THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND ITS IMPLICATION ON BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN OF ADULTS

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Abstract

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MySpace are the dominant players who are leading as most popular and widely used social networking sites among adults. The emerging trend of these social networking sites draws attention towardits significant role in communication technology as an opportunity,which also associates with certain risks and insecurity for its users.It signifies the dynamicnature of role of internet and online communication, relationships which are most probably based on existing offline social network.In this regard the present study focuses on the role of communication technology in terms of its online as well as offline social network.It also seeks to highlight interdisciplinary implications and perspectives of social networking sites on the behavioral pattern onadultsin the context of India.

Key words: Social Networking Sites,Privacy, Trust, Beehive, Virtual World

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Introduction

In today's global information era, the role of communication technology is crucial whereas internet signifies as a prominent playerfordisseminating information at rapid scale. Adolescents and adults are mostly general users of this online communication technology in case of creating their social virtual environmental network. The application of social networking is in different forms as it is not only confine with instant messaging, emails, and chat rooms, but also includes social networking sites like Facebook,Twitter, LinkedInetc. as well as blogs,Google+ , photo and video sharing sites such as YouTube etc. There is overlapping of these instruments in the context of social media. It reveals the complementary relationship which createsa common social networking platform. In contrast, there is a continuous consensus between two mediumsconsist of online and offline social network. It has been arguedthat in terms of efficiency there is no such impact of social networking sites on their relationship which might draws skeptical outlook toward its impact and usability (Subrahmanyam, et al., 2008).

In this context, there are various studies which contribute different perspectives in analyzing this virtual world with reference to social networking sites. Social networking sites are leading as most popular and widely used network which satisfying the need of belongingness in a competent environment, whereas adolescence and adults are witnessing the same in the absence of offline interaction. They usually try to create a virtual social world with their offline friends. Nowadays social networking sites are used beyond this terminology, hence it doesn't only confine with offline friends, but also a group of people who share their common individual interest in which they may not know personally. Even Beyond this it also works as a common platform for expressing their views against political ideology and its different activities or policy implications. In this regards the social networking sites are important not only from the perspective of individual interest but also from institutional framework and its structural modeling.

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MySpace are the dominant players who are leading as most popular and widely used social networking sites among adults. The nature and implications of social networking sites are interdisciplinary; it touches every aspect of human life, particularly psychological, sociological and economic perspectives which revolve around this virtual social networking. With regards to this the concern study seeks to draw attention toward the role of communication technology in terms of its online as well as offline social networking. The

present study also focuses on its uses with regards to its different perspectives consists of societal, economical, psychological, politicalbehaviorin the context of its implicationon the behavioral pattern onadultsin the context of India.

The Emerging Growth of Digital India

The role of Science and technology is crucial in reducing the communication gap wherein people are so busy with their schedules in which they find difficult to interact with their existing and old friends.Theinternet is acting as driving force in creating virtual social world as the world rate of internet users has increased from 16% in 2005 to39% in 2013 (ITU,2013). The developing countries are no longer back-seated in suchknowledgeeconomy.

Figure 1: **Comparison of Individuals Using Internet of Developed Countries and Developing Countries**
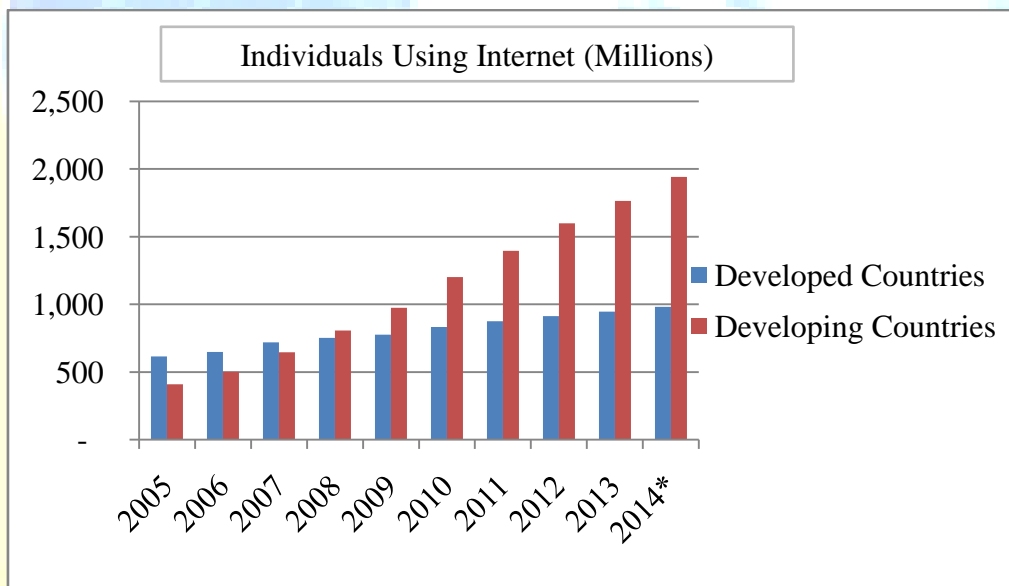
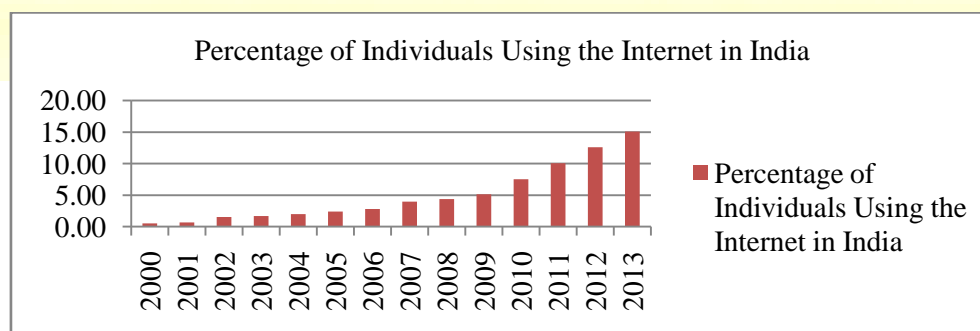**Source**: **International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 2014**

Figure 2:Comparison of Individuals Using InternetAcross the Globe
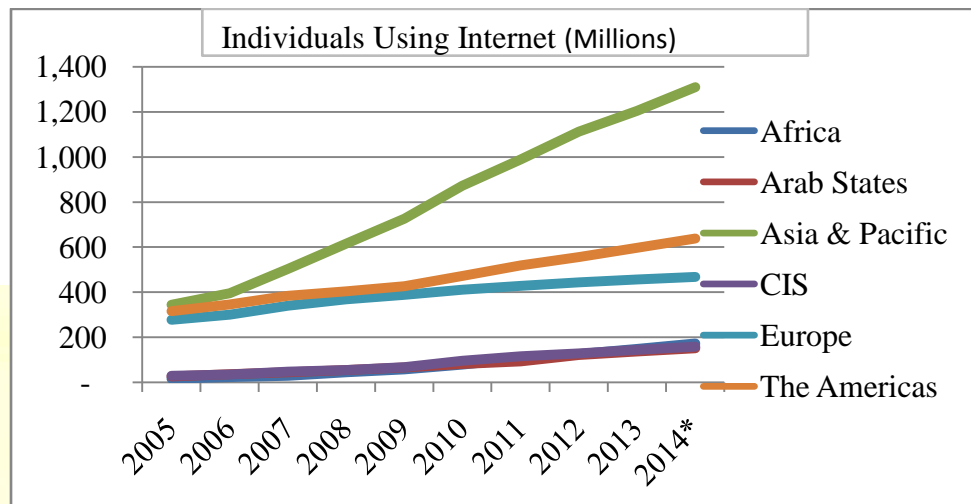
### Source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 2014

With the increased growth rate of internet users from 0.53% in 2000 to 15.10% in 2013, there is also increase rate of social networking users in India. It is expected to be high in coming years. However,currently Indiaholds 3rd position for internet users inthe Global ranking(ITU, 2014).In this context it is important to understand the role of social networking sites in digitalIndia. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc. are broadly dominating on social media whereas Pinterest, Google+, Instagram etc. are becoming popular trends among teenagers in India. On the other side offline networking versions like hike messengers, are also emerging on social media while taking into consideration of attracting new users who don't have internet access. This is a kind of extension of social networking sites working as giant to connect people and many more.

Figure 3:Percentage of Individuals Using the Internet in India

Source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 2014

Figure 4:Number of social network users in India from 2012 to 2018 (in millions)

Number of social network users in India from 2012 to 2018 (in millions)
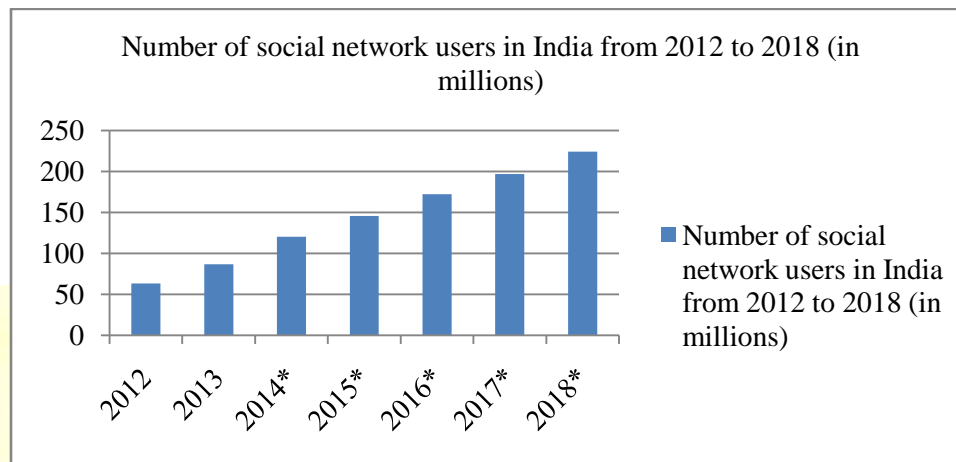
Source:Statista, 2014

Table 1:No. of Social Media Users in India

Social Media	No. of Users (in millions-2014)
Facebook	100
Twitter	33
LinkedIn	26
Pinterest	5.5

Source: social media statistics 2014

Role of social networking sites and Its Implicationson Behavioural Pattern of Adults

The major customer shares of social networking site users are youngsters. Initially, it was intended to provide a communication network among college student which eventually encouraging children as well as adolescents. There are different reasons for which adolescents and adults connect to the social networking sites quickly and widely which could involve "emotional support, trust and loyalty, sharing activities, and offers of instrumental support" (Radmacher & Azmitia, 2006). Whereas, it has been seen that sense of belongingness not only establish existing relationships as well as new relationships, but also leads to evaporate the depressed mental stake up to a certain extent. Hence it is difficult to say whether it works in the long term actionin terms of behavioral change.

Another approach lies inthe communication process is through offline as well as an online social network. It has been seen that there is a thin line between offline and online development of these relationship. It has been argued that initially most of the time people prefer to engage and tries to develop their offline local network by online way, which may not be the case with distantstrangers(Boneva, et al., 2006), and this applies equally to social networking (Ellison, et al., 2007).Probably the probability remains that youngsters could get engaged indirectly with distance strangers through the process of their long and complex network system which may be based on existing offline network. On the contrary, ithas been argued that though social networking tohave dramatically transformed children and young people's lives, it significantly facilitates change in the process of communication in terms of quantity and quality (Boyd& Ellison, 2007).

With the advent of global world, teenager and young people engage in different forms of social networking sites for the expression of self, learning, construction of a wide circle of relationships, whereas it is important to note that its role is not only confine with finding old friends, but also leads to the development of new relations who share common interest and the management of privacy and intimacy (Livingstone & Brake, 2010).With regards to the use of social networking sites and its practices it reveals pleasure to teenagers who gets the opportunity to project their self in a sense of what they want so for example a typical teenagers profile follow big welcome in sparkly pink, with music, photos, a love tester (Giddens, 1991).

As growing concern for the use of social networking, has drawn attention to the issue of privacy matter. Hence, there are several studies which have highlighted the issue of privacy and risk while engaging with social networking sites. It has been observed that with growing competition most of the social networking sites allow its users to use or post the information pertaining to third party profiling. In this regard, there is a skeptical view pertaining to the role of online communication technology in terms of understanding issues related to the privacy. There is still need to analyze the relation between potential opportunities which leads to the creation of social identity and role of technology. The social networking sites such as Facebook,MySpace, Orkut, and Twitterallowing their users to customize their privacy policies for example Facebook have a "Privacy Setting". It facilitates control on the specification of profile data. On the contrary, ithas been argued that despite of having these provisions there is growing concern against the matter of its uses because of its complexity in nature, whereas lack of proper and

appropriate information creates hurdles in the process of ensuring trust and privacy (Fang &LeFevre, 2010).

There are several studies which highlight the consequences pertaining to the issues of privacy. First consequence is that wide circles of friends lead to the effect of extensive social networks of weak ties (Ellison et al., 2007;Livingstone &Brake, 2010). Another from the perspective of teenagers who find easy to flirt or negotiate online rather than face to face communication could be a symptom of criminal attitude (Livingstone, 2008a). Lastly, itdeteriorates the traditional system of mentoring where people seek for mutual negotiation which takes back seat in case of online networking where people just follow their friend'sideologywhich mostly done on randomly basis (Heverly, 2008). It also comprises of ethnographic study by Boyd and Ellison (2007) which draws attention to the embarrassing, critical situation where third party people control some important features of their information like Crude pictures. In Another context college student, teenagers and adults reveal a lot of information about themselves, and May not very aware or concern of privacy options or who can actually view their profile (Acquisti& Gross, 2006).It draws attention, whether how long people may find it feasible and willing to share their information and develop their relationship online with regard to trust who record every sign of their action could be advantageous also which might not the case of offline communication. In this context Privacy Trust Model gives some insight for understanding the system of trust and privacy matters (Dwyer, et al., 2007). Beehive also works as people recommendation system for individual who provide comments on users and its share content and manage their profile in a professional manner (Chen, et al., 2009).

As we know, every investment involves its own cost which is quite similar in the case of social networking also, which find a close association between opportunities and risk of using profile information could not be possible in case of offline where most social transactions leave behind no trace e.g. currently Orkut is on off air.It is mostly time consuming in which there is also possibility that youngsters will get fed off with the advent of every new instruments like what's up, hike messengers currently in boom. Another question lies, whether it is just confine with developmental issues of human behavior and its actions from individual psychological, societal perspective. It is also important to note that it has political significance pertaining to the creation of social identity and the development of social capital in which people get informed

and manage their political activities and issues (Zhang, et al., 2009).Ultimately, social networking sites are experiencing huge success in terms of its return bydeveloping and adopting suchinstruments. The use and implication of Social networking follows multidisciplinary approach, creates opportunities with respective to the technological advancement are concerned. It is a dynamic process of development which accompany with the path of social sciences.

Conclusion and Summary

The emerging trend of Social networking sitesand its uses highlight its significance in terms of satisfying psychological needs of belongingnessespecially among emerging adults. In this regard it is important to note and analyze its dynamic nature which change continuously draws attentions toward the issues of complexity, whereas from another perspective they are transient and relatively short-lived. It signifies its revolving culture. One key issue is ensuring appropriate privacy for both children as well as emerging adults. In this regard, there are many other instruments which provide solutions in terms different privacy policies, Beehive etc. On the contrary the question remains the same whether it is possible to control entire risk of leakage of information by spammers and fraudsters.

With growing competition there are different changes which emerging adult also follows that leads to flexibility and dynamic behavioral aspect. The real issue lies with transformation in behavioural patterns and practices of adults in real life though its nature and privacy issue is a matter of concern. There is a continuous change in their preferences and choice. In such an environment, it is quite impossible to predict their behavior in a sense whether emerging adults will continue to use social networking sites for interconnections or not and if they do then in which particular manner. There are other environmental factors which also influence the use and implications of social networking sites.In India, the rate of internet users and thereby social networking site users is high in urban region as compare to rural areas, whereas rural areas are still struggling with lack of adequate and efficient infrastructure facilities. It has been noticing that India is full of cultural diversity where youngsters enjoy with chats and organizing different events which is quite witnessed by social networking sites. On this ground we can conclude that technology as instrument creates opportunities which may likely to be associated with certain risk factor that can be minimized through the ways of following optimize solutions, whereas ultimately solution lies with self-control and effective management of optimum utilization of suchresources.

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