

Cybersocialization - an epitome of friendship or violence

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ABSTRACT

Aristotle says, Man is a social animal and he cannot survive in isolation or without any relationship. Humans need socialization to be nurtured and to have a nature. Socialization is a lifelong process of transformation and behavioural learning through interactions. To cater the needs of socializations humans have opted for many innovative ways, one such is the virtual socialization or cyber socialization. The generations born after 1990s are digital generations, they willfully opt for internet to be a medium for shaping their personality through the virtual platforms. Virtual socialization is made possible through an array of social networking sites, starting from Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, etc. This technology leads younger generation to more of online and less of face-to-face interaction.

In this era of information technology, younger generations are opted with two lives to live: a physical life and a virtual one. According to recent studies, users of virtual world are at an increasing pace from millions to trillions. Virtual life is entertained by young people because it provides them a virtual space where they can exchange ideas, interact with people who are like-minded to their choice and preferences and therefore they are the masters of that virtual space created by them. As people started using this virtual space and create more of socialization, on the same side violence also gets increased. The main aim of this paper is to analyse whether cyber socialization is a cause of violence.

Key Words: Socialization, Interaction, Virtual space, Cyber socialization, Social Networking, Violence

INTRODUCTION

Socialization is the process of learning the norms and beliefs of our society. It is the process of understanding norms of the society, accepting beliefs of the society alongside being aware of the social values. "Socialization" or "being sociable" is the epithet of this modern technological world. Humans need socialization to be nurtured (i.e., the social environment in which we live in) and to have a nature (i.e., hereditary and genetical traits), the above-said two attributes, nature and nurture collectively depict the human social behavior. Although Hereditary and genetical traits helps us live a life that is already designed by genes, the society in which we live in is responsible for the behavior of through combined effort of human language, social interaction, and other forms of human contact.

Socialization varies with different concepts and different situations. The Major categories of socialization include: Primary socialization and Secondary socialization, based on the society assessment of humans there can be: positive or negative socialization, based on the depth of awareness of socialization: formal or informal socialisation, based on the perception of objective, we have anticipatory or adaptive socialization, based on the intervention of legitimacy, they can be associative or institutional socialization, etc.

Thus, social interaction plays a more important role than many of us realize. According to sociologist Charles Horton Cooley, individuals acquire their concept of self by observing how they are perceived by others, a concept Cooley coined as the "looking-glass self." A person's sense of self is inevitable linked to their perception by others. The imagination of their self is collectively networked by how they are perceived by others and humans try to interpret their reactions based on others perceptions and thereby design a self based on those perceptions and interpretations. The looking-glass self-concept of Cooley, widely describes the process wherein individuals base their sense of self on others perceptions and interpretations. Using social interaction as a type of "mirror," people use the judgments they receive from others to measure their own worth, values, and behavior. This developed self-concept is not an immediate action but it happens in social settings.

Sociologist George Herbert Mead emphasized that people develop self-images through interactions with other people. He further argued that the self of a person is a part of his personality. This attained self-concept is also a product of social setting.

This social setting is now made easy by the advent of Social Media, starting from Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, etc. This technology leads younger generation to more of online and less of face-to-face interaction. According to recent studies, users of virtual world are at an increasing

pace from millions to trillions. Virtual life is entertained by young people because it provides them a virtual space where they can exchange ideas, interact with people who are like-minded to their choice and preferences and therefore they are the masters of that virtual space created by them. Thus, the wellbeing of men and women, especially in adolescents and teens, largely depends on having a wide circle of friends, and lack of friends is associated with significantly lower levels of psychological wellbeing.

As people started using this virtual space and create more of socialization, on the same side violence also gets increased. The main aim of this paper is to analyse whether cyber socialization paves way for healthier friendships or is a cause of violence.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mead's theory of social behaviorism:

George Herbert Mead was an American philosopher, sociologist, and psychologist. The two major works of Mead include a theory of pragmatism and social behaviorism. Mead's theory of social behaviorism envisages the concept of social interaction and he believed that the key to self-development in an individual is by social interaction and communication between individuals. The main objectives of this research paper are based on the outline of ideas developed by Mead in his theory of social behaviorism.

- *The self develops solely through social experience:* Mead believed that human's self-development gets driven by social experiences alongside with heredity traits.
- *Social experience consists of the exchange of symbols:* According to Mead, humans use language and other visual cues to convey meaning.
- *Knowing others' intentions requires imagining the situation from their perspectives:* Mead believed that social development happens when the individual takes the role of the other.
- *Understanding the role of the other results in self-awareness:* Mead proposed that there is an "I" self and a "me" self. The "I" self is active and initiates action whereas the "me" self always interrupts or changes action depending on others action.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research paper include:

- To analyze the development of self through social interaction

- To justify that social interaction is a result of information exchange or violence
- To prove that social interaction is successful when seen from a friendly perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cyber socialization dates from 1970s with the invention of e-mail, for scientific and academic interactions, progressively ended up in personal conversations and chatting in chatrooms (Clemmitt, 2006). Fraim (2006) defines this cyber socialization as the “virtual interaction with known and unknown individuals for the purpose of entertainment and for establishment of relationships and commitment during emotions of depression and loneliness”.

People who feel better to express their true selves on the Virtual rather in real world can socialize faster and form close relationships at a convenient pace over the Internet (Bargh et al., 2002). The advantageous side of Virtual socialization is a type of non-verbal communication, i.e., absence of facial expressions, voice tone, gestures, postures, etc., with relative anonymity during conversations via the Internet, which helps in gradual development of conversation and strong relationships (Bargh & McKenna, 2004).

Siidiqui and Singh (2016) reported that the rapid growth of technological development gave birth to small communication devices like smartphone and Gadgets, for assessing social networks at all times. With the accelerated development of technology and internet, social media has become a routine for most of them; humans get so much addicted to these networks. With different fields, the impacts of social media on humans do differ.

METHODOLOGY

The Methodology adapted for this study is a quantitative approach with a research questionnaire with 100 respondents from ages 18 to 21 years. The responses were justified for the research objectives.

FINDINGS

Development of self through social interaction:

Posting pictures, for example, posting selfies, posting opinions, celebrating success, check-ins with pictures, etc. on social media build a self-image for the individual. Figure 1 illustrates that users like to post on social media with the main motive of informing others out of which females take up the majority.

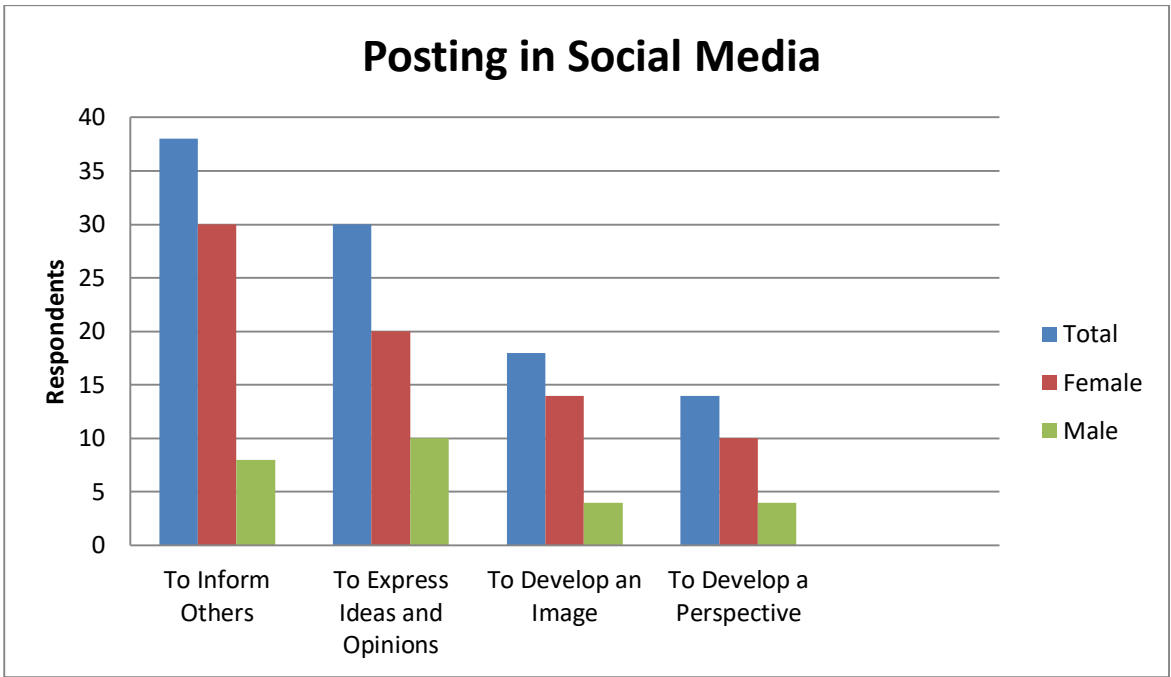


Figure 1: Representation of percentages of male and female with regard to posting on social media.

In today’s social networking era, adolescents and teens who use social media are worried about how many “likes” they can get, how many “followers” they have and how many “retweets” are done. The likes, comments, share and tweets add up more perceptions and interpretations to their self-image. Figure 2 represents the clear picture on how the social self is created for each social media user irrespective on gender, when males just post pictures and don’t check the trend of the picture, women check the trending on each posts, i.e., they check the views, likes and comments.

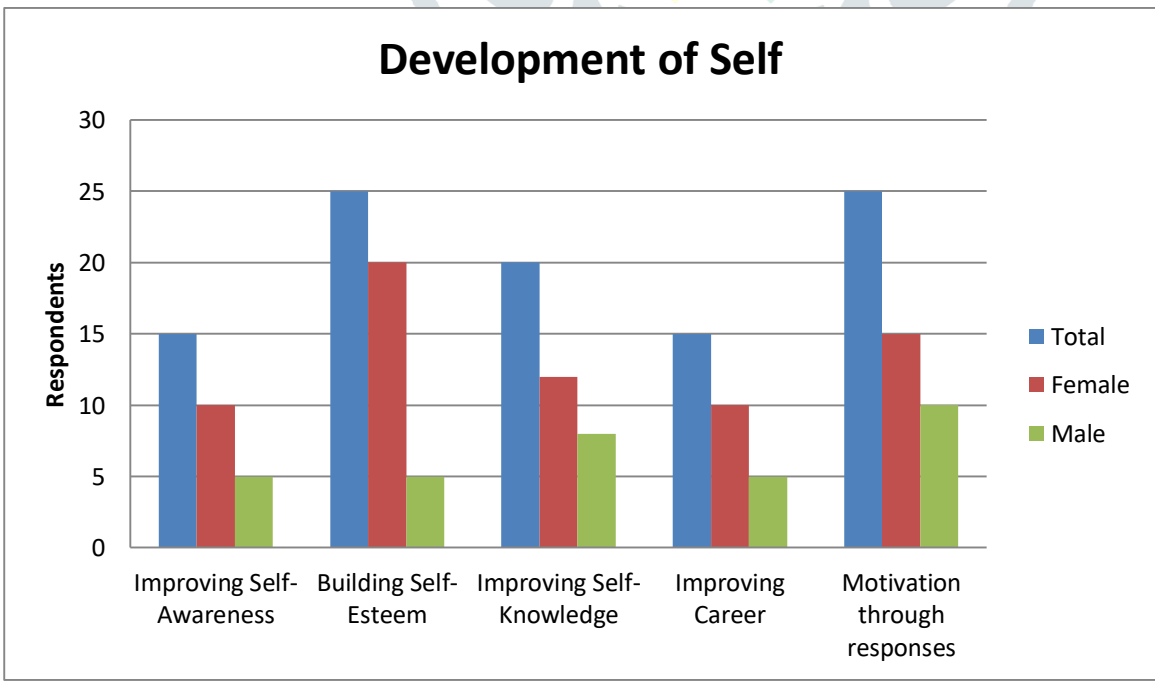


Figure 2: Representation of social self through interaction in social media.

When the number of the likes, comments, share and tweets decrease, they feel they are not that “perfect image” who people like, they also feel that they are not worthy or good.

Social interaction is a result of information exchange:

Social media creates a platform for information exchange which increases more of social interaction through emojis, memes, gifs, etc. In this era, adolescents and teens feel social interaction much comfortable than face-to-face interaction. As social interaction uses a non-verbal way of communication, users tend to socialize and interact more intimate. Among all these socializations, there are successful relationships that can happen only if both the users express their true. Respondents felt that many in social media disguise their identities they don't express their true self through their pages and many users fake their profiles. These activities of disguise and faking cause cybersocialization to become a violent platform. Figure 3 depicts the percentages of social interaction performed by both the genders, in which women represents a percentage wherein they feel comfortability in interacting through social media and they are very much aware of the violence the interaction encompasses.

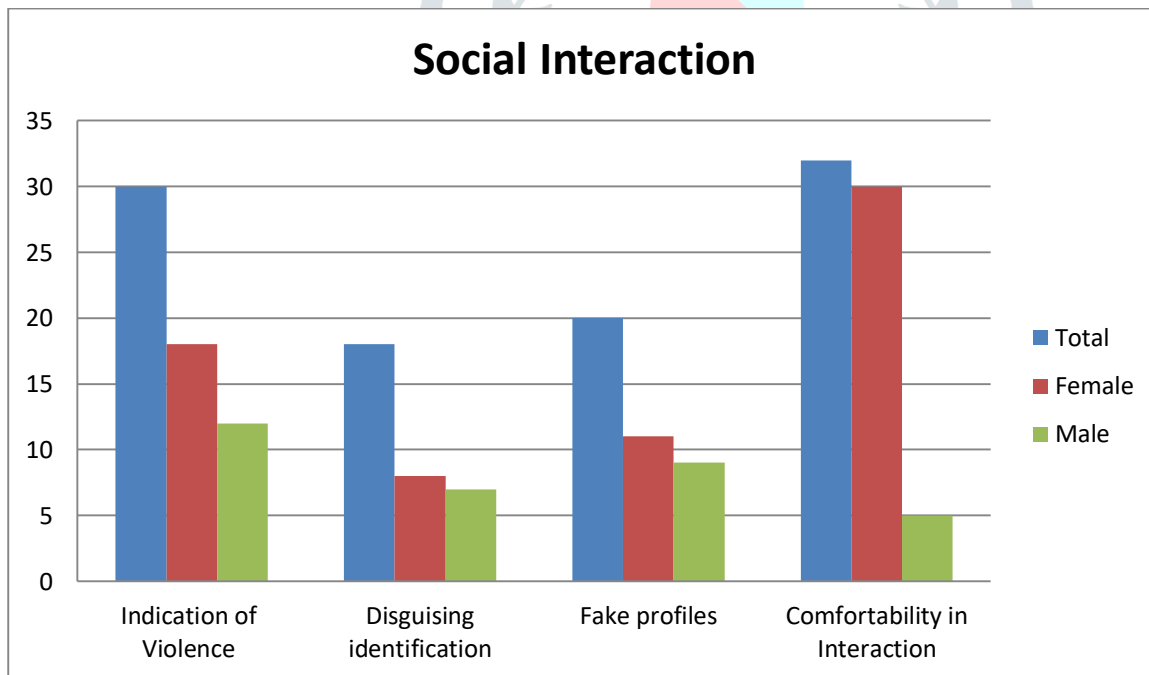


Figure 3: Representation of social interaction in Social media platforms.

Social interaction is successful or not successful based on thinking perspective:

Figure 4 depicts the success rate of interaction through social media platforms. In this modern era, adolescents and teens tend to become socialize only if they feel that their friend thinks from the perspective which they like. If they feel the bonding they tend to become more social and thereby

making the social interaction successful. Some of the respondents felt that they have to be little cautious on picking up friends through social media, as some of the users tend to read the profiles and take in a manner that is pleasing which may end up in violence.

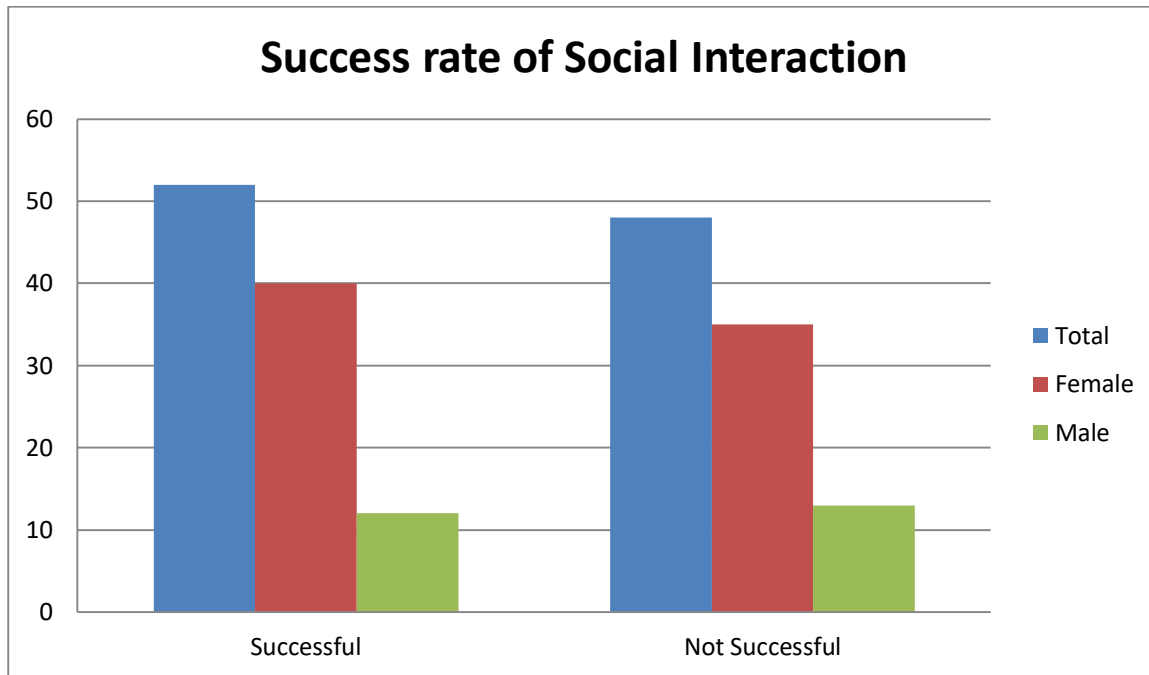


Figure 4. Representation of success rate in interactions through social media platforms.

CONCLUSION

Social media gives its users a greater opportunity for socialization like rejoining with old friends, sharing pictures, sharing opinion, etc. It also helps in providing virtual presence in all relationships. As long as everything is done with limit, cybersocialization is not hazard free. It is a platform to reconcile relationships.

Alongside social media also paves way for more of virtual relationship as there is no restriction for relationships and no exercise of freedom of speech. Women are found to be thrice more cybersocialization active through social media. As social media is a wider platform with lots of interconnections, users tend to be more careful in their posting and sharing. It is therefore very obvious that online socializing is also as vulnerable as real life socializing, the patterns may differ. Ignorance coupled with lots of information exchange may lead to criminality and violence. Social media is a platform to socialize, to express ideologies and interpretations, when such information exchange happens it has to happen with utmost care and caution.

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