

# Social Media Destroying Youth Lives

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**Abstract:** *The digital landscape has put increased pressure on youth today. There are so many social media channels are destroying the minds of youth through their physical health, mental health, and the quality of human interaction. The present paper aims at presenting about social media and its sites, factors of social media influence. It also focuses on the Social Media Statistics and Facts for 2016. The present paper attempts to show how the social media destroying youth lives physically and mentally and negative effects on academic life.*

**Keywords:** Social Media influence, youth, Statistics

## 1. Introduction of Social Media

Social Media is the future of communication, a countless array of internet based tools and platforms that increase and enhance the sharing of information. This new form of media makes the transfer of text, photos, audio, video, and information in general increasingly fluid among internet users. Social Media has relevance not only for regular internet users, but business as well.

Platforms like twitter, Face book, and LinkedIn have created online communities where people can share as much or as little personal information as they desire with other members. The result is an enormous amount of information that can be easily shared, searched, promoted, disputed, and created.

## 2. Definition of Social Media

Social media is a term used to describe the interaction between groups or individuals in which they produce, share, and sometimes exchange ideas over the internet and in virtual communities. Social media is an umbrella term covering websites, mobile technology, applications or tools that enable active and participatory publishing and interaction between individuals over the internet.

### 2.1 Social media sites

- Social networking sites – Focus on building online communities of people who share common interests e.g. Face book and MySpace
- Video and photo sharing sites – Allow users to upload and share images and video e.g. Flickr, YouTube and engage in discussion about the content.
- Blogs – Provide commentary on news or specific topics, and allow sharing of information and opinions -includes corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media outlets. They usually offer interactivity in the form of comments.
- Micro-blogs – Similar purpose to a blog except entries are limited to a certain number of characters. Micro blogs tend to be much more interactive and discussion based than long form blogs e.g. Twitter.

- Forums and discussion boards – Online discussion sites where users can post messages and comments e.g. Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups
- Online encyclopedias that allow web pages to be created, interlinked and edited e.g. Wikipedia

### 2.2 The 6 Factors of Social Media Influence:

Influence involves two entities as influence and target.

#### 1. The influencer's power to influence depends on two factors:

- a) Credibility: The influencer's expertise in a specific domain of knowledge.  
*Please note:* There is no such thing as a universal influencer, because no one can possibly be influential in all domains. The best that anyone can hope for is an influence in a specific domain of knowledge
- b) Bandwidth: The influencer's ability to transmit his expert knowledge through a social media channel.  
*Please note:* Active influencers in one channel may not even be present on another channel. So influencers are not only specific to a domain of knowledge, they are specific to social media channels

#### 2. The target's likelihood to be influenced by a specific influencer depends on four factors:

- a) Relevance (the right information): How closely the target's information needs coincide with the influencer's expertise. If the information provided by the influencer is not relevant, then it is just spam to the target and will be ignored.
- b) Timing (the right time): The ability of the influencer to deliver his expert knowledge to the target at the time when the target needed it. There is only a small time window along the decision trajectory when the target can be influenced. Outside this golden window, even relevant content will be treated as spam because there is no temporal relevance.
- c) Alignment (the right place): The amount of channel overlap between the target and the influencer. If the target is on a different social media channel, then the influencer's information either take too long or never reach the target.
- d) Confidence (the right person): How much the target trusts the influencer with respect to his information

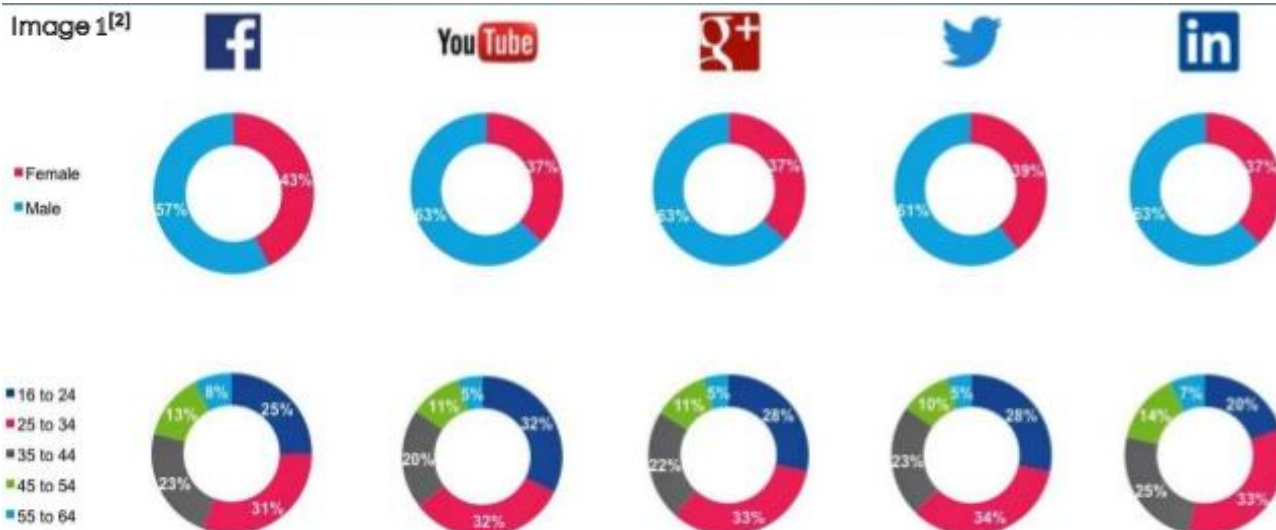
needs. Even if the influencer is credible, the target must have confidence in him. Without trust, any information from the influencer will be downgraded by the target.

### 2.3 Social Media Statistics and Facts for 2016

#### 1) Social media statistics

- For context, as of July 2015, total worldwide population is 7.3 billion
- The internet has 3.17 billion users
- There are 2.3 billion active social media users

- 91% of retail brands use 2 or more social media channels
- Internet users have an average of 5.54 social media accounts
- Social media users have risen by 176 million in the last year
- 1 million new active mobile social users are added every day. That's 12 each second
- Facebook Messenger and Whatsapp handle 60 billion messages a day

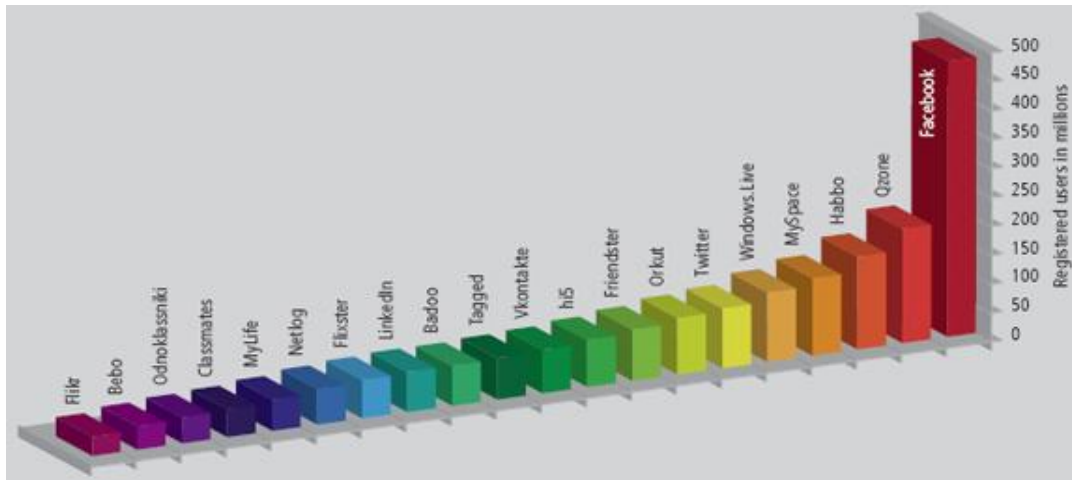


#### 2) Google statistics

- Google processes 100 billion searches a month
- That's an average of 40,000 search queries every second
- 89.3% of all internet searches are carried out by Google
- Those searches are carried out by 1.17 billion unique users
- Every day, 16 to 20% of that day's queries have never been asked before
- Google has answered 450 billion unique queries since 2003
- More than half of Google's searches come from mobile devices
- By 2014, Google had indexed 30,000,000,000,000 pages of the internet
- To carry out all these searches, Google's data centre uses 0.01% of worldwide electricity

- Facebook adds 500,000 new users every day; 6 new profiles every second
- 72% of all online US adults visit Facebook at least once a month
- The average (mean) number of friends is 338, and the median (midpoint) number of friends is 200
- Half of internet users who do not use Facebook themselves live with someone who does
- Of those, 24% say that they look at posts or photos on that person's account
- There are an estimated 81 million fake Facebook profiles
- The most popular page is Facebook for Every Phone, with 509,772,152 likes
- There are 40 million active small business Pages
- But only 2 million of those businesses pay for advertising
- Facebook accounts for 62% of social logins made by consumers to sign into the apps and websites of publishers and brands

#### 3) Facebook statistics



#### 4) Twitter statistics

- 500 million people visit Twitter each month without logging in
- There is a total of 1.3 billion accounts, but only 320 million are active
- Of those, 44% made an account and left before ever sending a Tweet
- The average Twitter user has 208 followers
- But 391 million accounts have no followers at all
- There are 500 million Tweets sent each day. That's 6,000 Tweets every second
- Twitter's top 5 markets (countries) account for 50% of all Tweets
- It took 3 years, 2 months and 1 day to go from the first Tweet to the billionth
- 65.8% of US companies with 100+ employees use Twitter for marketing

#### 5) YouTube statistics

- 300 hours of video are uploaded to Youtube every minute
- There are 3.25 billion hours of video watched each month
- More than half of YouTube views come from mobile devices
- The average mobile viewing session lasts more than 40 minutes
- The user submitted video with the most views is "Charlie bit my finger", with 834,956,899 views
- On average, there are 1,000,000,000 mobile video views per day
- In 2014, the most searched term was music. The second was Minecraft
- 9% of U.S small businesses use Youtube
- Navigate YouTube in a total of 76 different languages (covering 95% of the Internet population)

#### 6) Instagram statistics

- There are 400 million Monthly Active Users on Instagram
- Over 80 million photos are uploaded each day
- There are 3.5 billion Instagram Likes per day
- More than 40 billion photos have been shared so far
- 90 percent of Instagram users are younger than 35
- When Instagram introduced videos, more than 5 million were shared in 24 hours

- Pizza is the most popular Instagrammed food, behind sushi and steak
- 32% of US teens cite Instagram as their favourite social network

#### 7) Pinterest statistics

- 176 million Pinterest accounts have been registered
- But only 100 million are active each month
- 42% of all online women use the platform
- The best time to Pin is Saturday from 8pm-11pm
- In 2014, male audience grew 41% and their average time spent on Pinterest tripled to more than 75 minutes per visitor
- 66% of content that users Pin comes from brand websites

#### 8) LinkedIn statistics

- LinkedIn has 450 million members
- 100 million of those access the site on a monthly basis
- More than 1 million members have published content on LinkedIn
- The average CEO has 930 LinkedIn connections
- Over 3 million companies have created LinkedIn accounts
- But only 17% of US small businesses use LinkedIn

#### 9) How Social Media Destroys Youth

The impact of social networks on young people is significant. Children are growing up surrounded by mobile devices and interactive social networking sites such as Twitter, MySpace, and Face book, which has made the social media a vital aspect of their life. Social network is transforming the manner in which young people interact with their parents, peers, as well as how they make use of technology.

#### a) Face book Depression

Researchers have proposed a new phenomenon called "Face book depression," defined as depression that develops when preteens and teens spend a great deal of time on social media sites, such as Face book, and then begin to exhibit classic symptoms of depression. The intensity of the online world is thought to be a factor that may trigger depression in some adolescents. As with offline depression, preadolescents and adolescents who suffer from Face book depression are at risk for social isolation and sometimes turn to risky Internet sites and blogs for "help" that may promote substance abuse,

unsafe sexual practices, or aggressive or self-destructive behaviors.

#### **b) Cyber Bullying**

One of the often cited dangers of social media is cyber bullying. It occurs when a person uses sites like Face book to adopt a threatening behavior towards someone during a discussion or sends threatening messages.

#### **c) Cyber-stalking**

Stalking is defined as the obsessive monitoring or attention towards the victim that may harass him or her. Cyber-stalking can be done in many different ways using social media. Sometimes, an ex-boyfriend or spouse may get angry at the breakup of a relation and use social media to pursue the victim. In another case, a relationship that was developed online gets sour and the personal information shared can be used by the stalker. Or, someone may also fall victim to a random cyber stalking attack.

#### **d) Time wastage**

- Students, while searching and studying online, get attracted to using social media sites and sometimes they forget why they are using internet. This wastes their time and sometimes students are not able to deliver their work in the specified time frame.
- When alerted to a new post or tweet, it takes about 20 to 25 minutes for the average user to return to their original task. 30% of the time it takes two hours for the user to return to their original task.

#### **e) Users Vulnerable to Crime**

- Social networking sites allow hate groups to recruit and distribute propaganda online.
- Unauthorized sharing and copyright infringement threatens intellectual property and causes loss of income.
- Security attacks such as hacking, identity theft, and phishing scams, and viruses are common online. 68% of users share their real birth date, 63% share the name of their high school, 18% share their phone number, 12% share a pet's name: This information might be used in identity theft.
- Criminals use social media to commit crimes. Robbers know when they are away from their home on vacation and stalkers get information about their whereabouts via social media.

#### **f) Sexting**

Sexting can be defined as "sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital devices." Many of these images become distributed rapidly via cell phones or the Internet. This phenomenon does occur among the teen population; a recent survey revealed that 20% of teens have sent or posted nude or seminude photographs or videos of themselves.

#### **g) Online grooming**

One of the most distressing aspects of the social media is the growing evidence that pedophiles may use fake accounts on the social media to make friendships with young children and teenagers. They pretend to be of the same age to win children's confidence. They can then gain vital personal

information like their schools and the places where they hang out. They can then use that information to bully and make sexual contact with their victims or exposing them to explicit imagery or content.

#### **h) Lack of interpersonal skills:**

Children spending too much time online may consider a virtual relation substitute for a real one. By spending more time online they often ignore the importance and the appropriate behaviour related to face-to-face contact. Hence, the set of interpersonal skills that are necessary for the success in the real life may not develop properly.

#### **i) Reduced learning and research capabilities**

Students have started relying more on the information accessible easily on these social networking sites and the web. This reduces their learning and research capabilities.

#### **j) Multitasking**

Students who get involved in activities on social media sites while studying result in reduction in their focus of attention. This causes reduction in their academic performance, and concentration to study well.

#### **k) Reduction in real human contact**

The more time the youth spend on these social media sites, the less time they will spend socializing in person with others. This reduces their communication skills. They will not be able to communicate and socialize effectively in person with others. The employers are getting more and more unsatisfied with the communication skills of the fresh graduates due to this reason. The effective communication skills are a key to success in the real world.

#### **l) Reduces command over language use age and creative writing skills**

Students mostly use slang words or shortened forms of words on social networking sites. They start relying on the computer grammar and spelling check features. This reduces their command over the language and their creative writing skills.

#### **m) Loss of motivation in students**

The student's motivational level reduces due to the use of these social networking sites. They rely on the virtual environment instead of gaining practical knowledge from the real world.

### **3. Social Media Impact on Youth Health**

The excessive use of these sites affects the mental as well as physical health. Students do not take their meals on time and take proper rest. They take excessive amount of coffee or tea to remain active and focused which effects negatively on their health.

#### **3.1 Impact on Mental Health**

- 1) Social media is addictive
- 2) Social media makes us compare our lives with others'.
- 3) Social media makes us restless
- 4) Social media gives rise to cyber bullying
- 5) Social media glamorizes drug and alcohol use.

- 6) Social media can make us unhappy
- 7) Social media can lead to fear of missing out, aka FOMO.
- 8) Social media often leads to multitasking.
- 9) Social media enhances our connectivity.
- 10) Social media can help with socialization.

### 3.2 Impact on Physical Health

#### 1) Causes Depression

Many social media users practice boosting the reality of their lives by posting things that make them appear more desirable to be with. People just want to measure up. Those with less social confidence can easily see themselves as having less worth than others. Being constantly reminded that their life may not measure up to so many others can further lower a person's self-confidence.

In addition, social media is rampant with overly critical and often hurtful interaction. These unfriendly exchanges can take place so much more easily when the human element of face-to-face communication has been removed. Such cruelty can be devastating to an already troubled individual. The feelings of inadequacy that are caused can sometimes lead to depression.

#### 2) Leads To Addiction

Some studies, like one by the University of Maryland, have shown that all this use of social media can lead to an actual addiction. Many individuals are spending so much of their time on social media websites that it actually interferes with the way they live their lives.

As technology moves forward, there are an increasing number of people who are now relying on their smart phones to visit these media sites. Again and again, throughout their day, they feel the need to post something or check-up on what others are posting. It has become an important part of the way these people spend their days and it is affecting thousands of people. Just think about how often they see people using their smart phones for anything other than talking or texting.

#### 3) Leads To Isolation

The use of text messaging and social media messages have become a common occurrence in today's society. Interaction on a human level has become less frequent in a person's day-to-day living arrangements. Direct communication has been eliminated and much of society has been reduced to using abbreviations that express their emotions. Examples of important aspects of communication that are falling by the wayside today include: Basic verbal communication, Tone of voice, Facial expression, Body language. Social media is removing these very human qualities of communication by eliminating the need to get out and socialize with others in person.

#### 4) Inhibits Physical Interaction With Others

Spending all this time online socializing has replaced the time spent engaging in face-to-face communication. The human element of conversation has been removed. Why

go out for a chat over a cup of coffee with one friend when they can stay home and socialize with many at one time? By removing the need to socialize on a face to face basis, they have removed all of the perks that go along with it, such as: The sound of laughter, being able to read another's emotions, the sight of a smile, and the feel of a touch. These are all very real human qualities that individuals need to express and interpret from others now and again.

#### 5) Hinders Creativity And Decreases Physical Activity

Social media has made it easy for many to become just plain lazy. With the touch of their fingertips they can post a question to their social sites asking others for ideas rather than using their own imagination and thought process to generate an idea. Original thinking can easily be replaced by utilizing readily available information online, thus eliminating the need to create their own ideas. On top of that, people are also less inclined to go outdoors just for some exercise, or even working out at home. After all, it's difficult to update their online profile when they're running on a treadmill.

### 3.3 Social Media Impact on Youth Academic Life

Social networking sites are affecting youth lives both positive and negative ways. Academic life is one of the areas that are affected.

- The main harm of social networking is creating an addiction.
- Students are also not able to get rid of this addiction during lecture hours therefore, their concentration decreases and this negatively affects their ability to learn new topics.
- As mentioned, students use their smart phones to access social network sites during lecture hours so, they cannot carefully follow lessons. "Social networks grab the total attention and concentration of the students and divert them towards non-educational, unethical and inappropriate actions such as useless chatting, time killing by random searching and not doing their jobs".
- According to other surveys, usage of smart phones to access social network sites during class does not only affect students' concentrations, also distracts students' short memories and listening skills. Inevitably, their exam results fall down dramatically.
- The other issue is virtual life which is provided students by social network sites. Students do not want to follow lessons because lessons are boring them.
- They want to be online on social network sites instead of being in class. The reason behind of this is virtual life opportunities.
- In social network sites, there is no obligation for users. Therefore, students like living in this virtual world because, classroom does not provide same opportunities for them.
- If they are in classroom, they have to listen lessons and complete works. "This virtual life of student destructs his thoughts from education towards other activities and by living inside fantasy world student slowly starts to hate educated life and studies".

- Consequently, mobile phones are the most dangerous tools for lectures and students during lessons and this tool should be removed from lectures if efficient lessons are wanted to give to students.

#### 4. Conclusion

The overuse of these social media sites on a daily basis has many negative effects on the physical and mental health of students making them lethargic and unmotivated to create contact with the people in person. The parents should check and balance on their children when they use the internet. They should be on guard whether they are using it for appropriate time period or not. The peers and teachers should also help students make them aware of the negative effects and explain what they are losing in the real world by sticking to these social networking sites. Social networking clearly portrays both positive and negative effects on the youth. It is decision of an individual to make whether to continue using the sites or not.

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