

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG THE STUDENTS OF BANGLADESH: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Introduction

Social Media has emerged as revolutionary means of connectivity throughout the world where Bangladesh (BD) is no exception. Last a decade, the online world has changed dramatically. Thanks to the invention of social media, young men and women who exchange ideas, feelings, personal information, pictures and videos at a truly astonishing rate. Seventy-three percent (73%) of wired American teens now use social media websites (Oberst, 2010). Every day many students are spending countless hours immersed in social media, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and Viber. Many researchers have been diving into a considerable amount of research on how social media influences student's academic performance. Many parents are worried that their college going students are spending too much time on Facebook and other social media sites and not enough time for studying. Due to lack of outdoor game facilities and parent's commitment elsewhere, students are prone to Social Networking Services (SNSs). Therefore, our research ascertains the relationship between the social media and its negative impact on students' overall performance. According to Wikipedia, social media includes web-based and mobile technologies used to turn communication into interactive dialogue. The definition of social media is "the relationships that exist between network of people" (Walter & Riviera, 2004). Social media is also defined as Facebook, YouTube, Blogs, Twitter, MySpace or LinkedIn (Martin, 2008). According to oxford dictionary, a person who is studying at a university or other place of higher education is called student. All modern gadgets are mostly invented in the western world and then exported worldwide. Students have great interest in social media than any other device since invention. However, the use of social media has both positive and negative effects depending on the type of application. According to Nielsen Media Research study in June 2010, almost 25 percent of students' time on the internet is now spent on social networking websites (Jacobsen, & Forste, 2011). In fact, a recent survey of 3000 students from across the USA revealed that 90% of college students use Facebook and 37% use Twitter (Dahlstrom, de Boor, Grunwald & Vockley, 2011). Modern psychologists are quite worried about negative effects of SNSs among the students. Bangladesh

is also feeling the heat of online SNS. The country has seen a sharp rise in internet users in recent years due to the availability of cheaper mobile internet technology. Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) statistics show that the country currently has around 70,000,000 mobile phone subscribers (Rahman, 2011). Bangladesh now has 800,000 internet users and the BTRC expects it to cross the one-million mark in the near future. Habib (2012) conducted a research to identify the uses of Facebook by university students of Bangladesh and found that they are using it most for chatting and gossiping with friends. The present study is an attempt to explore this knowledge gap. Therefore, a comprehensive researched is carried out to unveil the positive and negative effects of social media and the counter strategy to protect the young generations of the country from ineffective use of SNS.

Positive Impact of Social Media among Students

Researcher explored following positive impact of SNS:

- The increasing popularity of social sites like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, social networks have gained attention as the most viable communication choice for the bloggers, article writers and content creators.
- Social Media has removed all the communication barriers and one can communicate his/her perception and thoughts over a variety of topics. Students and experts are able to share and communicate with like-minded people and can ask for the input and opinion on a particular topic.
- Social Media unites people on a huge platform for the achievement of some specific objective. It removes shyness of individual and enhances skill of writing. This is very important to bring the positive change in society.
- Social Media is very effective for distant learning and getting relative and friends connected for 24 hours a day. It offers any news happening among the friends and relatives across the globe.
- It is also very effective for instant and group study from distance place and getting a quicker solution. It saves enough time and money for travelling from place to place. Students are immensely benefitted without spending much time and wealth.

- SNSs play dominant role to create general awareness among the mass people as quick as possible. Breaking news or emergency situation is passed to all citizen of a country to avoid danger.

Negative Effects of Social Media on Students:

Following are the negative impact of SNS:

- **Addiction:** It leads to addiction of spending countless hours on the social sites and diverts the focus and attention from a priority task. It lowers the motivational level of the teenagers and students.
- **Cheating:** Another downside of the social media is that the user shares too much information which may pose threats to them. Even with the tight security settings your personal information may leak on the social sites. Downloading your videos or pictures and copying your status is an easy task and can be done within few clicks.
- **Isolation:** One can suffer from isolation as he tends to be glued to the computer and does not move out of the house and meet people. The on line chatting makes students isolated and self centered. Such kind of students can not mix up freely with other friends and remain isolated which leads to depression.
- **Gaining Weight:** One may gain weight as he/ she sits in front of the computer for a long time and takes food. Naturally, he will not have much exercise and will suffer from obesity.
- **Abnormal Symptoms:** Surfing Facebook does show abnormal symptoms among many teenagers such as depression, excessive aggression, abnormal anxiety or even normal anxiety. Those suffering from social anxiety tend to immerse themselves in front of Facebook.
- **Bad for the Eyes:** Too much exposure to the smart phone/ computer is bad for the eyes. It is noticed that present generation uses spectacles more than previous generation.
- **Communication with Strangers:** On Facebook communication, it is possible that one might end up building up relationships with strangers, who can turn out to be criminals as well. Teenagers are vulnerable and are easily susceptible to outside influences.

- **Lacks Face to Face Connection:** There is a lack of face to face connectivity since one does not meet the other person. A good number of family members taking meal together and not making face to face talk, instead they are handling smart phone.
- **Promotes Laziness:** Since socialization and face to face connectivity is decreased, one student uses a smart phone or personal computer. He/she browse through Facebook or other application and promote laziness
- **Causes Distractions:** Browsing Facebook does distract one's mind from many other activities. The excessive uses of SNSs divert attention of students from actual study and ultimately fail to achieve the desired objective.
- **Unethical Approach:** On social media like YouTube, Facebook and viber, one tends to communicate on unhealthy sexual practices. There is no healthy sexual interaction as one is not meeting each other physically.
- **Psychological Effects:** It has been admitted by many students that they have experienced bullying on the site, which leads to psychological harm. Students of high schools face a possibility of bullying and other adverse behaviors over Facebook every day.
- **Increase of Extra Marital Affairs and Divorce Rate:** Since induction of social network, the unsocial use and extra marital affairs related incidence increase significantly. Starting from media personality to normal house wives excessively using SNS, are subjected to negative effect of it from undesired person.

Findings from Literature Review

In the western world social media is very effective tools due to technological advancement and economic development. Their culture and tradition allow the use of social media in many folds. The developed countries always favour to connect peoples for their own economic interest. Accordingly connectivity and sharing information around the globe between people to people is a gift of the era of globalization. Physical and face to face interaction with parents and relatives are very rare for Facebook generation. Psychological imbalance and laziness is also the outcome of SNS. There is a contradiction of opinions, but most researchers admit about negative use of it during study hour by students. Moral, ethics and values are getting deteriorated due to excessive use of social media.

Bangladesh is a country of low internet perception although a big online community is gradually developing. Although many students opined that social media is very effective for study, knowledge sharing and learning but practically they did not realize the practical implications. Instead, most of them use for messaging, chatting and gossiping with friends where a large number of them shares unnecessary information and unethical photos.

Social Media and Young Generation: Bangladesh Scenario

Collection of Data: Data is collected from different institution of Dhaka City and 375 students are served with questionnaire. The collected data has 6% to 8% errors due to difference of age gap and lack of realistic understanding about social values and norms.

- About social media's benefit in the field of education for students where about 70.4% students agree the benefit and around 24.8% does not agree. However, 4.8% remain undecided.
- Social media's linkage is the wastage of time for youth. 68% students agree about the wastage of time and 16.8% does not agree. However, 15.2% remain undecided. This data is very valid as majority students supported the above statistics during interview session.
- Social media is deteriorating our social norms. 64% students disagree about the deterioration and 32.8 % agree. However, 3.2% remain undecided.
- Social media is affecting negatively on study of youth. 59.2% students agree about the negative impact on academic performance and 36.8% does not agree. However, 4% remain undecided.
- Social media is necessary for young generation, where 52% students agree and 44.8% does not agree. However, 3.2% remain undecided.
- Social media promotes unethical pictures, video clips and image among the students. 80% students agree about the negative effect and 18.4% does not agree. However, 1.6% remains undecided.
- Social media has positive impact on youth. 52.8% students agree with the positive effect and 35.2% does not agree. However, 12% remain undecided.
- Social media is paying essential role for the betterment of society, where 43.2% students agree and 48.8% does not agree. However, 4% remain undecided.

- Social media is creating awareness among youth for new trends where 72.8% students agree with the positive aspect and 25.6% does not agree. However, 1% remain undecided.
- Social media provides good source of knowledge and information for youth where 92% students agree and 6% does not agree.
- Social media is useful to connect the people around the world. 74.4% students agree and 36.8% does not agree. However, 9.6% students remain undecided.
- Social media is essential for learning and skill where 72% students agree and 24.8% does not agree. 3.2% remain undecided. Although data shows about more than 50% agreed for learning, practically they opined it to be more of chatting and messaging only. 78.4% students agree about less outdoor games and physical activities are the outcome of social media. However, 20% students disagree and 1.6% remains undecided. Real survey and face to face interview with many parents show that lack of play ground and outdoor facilities cause devastation for young generation in Dhaka city.

Findings of the Research

From the above analysis, it is found that forty-five percent of the sample admitted that they spent 4-6 hours per day to check a social media site, 23% spent more than 6 hours, 20% spent 2-4 hours and only 12% spent less than 2 hours. The ratio of participants who posted or responded during school hours was 64%; 15% rarely used social media during school hours; 21% were not sure whether they would like to use it.

Case Study: Divorce/Family Separation Statistics of City Corporation in Dhaka City

This data collected from total 10 zones of Dhaka city comprising of City Corporation (North) and City Corporation (South) which have five zones each.

Table 1: Statistics of City Corporation, Dhaka (North and South)

Duration	Number	Remarks
1995-1999	11,266	5 years aggregate
2000-2005	20,913	6 years aggregate
2006-2010	23,231	5 years aggregate
2011	5,763	12 Months
2012	7,111	12 Months
2013	7,332	12 Months
2014	7,998	12 Months
2015	8,309	12 Months
Source: Data Collection from City Corporation		

Wrong Use of Social Media is a Curse-A Case Study

Until 1999, the family bond and ties with people in the society was quite enchanting. From 2000 the use of social media started in BD and the relation between couples and family bond began to slacken remarkably. Unethical relation and extra-marital affairs with undesired person got momentum and mistrust grew among family members. In this connection a case study of a government's servant, Mr Rahim Mollah serves in Dhaka Cantonment and hails from Gaibandha district. A man from an ordinary family and earns Taka 15000/= as salary per month. This man got connected with number of ladies over SNS. He had over 100 sims and used all with separate ladies at different times. He really got addiction in maintaining illicit relation with ladies. By now he is married to three ladies and kept all information secret. In addition he maintained illegal relation with many ladies other than wife. The man used to play fraud and foul with all ladies using social media. One day one of his wives revealed the evil scam of her husband and reported the matter to office authority. All wives and media connected ladies came and launched complaint together. According to departmental law, Rahim Mollah was trialed and sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. He lost the job and spoiled the life of many ladies. Rahim Mollah is termed as a curse of social media. City Corporation statistics show thousands of Rahim Mollah's involvement in wrong use of social media and misusing millions of ladies.

Possible Strategy to Save the Young Generation

Continuous Motivation: Drugs, unprotected sex, drinking, bullying, smoking—the list of parental worries often seems endless. According to psychologist Kimberly S. Young, Ph.D. of the Center for Online Addiction, teen internet addiction is becoming a growing problem. Continuous motivation regarding the negative effect of social media is a pre-requisite to prevent our students from wrong use of social media.

Teacher's Supervision: Teacher plays significant role in grooming the students. Teachers are considered the most enlightening element of the society. Teachers of school and college should monitor and keep account of their students.

Parents' Know-how and Supervision: According to Barker (2011), the internet makes information accessible in ways what our previous generations never imagined. Parents who are not technologically savvy already have a social media expert in the home. Parents need to ask their children to show the social networking ropes. If a parent does not have an account, they can ask their kids to help them set one up.

Help Students Uncover His or Her Passion: Everyone needs a hobby in life; children are no different. Therefore, start talking with child more, probe to uncover his or her likes and dislikes. There are so many things kids can get involved in these days, from sports to groups of specialized interests.

Teach Children How to Use Facebook: One of the challenges with social networking sites is that they subtly teach children to commoditize relationships. However, if your child is looking for people they don't know, that's when Facebook becomes dangerous and opens the door to cyber-bullying, bad influences, and unforeseen dangers. Help your child realize that for their purposes, Facebook is not for meeting strangers around the world.

Take a Proactive Approach to Facebook: You have to educate yourself about social media and be proactive in terms of how your children use Facebook. By getting involved in all aspects of your child's life, including their cyber life, you can teach them how to use Facebook responsibly and instill in them a true passion worth pursuing.

Inclusion of Watchdog Software: The watchdog software should be incorporated to identify and bar the misuse and unethical use of it only. Appropriate organ of the country should venture to develop and implement the software to save the derailed kids of the society like India.

Enhance Family Bond: Parents must monitor and follow the movement of their kids. Parents and guardians must give time, take food together and share joys and sorrows. The kids should feel them part of family and society as a whole. Parents must be very friendly to kids to share their needs and complaint, if any

Practice of Religion: All religion teaches positive thing and keep all kids on the right track. Parents and guardians must keep inspiring to abide by basic requirements of religion. Prayer always refrain human being from wrong doing as stated in holy Quran.

Implementation of ICT Act-2009: ICT act has been published covering all “Do’s and Don’ts”. Unfortunately 90% of guardians/ parents or students do not know the contents and instructions of the act. Appropriate authority of Government must arrange the system to educate the people.

Creating Awareness by Electronic/ Print Media: All out efforts should be taken to insist young generation about the code of conduct of social media. Both the media are to be used to create and transmit general awareness of the consequences. Government should instruct all electronic media to conduct teen awareness program at a particular time to instill basic values and norms in their mind.

Facebook Not a Natural Friendships and Activities: Everyone needs face time with other people, not just screen time. Physical presence with others promotes deeper connection, and all people need to be touched, hugged and attended to. Therefore, we should impose rules like TV time and phone time over use of SNS.

Ensure Physical Activities and Outdoor Games: During research the shortage of play ground or outdoor game facilities in Dhaka city are clearly identified. Young generations are centered at home and spend huge time with electronic gadgets with friends in chatting and messaging. Arrangement of facility is a demand of the time to increase their physical connectivity with friends to leave the virtual world.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to introduce organizational participation to exercise positive influence of social media among the students. This may be coordinated by the appropriate Government authority.
- Creating awareness among the teenagers about negative effects of social media including cyber-crime through electronic/ print media.

- Parents/ Teachers' continuous motivation, care and supervision are most significant tools to use SNSs by the students.
- There may be watchdog software in the server to hunt the students who are using unethical sites or these sites may be permanently blocked to the students.
- Ensuring adequate facilities for outdoor games and inspiring the teenagers to participate in physical activities.

Conclusion

Social Media is the mass communication systems and very important for today's digital world. Students are found very active and rank highest throughout the world. Our students are no exception. It offers huge scope to maintain connectivity and enhance academic performance by group study. Again, the use of social media has become an addiction to most students of high school and college. They spend near about 2-4 hours by messaging through Facebook and University students spend 6-8 hours till late night. Students prefer to chat with friends for hours and this leads to a waste of time that could have been used for studying, playing or learning new skills. Survey shows both positive and negative effects of social media prevailing among the students with varied perception.

As regards to wastage of time for youth is 61.6% as the students agreed while 32% students of Dhaka city disagreed. Social media is deteriorating our social norms where 64% students disagreed and 32.8 % agreed. 59.2% students agree about the negative impact of SNS on academic performance and 36.8% does not agree. Very interestingly survey shows SNS promotes unethical pictures, video clips and image among the students where 63.2% students agreed and 35.2% does not agree. 52.8% students agreed that social media has positive impact on youth and 35.2% does not agree. Another positive aspect of social media creates awareness among youth for new trends where 72.8% students agreed. Social media provides good source of knowledge and information for youth where 92% students agreed unanimously. 78.4% students blamed SNS for preventing them from outdoor games and physical activities as survey shows. However, 20 % students disagreed. Practically due to lack of outdoor facilities SNS equally attracts them and vice versa. Strategies to be adopted at all level to avert the negative effects of social media from our students.

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