



SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATIONS AND THE NOVEL CORONA VIRUS

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Abstract

Social media is a web based automation that helps in sharing of propositions, views and particulars at virtual network. It is a platform that is used by millions of people as it provides swift communication and information on a single platform. It has been increasing rapidly without considering any economic and geographical boundaries. It is a platform where lots of content are been shared by peoples for their use as personal information their documents their activities like photos videos and many more. This paper aims to study the impact of social networking sites on users during pandemic and also its importance during lockdown. A self-structured questionnaire was prepared and sent to 100 social media users through Facebook, Whatsapp, Telegram and other online platforms. Descriptive and analytical study was made and the data was then analyzed using percentage method. This study had shown that majority of peoples used social media for exploring new things life in field of education students look forward to the online classes and explore lots of thing related to study which helped them in improving their knowledge. Many households switch to you tube for learning new dishes, exploring new ways for interior, some look forward towards different gardening ideas and many more.

KEY WORDS – Social media, Novel corona virus, pandemic, lockdown.

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a platform which is used by maximum number of population in the world either for enhancing their knowledge, entertaining themselves, spending their leisure timing or even for connecting to their loving ones, who are far away from them people use social media as their first priority. According to the recent survey, more than 4.5 billion people use the internet and the users of social media have passed across the 3.8 billion mark (Digital 2020 Global Overview Report). This states that near about 60% of the world's population is already online. The gradual increase in social media users was seen since long time but a sudden hike took place with the arrival of Corona virus which was marked as pandemic throughout the world.

The Hindu stated that “The coronavirus outbreak came to light on December 31, 2019 when China informed the World Health Organization of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of an unknown cause in Wuhan City in Hubei Province. Subsequently the disease spread to more Provinces in China, and to the rest of the world. The WHO has now declared it a pandemic. The virus has been named SARS-CoV-2 and the disease is now called COVID-19”. It is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus known as coronavirus. Peoples infected with corona virus experienced mild to moderate respiratory illness and were recovered without requiring special treatment. This disease was most likely to affect older peoples and those who were underlying medical problems like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer or any other kind of respiratory disease. To cure any disease one of the most important things is to find cause of its transmission in the body. The spread of corona virus as studied by experts was transmission by peoples. It spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when the infected person coughs or sneezes. So to prevent and slow down the transmission of this virus peoples were advised to wash their hands at regular interval using alcohol based sanitizers, not to touch eyes or nose over and over again and one of the most important thing was to maintain social distancing among peoples and for this the most effective step taken by the government was lockdown in almost every part of the country.

Peoples were stuck inside their houses, all colleges, schools, restaurants, theatres, amusement parks, offices and almost every place was closed except Hospitals, police station and some essential services shops. Peoples were left with nothing other than their laptops, television, tablets, mobile phones, etc. as the only source of their entertainment, so maximum of the peoples spent more of their lives online. In the past few years, we had seen a drastic increased in smart phone users but during pandemic it is the internet that had grasped millions of people's attention towards itself. As per the **Datareportal global report** published on 27th January 2021, More than half of the world now uses social media out of those 4.66 billion people uses internet and 316 million new users have come online within last twelve months i.e. during coronavirus. As stated in news18, the findings showcased a steep increase in content consumption as it reported the time spent by the average user to be over four hours per day as compared to previous -- 1.5 hours on social media platforms.

Google owned application that is You Tube has seen Twenty point five percent gush in subscriber base in the country stated in a news report. In order to garner better engagement, brands are indulging into thorough marketing through Facebook and Instagram and the Indian government's efforts in spreading awareness has gained mileage over YouTube, said the report. The report revealed that the millennial remain the most active group on YouTube in India, with 70 percent of viewership coming from the age group 18-34. Over 90 percent of the views on YouTube were through mobile devices.

"The covid-19 pandemic brought a lot of new customers into the OTT category and they continued to stick on, and not at the cost of other avenues because the overall time spent on entertainment has gone up and that trend is here to stay," said Ferzad Palia, head, subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) and international business, Viacom18 Digital Ventures. Platforms like these have not seen any slowdown since the lockdown and subscriptions are far from plateauing, Palia added. Overall, platforms have seen around 30-40% spike in paid subscribers over the past year, said Mehul Gupta, co-founder and CEO at SoCheers, an independent digital agency.

Thus Corona virus has boosted up the user of social media sites as it is a platform used by people accordingly to their needs depending on an individual's gender, age, and level of their education or occupation as well. Many people used it as a platform for online studies whereas some used it for learning new skills in their leisure times. Online study as well as work from home also marked up an extension in many social sites users. During lockdown people were more dependent on social media for their entertainment, being social digitally, or being productive at home.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media came out with potential negative influence on the user's mental health and psychological well-being by spreading fear and panic related to outbreak of Covid 19 in Iraqi kurdistan and the most common platform for spreading such panic was Facebook. Although the nature of impact of social media panic among peoples also varies depending on an individual's gender, age, and level of education **Ahmad and Murad (2020)** Social media is a dynamic appliance for social interaction and ongoing education by facilitating collaboration among users. It has been found to be beneficial for the users during the time of lockdown where physical distancing was one of the most important thing for the peoples social media as a digital platform came up with the alternate way for working, chatting and learning as well. **Wong, Ho, et. Al (2020)** the largest netigen base which is over 2.5 billion internet users is been acquired by the Asia alone with East Asia accounting for the majority of this share. The global average for the online penetration rate in April 2021 stood at 60 percent whereas eastern Asia alone was around 71 percent which was higher than the global records. **Johnson (2021)** Covid19 has caused many positive and negative impacts on the people through social media sites but focusing on Gen Z, they have faced severe destruction on their mental health during first lockdown in UK. S-O-R framework which describes the behavior of individual through stimuli creating cognitive and emotional states which lead to responses is been used for the findings of this research highlighting series of practical implication of social media users with their health officials organizations institutions **Liu.,et al(2021)**

OBJECTIVES

- To study the impact of social networking sites on users during pandemic.
- To study the importance of social media for the peoples during lockdown.

METHODOLOGY

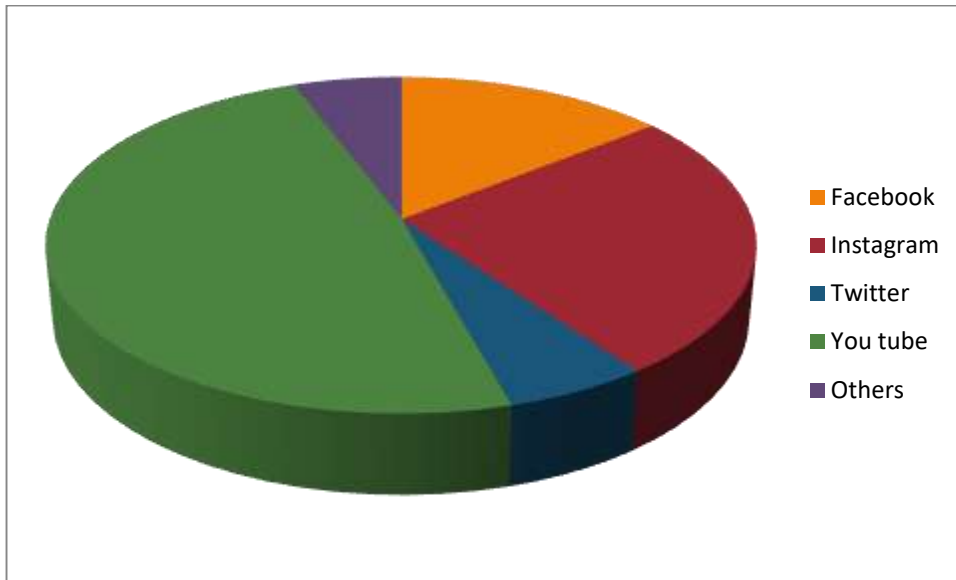
Both primary and secondary data sources are used in this study. Journals, newspapers and books were reviewed for collection of secondary data. The study involved the random sampling method. For the collection of primary data, we have used a quantitative survey methodology to obtain data from the peoples who are active on social media for more than 1 year. A self-structured questionnaire was prepared and sent to 100 social media users through Facebook, Whatsapp, Telegram and other online platforms. The social media users actively participated in the online survey which aimed to study the impact of social media over the peoples during lockdown. 70 out of 100 questionnaires were received from the social media users. Descriptive and analytical study was made and the data was then analyzed using percentage method.

RESULTS

The results showed that 69.1% of the total users confirmed that the arrival of covid 19 has increased their usage of time consumption over social media and the most frequently used social media application was YouTube i.e.49.3% among different social media applications as Facebook (14.5%), Instagram (24.6%), Twitter (5.8%) and others (5.8%) which people (50.7%) have marked as an

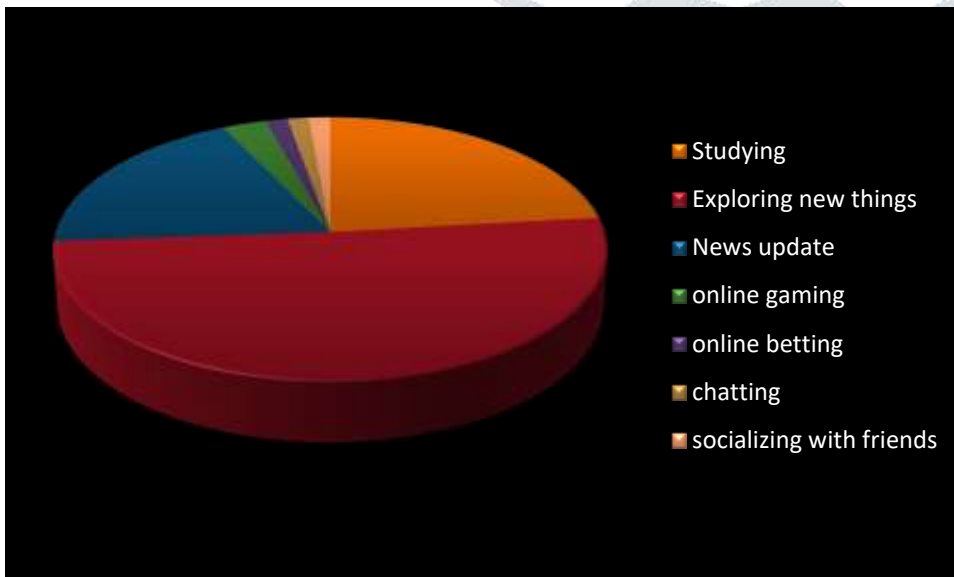
application for learning new things which they can implement in their daily lives. The time period during pandemic had mad lots of people learn and explore many things in their daily activities.

The table shows the percentage of the peoples using different social media applications:



Peoples (54.4%) have also switched to the OTT platform during pandemic. Over the top (OTT) had grown rapidly in the last couple of years as it offers more pellucidity to the users. According to the data by (emarketer) Netflix is found to be the biggest OTT service in the US in terms of revenue, with 30.8% of all subscriptions heading their way.

The table shows the purpose of the peoples to use social media



55.9% users found social media to be a boon during the pandemic as they found that social media was useful to cheer up their minds within the time where there was no other way to hang out.

This study had shown that majority of peoples used social media for exploring new things life in field of education students look forward to the online classes and explore lots of thing related to study which helped them in improving their knowledge. Many households switch to you tube for learning new dishes, exploring new ways for interior, some look forward towards different gardening ideas and many more.

One of the biggest reason behind the positive response of the peoples regarding social media applications was that 94% of the users were in favor that social media applications has helped peoples to stay connected during lockdown and also 85.3% users believe social media create opportunities to keep people safe and informed at home. 84.3% of the respondents do believe that social media was one and the only platform which had kept peoples updated to the social news being at home. 82.9% of the respondents do believe that they had learnt a lot of new things in pandemic through social media applications which they had implemented in their daily lives.

CONCLUSION

The worldwide lockdown has resulted in significant shifts in audience behavior, specifically in terms of online content consumption. According to the study, COVID-related content has seen a surge of 98 percent in terms of views and 19 percent in terms of engagement. In such a scenario, retention rate and watch time of videos will be the key metrics to filter and identify the best performing channels," Subrat Kar, CEO, Co-founder Vidooly, said in a statement. Most of the people switched to OTT platforms during this pandemic as it provides a variety of entertainment, which lead a sudden increased in the number of subscribers. Thus social media has a positive impact on the people during pandemic as it had helped people to learn new things when there was no other way for the refreshment. It was considered as one of the most useful application for peoples who rely over it for the news, as 52.2% peoples reported social media as a platform for the social news as because majority of peoples at the time of pandemic has said no to the newspaper, magazines or any other external tangible thing to enter into the house so social media was one of the best alternate to all of them for such peoples during the time of pandemic. The study also revealed that 22.7% peoples have become addicted to the social media by using it frequently in their daily lives during lockdown. Social media, by looking towards the challenges of the modern lives proved to be a boon for the public but proper time management is must to cope up with every situations. Addiction to anything is never considered as good factor for humans so proper utilization of everything must be known to the peoples.

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