

Growing power of Social Media; Prospects and challenges

outline

1. Introduction

- a. Attention grabber!
- b. General statements
- c. Thesis Statement:

The dawn of twenty-first century has witnessed the unprecedented increase in the power of social media. It has both prospects and problems depending upon how responsibly its power is tamed.

2. Prospects for growing power of Social Media

2.1. Enhancing the Role of Public in National and International Affairs

- a. Recent condition in Nepal
- b. India Pakistan Relations
- c. Pakistan Air Base issue

2.2. Boosting Individual and National Economy

- a. TikTok - a tool of earning
- b. Former Prime Minister of Pakistan on Social Media

2.3. Increasing Accountability

- a. Resign Campaign against KP Sharma Oli and other Ministers
- b. Justice for Zainab

3- Problems for Growing Power of Social Media

3.1 Social Media - A Tool of Hybrid War

- a. The issue of PEGASUS - Israeli Spy Company
- b. The spread of homophobic remarks
- c. The reality of Jamal Khashoggi

3.2- Social Media: A tool of Defamation

- a. Ali Zafar - Meesha Shafi case
- b. Defamation of DC Muzaffargarh Usman Tahir

3.3- Increasing Health Crisis

- a. A Source of depression and mental health crisis

4- Recipe to tame Social Media for betterment

- a. Need of international organization
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5- conclusion

ESSAY

A voice, demanding the rescue of Russian and Polish mountaineers raised through twitter. They were misplaced during their expedition of Nanga parbat, Pakistan - a killer mountain with the height of 8126 feet. Although Pakistan army could save only one but this demand through social media, shows its growing power. Now a days, social media has become an important part

of our economic, political and social life, people are involved in world affairs, and economic lives of people are increasing in their standards. Moreover, the rise of accountability through social media is an unmissed prospect. Despite these prospects, there are some problems which are rising due to uncontrolled spreading of social media; social media is being used as hybrid war and defamation. Along with these problems, the crisis of health, causing due to social media cannot be set aside. The dawn of twenty-first century has witnessed an unprecedented increase in the power of social media. It has both prospects and problems depending upon how responsibly its power is tamed.

Before going into the discussion of prospects and problems of social media, it seems necessary to understand

The real meaning of it. Social media is a term used to describe the interaction between groups or individuals, in which they produce, share and sometimes exchange ideas, images, videos and many more over the internet in the virtual communities. There are several platforms of social media: Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Snap chat, initially these were used for text messages and now through audio, calls or videos. The emerging progress in technology is reshaping it day by day. This social media, is now being used as an important pillar of the world in both forms - prospects and problems.

To start with the role of social media in national and international affairs, it is now an important pillar of any country's foreign policy.

In old days people of one city were unaware about the people of other city remaining in the same country. In addition, people were not involved in equalizing the relations with other countries; only diplomats were considered all in all for international relations. Now due to growing of social media the method of defining the national and international affairs has changed. People of the country are fully involved in the country's affairs. The best example in this case is the recent condition of Nepal. Due to social media the youth of Nepal Gen-Z forced their Prime Minister to resign upon corruption, mismanagement and nepotism. Similarly India-Pakistan relations are in front of both the countries. False flag operations and suspension of Indus water treaty

are also being observed by the people of both countries. Moreover, when America requested Pakistan for Air Base to keep eye on Afghanistan, the people condemned on social media. All these issues forbade the government to decide alone; the wishes of the public were given weightage. In this way social media is an important part of national and international affairs.

Going further, social media is considered to be an unmitigated pillar of individual and national economy. With the growing power of social media, it has employed many people and increased tourism. Firstly, a well-known social media platform, TikTok is paying money for its account holders. In addition, there are many people who are full of talent of acting or any

other skill but were lacking chances. Now, they are able to earn handsome money. Moreover, former Prime Minister of Pakistan and his ministers were used to use social media platforms to spread the beauty of our country Pakistan. There were many times when the Prime Minister was seen in the picnic spots and sharing beautiful pictures through his personal twitter account. It is due to use of social media 1.9 million tourist visited Pakistan in 2019 as of 2020. It was an increase of 300% from the previous years. Both the above mentioned examples show the value of social media in raising individual and international economy. It is rightly said by Bill Gates that "if your business is not on the internet, then your business will be out of business."

In the same way, social media has emerged as an extremely potential tool of accountability.

In old times when people felt that they were ill treated by the state or rulers, they used to come out in the streets and conduct a protest against the authorities. Moreover, many culprits were set free, indulge in serious offences, due to lack of evidence. Now, the time has changed people used to start social media campaigns against such crimes. There are many such incidents, firstly, a social media campaign by Gen Z in Nepal against K. P. Sharma Oli and his ministers. #Nepokids and #ResignPrimeMinister was started when the corruption and mismanagement of Nepali Prime Minister reached at extreme level. Secondly, another campaign was kick-started

little Zainab, when she was
raped. Noida Muqaddam Murder
is also on the scene. All
these cases were disposed
off within the time with
the punishment. This shows the
role of social media in
the accountability process.

Although, there are countless
number of prospects of social
media that has been revolutionizing
the world, but there are also
some problems in this regard.

Going into the problems
of social media, it is a
potential tool for hybrid war
of this era. It is a war
strategy employs political and
conventional warfare with other
influential methods. It includes
spreading disputes and social
unrest in a society or
a nation. These services were
employed to intelligence and
secret agencies. Now, this
work is taken by social media.

There were many examples of international arena, where these social platforms has been used, firstly, an issue of spying 50,000 famous persons of different field including the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, through Israeli program known as PEGASUS was on the scene. It was carried out by social media application; secondly Islamophobic sentiments are spread through social media. Thirdly, India's agenda of causing a hybrid war was disclosed by European Union Disinfo Lab. Similarly the assassination of Saudi Journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018 was also a part of hybrid war through social media. All these show that social media is being used as an instrumental of hybrid war.

Adding further, social media has emerged as a tool of defamation. Different social media devices are used by individual as well as countries to defame other for their vested gains. It causes personal and countries damage. Using of social media for as defamation tool is also known as labeling theory in social science. In recent times, Israel is defaming Iran and Qatar on social media. Similarly Ukraine is also defaming Russia on social media at international level. In Pakistan Ali Zafar and Meesha Shafi case was in air. Meesha Shafi alleged Ali Zafar for harassment in the court. Although he was set free but was defamed on many public stages. Similarly Deputy Commissioner Muzaffar Gani Usman

Tahir defamed by social media users whereas he was rescuing the people in flood of 2025. At end, this tool has caused many deaths when some innocent persons were defamed. It clearly shows that social media defaming tool is one of the biggest problem.

Among some other problem related to the growing power of social media is the rising health crisis. Before the spread of media, one sit to with one's family and friends for which physical and face to face interaction was necessary. It was source of mental happiness. Now all these activities are restricted to virtual interactions only.

Almost 5.41 billion people are using social media globally which is 65.7% of the total population. Every one sits

in his room and interact with his family and friends virtually. This creates a feeling of loneliness. Fake and unauthentic news is spreading causes depression and anxiety among the public. According to U.S. News, experts have found that social media use appears linked to negative mental health impacts. Researchers have found a rise in depression among young people since 2012, with the use of social media, which is needed to be treated like alcohol and cigarette, in this regard Joe Biden said "The rampant misinformation of Facebook related to Covid-19 is killing people."

Going into the recipe to tame the potential impacts of growing power of social media, there is a hardcore need of legal framework to spread of news on it. Unfortunately, the national and international organisations

are failed to implement on the laws and regulations. These must be an international organizations and regulatory authorities to protect the negative impacts of social media. Firstly, every news which is going to be posted on social media should be filtered so that fake and false information spreading to be curbed. Secondly, social media accounts should be divided among age groups and accounts of young children should be restricted on defined hours which are generally specified for playgrounds, parks and sleeping. This step will protect our generations from physical and psychological impacts of social media.

In a nutshell, the growing power of social media is a blessing or a curse for society as well as for the world. It is revolutionizing the political lives by enhancing the accountability, employment

and public role of diplomacy. However, it is abused and detrimental to the societal health in the form of hybrid wars, defamation and mental health. It requires a proper plan to ensure that the harms associated with social media is tamed. If the world can curb societal health issues like Polio, then why cannot this. There is a need of immediate set of steps which harness the benefits and mitigate the problems. As is rightly said by Mark Zuckerberg that when you give everyone a voice and give people the power, the system will end up with a really good place.