media users worldwide in 2023, representing nearly 60% of the global population. This unrestricted access fosters overuse and addiction. The ease of using social media becomes a big source of temptation for human beings who find social media an easy source for quenching their thirst.

In addition to this, there is no system of regulation or monitoring to restrict the uploading and downloading of immoral material on social media. Many parents express concern about their children's social media activities but fail to implement effective monitoring tools. A study by the Pew Research Centre revealed that only 30% of parents utilize parental control tools to oversee their children's online activities. This lack of oversight can lead to overexposure to harmful content and negative influences.

Apart from this, social media is a relatively cheaper source of connectivity and entertainment as compared to other sources.

Most social media applications are free, making it easy for anyone to join and participate. In Pakistan, where internet data costs less than \$0.10 per GB, social media use has skyrocketed, resulting in a large population of Facebook and

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whatsapp users. At a time when inflation is at its peak, people find it more convenient and cost effective to rely on social media instead of physically visiting their loved ones or going to park for recreation.

As far as ameliorative measures are concerned, there can be many; however, it needs to be understood that the goal that should be pursued is to limit the excessive use of social media.

To this end, implementing checks and balances on social media usage can help mitigate its negative impacts on real life communication. Several countries are beginning to recognize the importance of regulating online activities. Report from the International Telecommunication Union indicated that more than 60% of countries have enacted some form of legislation addressing online privacy and harmful content. These laws can prevent misuse of social media platforms.

Moreover, increasing awareness of the risks associated with excessive social media use is crucial in promoting real time communication. Educational institutions can play a vital role in this endeavor. It is important to teach students about social media's impact on health. Additionally, media campaigns aimed at young people can be effective.

Additionally to combat the negative consequences of social media, providing alternative supports is essential. For example initiatives like community centres and social clubs can offer spaces for people to engage in face to face interaction. Moreover, some countries are exploring the idea of taxing social media platforms to discourage excessive use and fund mental health programs. A proposal in Singapore suggest levying taxes on companies that profit from addictive features, with funds allocated for public education about responsible online behavior. These measures can create a more balanced approach to social media use.

On the basis of this detailed analysis, it can be concluded that social media has certainly wreaked havoc on real life communication in number of ways. Social media has provided multiple platforms that, on one hand facilitate human beings in fulfilling their day to day needs and requirements with ease, on the other hand they deprive people with face to face connectivity. As absence of real life communication and excessive use of social media have myriad of negative implications for human life, some workable plan of action will have to be chalked out. Introduction of measures for having technical checks and balances on social media, platforms, sensitization of people through

educational institutions and provision of alternatives to social media can be some of the many measures that can be helpful in this regard. The social media without an iota of doubt has become integral part of our lives and it cannot be replaced because of the benefits it brings to our lives. The only thing that is required and should be strived for is a development of neutral approach. In the moderate approach lies the beauty of life, and the earlier it is realized, the better it is.

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