

Dialoguing Change through Social Networking Sites: A study conducted in Delhi

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Abstract

Social networking sites refer to participatory approach which deals with narratives and is used for communicating societal issues. Youth constitute an important section of our society and their development has direct impact on the development of a nation. Active participation of young people in social networking sites enable them to sharpen their thinking and social skills. The present paper is based on a recent research entitled Dialoguing Change through Social Networking sites: A study conducted in Delhi which was conducted with the active participation of young people in order to study insights regarding Social Networking sites as a tool for creating dialogue among users.

Keywords: Social Media, Youth, Participation

Introduction

Change is necessarily conceived as 'dynamic' in the service of the 'progresses'. The progressive change is described as alternations in awareness, motivation and participation of the individuals. Development is 'growth' oriented all time. It has to be accompanied by social, cultural, attitudinal and other changes.

Communication is an integral part of any society or civilization. It helps us to talk together, to work together, to share information, ideas, knowledge, abilities, and feelings. Communication is an important input in development and proper use of communication can foster the pace and process of development and results in active participation. Rogers (1983) says, "Development communication refers to the uses to which communication is put in order to further development. Such applications are intend to either further development in a general way, such as by increasing the level of the Media exposure among a nation's citizens.

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Media is playing a vital role in societal development by its continuous positive process. It is considered as the fourth pillar of our constitution because it is considered as the actual state of society in a way that works to connect directly to the general public. Every nation's social development depends on the media. A society's cultural, traditional, social economic and political image depends on the presentation of the media.

The growth of media over the past few years has transformed the ways in which the internet is experienced by most end users. Now the internet is no longer a one way broadcast delivery system where the individual user downloads data, information and other resources produced by a relatively small number of content providers. These technologies are also associated with an enhanced social autonomy with young people now used to having increased control over the nature and form of what they do, as well as where, when and how they do it.

Young people are now interacting with media in multiple ways across multiple platforms. Media psychology adds values to any place that an understanding of human behaviour can be applied to media technologies.

Social Media as an Approach

In the last several years, the use of Social media to disseminate messages has grown significantly and continues to trend up. It has become an effective way to expand reach foster engagement and increase access to credible and legal based messages. Social Media is a broad term in media studies that emerged in the latter part of the 20th century that refers to on demand access to content anytime, anywhere or any digit device as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation and community formation around the media content. It also allow users to converse and interact with each other, to create edit and share new forms of textual, visual and audio content and to categorise label and recommend existing forms of content.

The social media is an interactive form of communication that use internet including social networks, blogs, wikis and many more. It makes possible for anyone to create modify and share the content share it with others using relatively simple tool that are often free or inexpensive. It can help us to connect people with information and services. It also creates new content, services, communities and channels of communication that helps to deliver information and services.

Social Networking Sites

Social Networking site is one of the most used social media which provides its users entertainment, information, connectivity and belongingness with others and thus with material benefits one can cultivate the emotional settlement as well. It allows users to create groups around similar interest and make connections with people from all walks of life.

It refers to a web site that provides a virtual community for people to share their daily or even moment-to-moment activities with family and friends, or to share their interest in a particular topic, or to increase their circle of acquaintances. Social networking sites include Face Book, twitter, LinkedIn, orkut and so on.

Methodology

The research is based on the interesting word like Social networking site along with the combination of the term youth. The methodology is focused in the quantitative data analysis based on survey method where a sample of 50 college students (University of Delhi) is taken in the area of Delhi. The analysis of data is based on simple percentile method.

Questionnaire comprising of both open and closed questions was developed to understand the perceptions of 50 respondents (youth) regarding Social Networking sites as a tool for creating dialogue among youth.

Results and Discussions

The study endeavours to understand the views of 50 respondents who are frequent users of Social Networking sites. The study was carried to understand how they relate social networking sites as a catalyst to create dialogue. The findings of this section are considered under the following headings:-

Profile of the respondents

- (a) **Sex of the Respondents:** Majority of the respondents (62%) were females. 38% respondents were male. Majority of the girls respondents is because Delhi University includes more number of girls colleges. The sample collected was more from girls' colleges.
- (b) **Age of the respondents:** The study revealed that age of 40% respondents were 19 years. 24 % respondents were from the age of 18 years and 20% respondents were from the age of 22 years. Age of 10% respondents were 21 years and of 6% respondents were 20 years.

Based on Usability of Social networking sites

- On the issue of time consumed on Social Networking sites, majority of the respondents use it for 4-6 hours.
- Focusing on the aspect of the most frequently used social networking sites, the respondents favourite was Facebook followed by Twitter and My Space.

Social Networking sites as a tool for Social Change

- Majority of the respondents reported that a Social networking site is a relevant tool for communicating development issues as its reach is universal.
- Respondents said it helps in sensitising people about social issues, gain solidarity and satisfy people's urge of contributing to the society.
- It provides platform to an individual to advocate social issues by voicing their opinions.
- Experience of involvement of young people in social networking sites has clearly demonstrated that it enhances their thinking and social skills and motivates some of them to become catalysts of change.
- Information on Social Networking sites leads to gain in knowledge among users and leads to Behaviour change communication.
- It creates a platform for the users to participate in discussions and debates based on societal issues by posting their thoughts and sharing their ideas on Social Networking sites.

Popular Social Issues addressed through Social networking sites

- All issues like political, health, environmental and social issues can be addressed through social networking sites as there is no restriction about any issue.
- Majority of the respondents reported that the issues on social networking sites which gained maximum attention were India against Corruption, Satyamev Jayate, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender community and petition based communities

Social Networking sites for Edutainment

- Social Networking site is an effective tool of edutainment because it has effective components like photos, videos, active participation of users, debates and voice chats which makes it more understandable through educating and entertaining users.

Strengths of Social Networking sites

- It has a quick feedback.
- It refers to direct communication between the senders and the receivers.
- The content is precise and comprehensive in nature.
- It is also considered as cost effective.
- It leads to Behaviour Change Communication
- It is mass oriented, interactive and it leads to knowledge building of the users.

Limitations of Social Networking sites

- Behavioural changes are not guaranteed
- Moderation of the content could be fake sometimes.

Conclusion

Social Media leads to an action that can be done immediately such as an icon that individuals click which automatically signs a petition. Stronger Social media tools like Social networking sites produce a steady stream of updates and change among the users. Social Networking sites are the popular new medium frequently

accessed by the youth as it is easy, cost effective and instant. In today's scenario it is a key player in the production and circulation of knowledge. Not only do we have access to gigantic libraries that are making available texts previously reserved for specialised readers, but one can also debate our reading with online sites that include a wide range of people from experts to new comers who can all provide their point of views. This form of media has provided forum to individuals to generate and express their point of view on important issues relating to their life. It should not be seen as socially neutral tools and we should try to distribute the benefits of the growth of information among the mass by making these form of communication be accessible to marginalised groups, which is vital to remove inequalities in democratic society. Lastly featuring over 2,00,000 Facebook followers, the various campaign has sparked a nationwide attitudinal change with protests and candlelight support rallies across the country which leads the users as a catalyst for social change.

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