



“SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ITS CONNECTIONS”: STUDY OF BHUBANESWAR

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ABSTRACT:

This research analyzes how social media as a tool of revolutionized communications and its connections in the city of Bhubaneswar. Communication opened up gates for social change which includes behavioral change and change in communication. Communication has a major impact on how people think and behave. The high-end exposure to the new media technologies has impacted urban and rural life in India. This study tries to understand the different tools of communication revolution that happened as part of social media. With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, twitter,



Instagram, orkut, MySpace, Skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication. One of the most important advantages of the use of social media is the online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people. This online sharing of information also promotes the increase in the communication skills among the people especially among the learners/students of educational institutions. Online tools and technology has not only mediated communication in countless ways, but that the very ways we communicate and even the ways we talk and think about communication are changing as a result. Social media have the potential to fundamentally change the character of our social lives, both on an interpersonal and a community level.

KEYWORDS: *The role of Social media, communication tool, publicity, branding, social media tools.*

INTRODUCTION:

The present research study looks into some of the aspects relating to the effectiveness of Social Media as a tool of Communications and its connections for the new media among the Bhubaneswar urban communities, Odisha.

The term Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, twitter, Instagram, orkut, myspace, skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication. This form of communication can be with a person or a group of persons.

Today most of the people specially the youngsters are hooked on to the different social media for keeping in contact with their peers. Social media is media for social interaction as a superset beyond

social communication. There are pros and cons to the use of social media. One most important advantage is the online sharing of knowledge and information among the different groups of people. This online sharing of information also promotes the increase in the communication skills among the people especially among the learners/students of educational institutions. There is also a flip side to the use of social media tools. Sometimes, such tools are misused by people which leads to interference into one's privacy. Such instances can lead to dangerous proportions keeping in view the ethical aspect of the use of such media. The social media tools have virtually brought people close to one another specially those living in far off places.

However, these days it has been witnessed that most of the business houses also engage in social networking while promoting their products and services. Very often, the head honchos of the business groups tries to maintain a healthy relationship with their valued customers. Social networking sites are now seen as a promising means of publicity, which every "brand" must embrace. Social media as a medium of promotion contributes, through its immediacy, to a healthy and direct relation between brands and their public in an online environment. This immediacy offers the public the ability to be present, to communicate, to influence and retain a stronger position towards brands. In addition to using social platforms to monitor conversations about their industry, competitors, and products, companies are increasingly reaching out to their customers via the social Web to communicate messages about what they have to offer. In fact, social media is transforming the way organizations communicate — the many social tools that are available today are very cost-effective compared to traditional approaches such as email and online advertising. Blog posts and tweets enable businesses to create communities, offer immediate feedback or assistance, and promote their products and services.

I. AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The term "Social media" refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. In the words of Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein, social media is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content."

Social media is media for social interaction as a superset beyond social communication. Enabled by ubiquitously accessible and scalable communication techniques, social media has substantially changed the way organizations, communities, and individuals communicate. Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure) Kaplan and Haenlein created a classification scheme for different social media types in their Business Horizons article published in 2010. According to Kaplan and Haenlein there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. YouTube), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft) and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life). Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and voice over IP, to name a few. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms. An overview of social media has been shown in the (Figure 1).

Massively Multiplayer Online game (MMO) is a multiplayer video game which is capable of supporting hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously. World Warcraft are some of the examples of MMO. Through social media, a person can also publish any news and views via web. Digg is one prime example of such media. It is a social news website. Facebook Connect, Digg Dialog, Digg Bar, Digg API (Application Programming Interface) are the important features of Digg. A person can discuss on any issues on skype, yahoo or google talk, and also there is the option of bulletin boards. Social networking is fast catching up as a means of keeping contacts and also sharing information with others.

Microblogging is another way of posting messages online. Twitter is a popular microblogging website. There are also livestreaming of videos available online for the viewers to see. A virtual world is an online community that takes the form of a computer-based simulated environment through which

users can interact with one another and use and create objects. Virtual worlds are not limited to games but, depending on the degree of immediacy presented, can encompass computer conferencing and text based chat rooms. Livestream, formerly known as Mogulus, is a live streaming video platform that allows users to view and broadcast video content using a camera and a computer through the internet. Users can stream live video or broadcast pre-recorded video in their channels, utilizing multiple cameras and on-screen graphics. Social gaming commonly refers to playing games as a way of social interaction, as opposed to playing games in solitude, like some card games (solitaire) and the single-player mode of many video games.

Social networks sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, orkut, MySpace, YouTube etc. and numerous other similar sites (including the social bookmarking 'sites' like www.redit.com, www.digg.com and www.facebook.com) on the Web help create new virtual communities where discussion and exchange of ideas through words, images and sounds take place across national and regional borders. Initially social networks started with simply a profile picture, profile details, and some form of a wall, and drove most of their usage via communication. Social network is a new communication medium along which people broadcast and receive various bits of information.

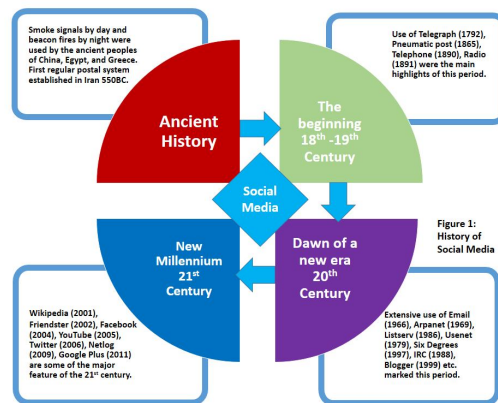
II. History of Social Media

When we think of social media, we generally think of Facebook and twitter. However, in reality it is more than that. The earliest ways to send messages over long distances were probably both audio and visual. People used to communicate smoke signals by day and beacon fires by night in ancient China, Egypt, and Greece. Drums were used in many parts of the world to extend the range of the human voice for communication as well.

The seeds of social media were sown during 550 BC when the regular postal system was established in Iran where horse riders and horse-drawn wagons carried mail. Usually, mail consisted of governmental dispatches and was delivered from one place to another. The evolution of social media can be gauged from (Figure 1) as given.

The 18th and 19th century were breakthrough period where devices like the telegraph (1792), telephone (1890) and radio (1891) ushered in a new era of the sending and receiving messages over long distances. The increasing number of express messages between businesses, financial and legal offices and banks in growing cities, as well as busy street traffic, gave rise to new methods of telegram and letter transportation. The pneumatic post was introduced to combat the shortcomings of the telegraphic network in Paris. The invention of telephone and radio took the meaning of communication to another level. The 20th century was marked by the growth and development of internet. With the growth and development of internet, there came era of exchange of messages from one person to another digitally or via web. Email, ARPANET, USENET, BBS (Bulletin Board System), IRC (Internet Relay Chat), Listserv, Blogger, Six Degrees, Live journal, Napster were some of the important sites for social interactions and sharing.

The 21st century saw a spurt in the growth of social networking sites by the launching of Friendster, Fotolog, Photobucket, Flickr, Orkut, Facebook, Instagram, Ning, Digg, Twitter, Netlog, Youtube etc. Social media has come a long way since the days of the telegraph and even the more recent days of Internet relay chats (IRC), and it continues to evolve. In the last few years, social media has become a convention of the online landscape. Major social networks and social media websites make changes and improvements on a fairly regular basis, so it's sure to keep evolving in coming years.



III. Social Media Classification:

Social media can be classified into the following categories –

❖ Social networking sites :

A social networking site provides a web-based platform for building social networks or social relations amongst people, e.g., shared interests or activities. They provide a means to interact over the internet, e-mail and now even the mobile phones. The most popular websites offering social networking currently are MySpace (started in 2003), LinkedIn (started in 2003), Facebook (started in 2004) and Twitter (started in 2006). A social networking site would allow a user to create profiles or personal homepages online and build up a social network. The profile page thus created is like the user's personalized webpage and contains profile information of the user like gender, religion, orientation, interests, place of birth, current location, marital status, books liked etc. The page can be customized as the user wants and include video clips, music files or photos on their page. Also included on the page is a list of friends that form the user's network. Typically, these friends are actual friends, acquaintances, and even strangers, who may have sent a friend request and the user has included them in his/her list.

❖ Blogs :

A blog (derived from the word weblog) is an online journal where an individual, group, or corporation presents a record of activities, thoughts, or beliefs. There are many websites that allow users to create blogs without any paying any fee like Wordpress.com, Blogspot.com, and blogger.com. Anyone can create a blog on these websites and these blogs can be accessed by anyone by typing the web address or URL (Uniform Resource Locator). Another popular sub category of blogs is microblogging. A microblogging site is like any blog except for it limits the number of words that can be published in one message. Twitter.com is an example of microblogging.

❖ Content generating and sharing sites :

These sites serve as sources of information for various topics. Photo-sharing sites like Flickr.com, picasaweb.google.com, Video sharing sites like youtube.com, slide sharing sites like slideshare.com, document sharing sites like docstoc.com etc. all fall under this category. These sites serve as free content for all users of internet. Users can search for content, download and use the content available on these sites without any fee. The content is also generated by the users. This type of user generated content is also known as crowdsourcing. Video and PowerPoint presentation can be shared and uploaded in YouTube and slideshare. This is a major advantage to most of the people who are unable to get access to the educational resources.

IV. SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL OF COMMUNICATION: CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

Social media offers a variety of avenues through which we can communicate with people. In fact, social media is known to have been used widely in educational field also. Over the last 30 years the nature of communication has undergone a substantial change and it is still changing. Email has had a profound effect on the way people keep in touch. Communications are shorter and more frequent than when letters were the norm and response time has greatly diminished. Instant messaging has created another method of interaction, one where the length of messages is shorter and the style of the interaction is more conversational. Broadcast technologies like Twitter transform these short bursts of communication from one-on-one conversations to little news (or trivia) programs: which we can 'tune in' whenever we want an update or have something to say.

Online communication tools also have the potential to increase our awareness of the movements of our professional or social contacts. Twitter, for instance, offers us an update of things people we know happen to be doing at a particular point of time. This phenomenon has been referred as social proprioception by Clive Thompson (2007), named after the physical quality of proprioception that tells a creature where its extremities are by the reception of stimuli produced within the organism.

Social proprioception tells us where the nodes of our community are and provides a sense of connectedness to and awareness of others without direct communication. Internet is the third place where people connect with friends, build a sense of togetherness.

Increasingly, a computer with an Internet connection is the locus of a range of interactions in a variety of media and a gateway to an array of social spaces for work and play. Social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace and virtual environments like Second Life and World of Warcraft have become online meeting spaces where users' members, residents, or players can interact and express themselves. Sites like YouTube and Flickr represent another forum for online communication that is centered on sharing, preference, and popular culture. Visitors can browse movies (in the case of YouTube) or photos (in the case of Flickr), express personal preferences, add commentary, and upload their own creative work. YouTube is also a repository of popular culture in the form of newscasts, television shows, movies, or music videos that are of current interest. The kinds of interaction that occur on these sites center around shared interests and include not only verbal commentary, but commentary in the form of original or derivative works based on popular pieces.

One of the reasons people prefer such form of media is because of the interactions they can have there, both social and professional. Whether it is as simple as checking back to see what other comments have been added to yours or as involved as attending a workshop or presentation in a virtual world, the nature of the attraction lies in the connections between people that these online spaces afford.

V. GLOBALISATION AND THE NEW MEDIA TRENDS

In the current world, the mass media are playing a key role in enhancing globalization, facilitating culture exchange, multiple flows of information, influences, data and image between countries through international news broadcasts, television programming, new technologies, film and music and the rise of new media has increased communications between different stakeholders all over the world and the Internet played a key roles. The different media houses allowed people to express themselves through articles, blogs, websites, videos, pictures, and other user-generated mode of media communications and developed technologies established the importance of making friendships through digital social places more prominent than in physical places.

Generally the globalization means "more than expansion of activities beyond the boundaries of particular nation states". Globalization shortens the distance between people all over the world by the electronic communications (Carely 1992 in Flew 2002). Social media "radically break the connection between physical place and social place, making physical location much less significant for our social lives, social relationships". The new media technology creates tensions and confusions in the public sphere environment for which the public communications becomes restructured and partly intangible in different social and cultural institutions. These trends of the globalized public sphere is not only as a geographical expansion form a nation to worldwide, but also changes the relationship between the public, the media and state.

The concept of "Virtual communities" are being established online and transcend geographical boundaries, eliminating social restrictions. "People in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk". The new mode of media has the ability to connect like-minded others worldwide.

RATIONAL OF THE STUDY:

How This Research Study Is Different From Earlier Studies:

The present research study looks into some of the aspects relating to the Social Media as an effective tool of Communications and its connections for the new media and the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Most of studies have emphasized only on the use of social media and not emphasized on the use of various social media as an

important tool of communication technology for education and various aspects of our day-to-day lives in the citizen journalism opportunities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the research study are as follows;

- To analyse the impact of Social Media as a means of communication tool
- To assess the usefulness of social media as a too, of communication
- To assess the potential of social media as a tool for technology enabled connections

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the paper '**Predicting the Future With Social Media**' by Sitaram Asur and Bernardo A. Huberman. They demonstrate how demonstrate how social media content can be used to predict real-world outcomes. They further demonstrates how sentiments extracted from Twitter can be further utilized to improve the forecasting power of social media. In the paper '**Workplaces and Social Networking**', the authors Andrea Broughton, Tom Higgins, Ben Hicks and Annette Cox talks at length the policy and practice relating to the use of social media by employees.

They were guided by the fact that they had already engaged to some extent with the issue of social media, what it might mean for their organization and how they were going to formulate and communicate a policy to staff in two major UK employers. The first organisation was British Telecom (BT), and the second organization was Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

In the paper, '**Predicting tie strength with Social Media**', Eric Gilbert and Karrie Karahalios, presents a predictive model that maps social media data to tie strength. The model builds on a dataset of over 2,000 social media ties and performs quite well, distinguishing between strong and weak ties with over 85% accuracy.

This research paper basically tries to analyze the effects of the growth of social media and its implications in the society and its development processes. This research paper also tries to find out the usefulness of social media as a tool of communications and influences for social change.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The research study is basically a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the role and importance of social media as a tool of effective communication. In order to empirically examine the effectiveness of social media, survey method was used for investigation, as this was found to be the most appropriate method to carry out a survey in order to find out the growing importance and the use of social media as a tool of communication. Observation method was also used for the present study.

I. DEMOGRAPHY PROFILE:

Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Odisha is a unique amalgamation of tradition and modernism. Dotted with temples of the past era glorifying several Hindu Gods & Goddesses, it is rightly termed as a "City of Temples". It is a city which has seen the advent of many faiths like Hinduism, Jainism & Buddhism and their peaceful coexistence with each other that has resulted in reinforcing its secular image in the country. While the old city preserves the golden chapters of history, the modern city boasts itself as being a tech- savvy state of Eastern India. Poised to becoming the premier tech city in eastern India, the city offers benefits like none other " Excellent Infrastructure leading to all round enhancement of quality of life and high quality talent pool. It has a modern cosmopolitan married to great historical and leisure places, the combination of which make it preferred destination. It is also one of the safest cities in India to live in.

History: This city witnessed some epoch making events in history. It was here that the Great Kalinga War was fought resulting in transformation of Emperor Ashoka from Chanda-Ashok to Dharma Ashok leading him to embrace Buddhism. The city has witnessed flourishing of numerous temples with intricate Odishan architectural works showcasing the artistic skills of our sculptors. Some of the

temples are Parsurameswar (7th c.AD), Vaital (8th c.AD), Mukteswar (10th-11th c.AD), Rajarani (11th c. AD), Brahmeswar, and the Lingaraj temple complex (11th c.AD). Apart from these temples, Bhubaneswar has the oldest rock-cut caves in Khandagiri, Udayagiri once inhabited by Jain monks and Dhauli where Ashokan inscriptions are engraved. Now, there stands a Peace Pagoda built by the Japanese monks.

Bhubaneswar is located on the eastern coastal region of India within the picturesque backdrop of its fringe areas. Nandankanan- the famous wild life sanctuary with the largest population of white tigers is located towards the northern side of the city. The rivers, Kuakhai & Daya (which carries many a historic tale in its fold) flows on the eastern and southernmost fringe of the city. The western fringe area is surrounded by a forest range with its rich ecological bio-diversity. Geographically, the city forms part of the mid-coastal plane of Odisha with an average elevation of 45 meters above the mean sea level. More interestingly, the city is centrally located between the two metropolises i.e Kolkata and Chennai being connected by East coast Railway and National Highway No.5. The city is well connected by rail and air with Delhi and other state capitals. Khurda town is located in between 200-12' North Longitude and 850-37' East Longitude. Four major roads namely, National Highway No-5 and 224, State Highway-13 and No-27 make the town accessible to important places of the town. From physiographic point of view, Khurda forms part of the North-Eastern hilly tract. The extreme part is occupied by Barunei hill range. Jatni town is located in between 200-10' North Latitude and 850-45' East Longitude. It is connected to Bhubaneswar and Cuttack by both rail and road.

Bhubaneswar city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Bhubaneswar Metropolitan Region. The Bhubaneswar city is located in Orissa state of India. As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Bhubaneswar in 2011 is 843,402; of which male and female are 446,204 and 397,198 respectively. Although Bhubaneswar city has population of 843,402; its urban / metropolitan population is 886,397 of which 468,577 are males and 417,820 are females. The average literacy rate of Bhubaneswar city is 91.87 percent of which male and female literacy was 94.66 and 88.73 percent.

Odiya language is spoken by the majority while Hinduism is the major religion followed by the people living in Bhubaneswar. Tribal population is about 22% of the total population in Odisha and some parts have settled down in the city to earn their living. The developing city of Bhubaneswar is the earning center of numerous poor people from rural areas as well as from the neighboring states of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. Thus, Bhubaneswar has more than 180 slums and Bhubaneswar demographic scenarios in such slums are quiet alarming. The slum comprises of 40% of the total population of Bhubaneswar and the socio-economic condition of the dwellers are worse as they lack of basic services like water and proper sanitary system, pollutions, poor education services, and so on.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN:

The present research study is exploratory descriptive in nature, it is exploratory in nature because the present study aims at exploring the Social Media as an effective tool of Communications and its connections and descriptive in nature because the study describes in details the existing social media as it exist at present and various variables related to that.

III. SAMPLE FRAME OF SAMPLING:

The area that has been selected for the present study is Bhubaneswar city, which is fast becoming a smart metro city of Odisha, India. A sample survey was carried out among the residents of Bhubaneswar city. The total of randomly selected 200 sample of people residing in the urban areas of Bhubaneswar city has been taken into consideration based on the Stratified Proportionate Random Sampling Method.

IV. SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION:

In the present research study, the researcher will use both the primary and secondary method of data collection. The primary source of the study for data collection will be the interview schedule

developed specially for this purpose, observation, field dairy and focus discussion done among the residents of Bhubaneswar city. Document analysis of the secondary sources includes internet, magazines, books and journals has been carried out to study the impact and the sue of social media in the social context and its potential for future growth.

V. TABULATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY:

The data obtained from the field will be carefully computed, systematically classified and represented in the tabular form under the different headings and sub-headings. The tables of the study, consisting of smaller and larger units will be obtained in order to cross-check the assembled data to make the same valid, reliable and explanatory. The tabulation plan of the study will be so arranged as to facilitate a factual analysis of data. In the final analysis, a critical analysis of the collected data will be made for further verification and re-interpretation of variables found crucial to the study areas.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

This study was conducted among the residents of Bhubaneswar city in the urban areas. The spurt in the growth of industries have truly made it a world class city. The total sample size was 200 which consisted of students, teachers, engineers, marketing professionals, businessmen etc. A careful analysis of the data reveals the following results-

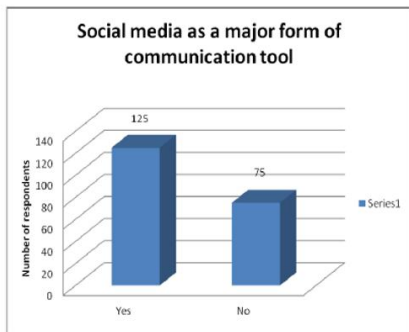


Fig - I

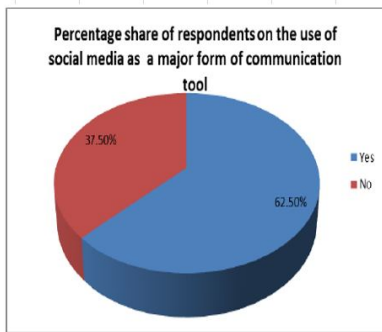


Fig - i

On being asked whether social media is a major form of communication tool, 125 respondents said that social media is indeed a major form of communication tool while 75 respondents have replied in negative. The above data is represented in the form of pie diagram as given below- Fig - i

On the question of utilisation of social media for educational purposes, 138 respondents have replied in affirmative that social media is widely used for educational purposes while 62 respondents said that social media is not used for educational purposes. This is represented in Fig-II and Fig - ii as given below-Fig - II

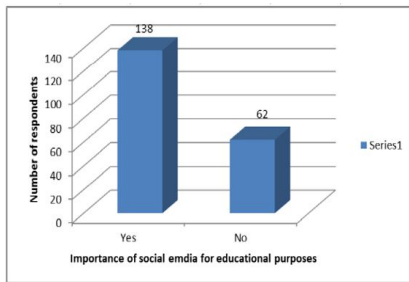


Fig - II

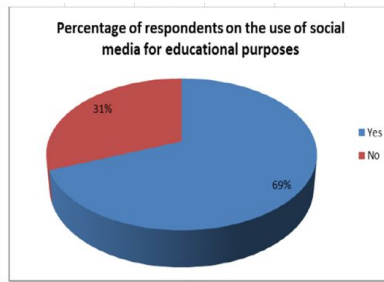


Fig - ii

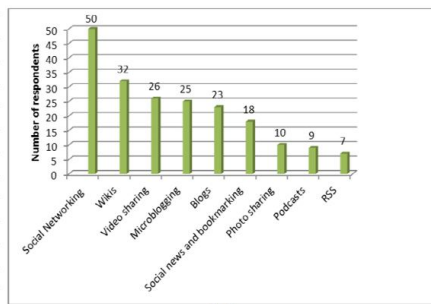


Fig - III

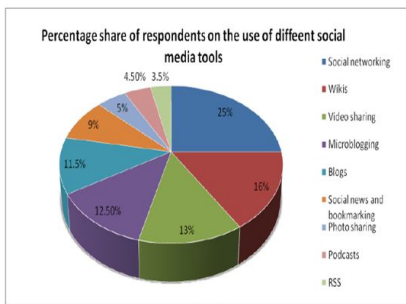
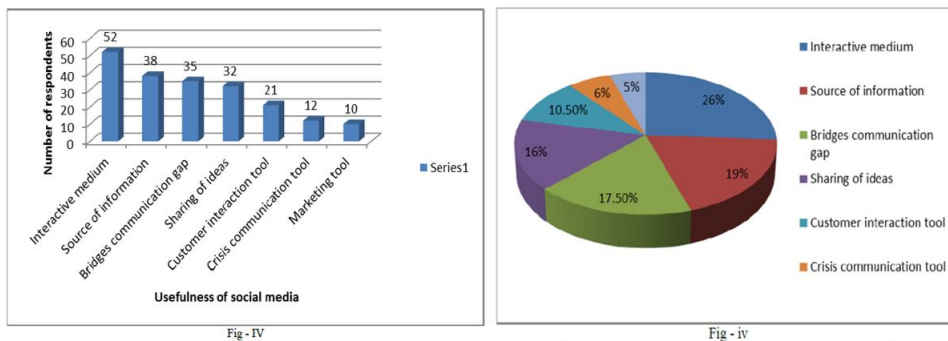


Fig - iii

The above data is represented in the form of percentage as given below- Fig ii. On being asked the major forms of social media tools which the respondents preferred the most, 50 (25%) respondents said that they prefer social

networking the most, 32 (16%) respondents giving their preference for wikis, 26 (13%) respondents for video sharing, 25 (12.5%) respondents for microblogging, 23(11.5%) respondents for blogs, 18 (9%) respondents for social news and bookmarking, 10 (5%) respondents for photo sharing, 9(4.5%) respondents for podcasts and 7(3.5%) respondents have preferred RSS (Really Simple Syndication) as a potent social media tool. This can be represented in the following diagram (Fig – III and Fig – iii) given below-

As regards the usefulness of social media, 52 (26%) respondents said that social media plays the role of an interactive medium, 38 (19%) respondents said that social media acts as a source of information, 35 (17.5%) respondents said that social media bridges communication gap , 32 (16%) respondents opined that social media helps in sharing of ideas, 21 (10.5%) respondents said that social media is an important customer interaction tool, 12 (6%) respondents said that social media is an important crisis communication tool while the remaining 10 (5%) respondents said that social media is an important marketing tool. This is represented in Fig – IV and Fig - iv given below- Fig - IV



A careful analysis of the above-mentioned data brings to light the fact that social media has indeed done a commendable job in bridging the communication gap among people. The different social media tools helps the people to interact with one another within the shortest possible time. Social media have the potential to fundamentally change the character of our social lives, both on an interpersonal and a community level. Changes in interaction patterns and social connections are already evident among young people, who are the heaviest users of social media. Thus one can say that social media has grown by leaps and bounds. This is evident from the fact that 62.5% of respondents consider social media as a tool of communication in a place like Bhubaneswar while 37.5 % respondents replied in negative. Among the major tools of social media, 25% respondents have preferred for social networking sites followed wikis (16%) and video sharing (13%) and micro blogging (12.5%). The fact that social media is an important interactive medium has been well justified as 26% of respondents have said it is an interactive medium while another 19% have said that social media is an important source of information. 17.5% of respondents have said that social media helps in bridging communication gap and another 16% have said that it helps in sharing of ideas. In the business sector, social media is used as an important tool of crisis communication and also a customer interaction tool. Growth of social media has revealed the following advantages and disadvantages. The main advantages of social media are;

- ❖ **Sharing of ideas:** Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, activities, events and interests within their individual networks. Web based social networking services make it possible to connect people who share interests and activities across political, economic and geographic borders.
- ❖ **Tool of communication:** Social networks are increasingly being used by teachers and learners as a communication tool. Teachers create chat rooms, forums and groups to extend classroom discussion to posting assignments, tests and quizzes, to assisting with homework outside of the classroom setting. Learners can also form groups over the social networking sites and engage in discussion over a variety of topics.

- ❖ **Bridges communication gap:** Social media bridges the distance among different people. It offers platforms for online users to find others who share the same interests and build virtual communities based on those shared interests. With the availability of social media technologies and services, content sharing and user interaction has become relatively easy and efficient.
- ❖ **Source of information:** Content generating and sharing sites serve as sources of information for various topics. Users can search for content, download and use the content available on these sites free of cost.
- ❖ **Important marketing tool:** Social media is widely used by most of the firms/organizations to market their products/services in the society. The companies resort to social networking sites to generate opinions on the existing and future products that are available in the market. This is an excellent marketing strategy undertaken by most of the companies to draw consumers and elicit public opinion. Such comments or opinions help the organization to redesign their products. Such social networking and user appraisal sites are an important way of promoting products and generating opinions.
- ❖ **Important customer interaction tool:** Social Media Networking is perfect for customer interaction, customer feedback, and customer support. New business contacts can be obtained for networking purposes.
- ❖ **Important crisis communication tool:** When the major forms of public relations tool fail, social media can be used extensively to communicate with the general public regarding any crisis situation that might have gripped the nation or any organization. But it is important to remember that while social media can have a positive impact during natural disasters, it can have a less favorable effect during business crises, in which case, corporate communication teams need to understand how they can use social media to their advantage. Communications landscape has changed thanks to social media, especially during times of crisis.

Technology has created new opportunities to effect social change and improve lives.

How do we change the world for the better? It's an age-old question. But these days, there are some very modern answers. The technological advances in recent years have given us new ways to connect to others in our communities and across the world. As of 2015, more than 3 billion people in the world have internet access, and more than 2 billion use social networks. Never before has it been so easy to reach so many. While plenty of people are using this new technology for commerce and entertainment, there are also numerous opportunities to use modern technology to promote social change. Here are some ways you can do just that.

❖ **Share Important Information and News:**

Before the internet, spreading important information required you to make expensive media buys, distribute pamphlets of questionable efficacy, or make time-consuming trips and personal appearances. With the internet, you can use an organizational website to provide all the information essential to understanding your cause and the actions that need to be taken to effect change. Additionally, through social media, you can keep people updated on developments and news affecting your cause.

❖ **Build an Engaged Community**

Most organizations working for social change have plenty of volunteer opportunities. The internet makes finding people to take on those opportunities far easier than ever before. Those who share your concerns can seek you out online. Likewise, you can find them through online message boards and social media posts. And volunteers are just one way you can get people involved. Through an active online presence, you can build an engaged, worldwide network of volunteers, activists, donors, and concerned citizens. You no longer have to rent out community space to bring people together. You can do so online.

❖ Provide Training and Education

Whether you're disseminating details of your preferred social change model, planning a demonstration, organizing a canvassing event, or just teaching others about the importance of your cause, the internet provides numerous training and educational tools. You can use an online training platform, set up online courses, or distribute educational materials through e-mail and other online means. The limitations depend only on the resources you can apply.

❖ Receive Ground-Level Reports

You can't be everywhere at once. But if you've built a strong online community, you can have eyes and ears all over the place. For instance, if you are a national civil rights activist working in Detroit and a town in California is considering enacting discriminatory codes, you can follow the city council's debate via social media reports from allies and members of your online community. This can give you real-time, ground-level information. And that might be the difference between being able to take action and being too late.

❖ Take Immediate Action

All over the world, social movements have been using social media such as Twitter to plan and stage demonstrations. You can use the same technology to address issues affecting your own cause. From e-mail campaigns to representatives to emergency relief efforts for those in crisis, the internet allows you to mobilize people swiftly.

❖ Raise Funds

Depending on the size and needs of your organization, the internet can save you from having to send out expensive mailers or stand with a donation bucket in the street. You can coordinate and execute major fundraising efforts entirely online. Numerous sites can make the process of fundraising easier and the collection of money simpler. Additionally, crowdfunding allows you to raise specific amounts of money for particular needs. If done well, these efforts can be promoted entirely through social media.

❖ Attend an Online University

Modern technology doesn't just give you an opportunity to do more, it also gives you the opportunity to learn more. If you are committed to social change, numerous online universities make it easier than ever to earn the kind of degree that can help you enter a nonprofit or public service career. An MS in Nonprofit Management and Leadership can be particularly beneficial. This master's degree program can help you learn about the systems and concepts necessary to create positive social change worldwide. By earning your MS in Nonprofit Management and Leadership online, you can take advantage of all the flexibility and convenience provided by online learning. It's a great way to help yourself learn the skills you'll need to promote social change through the use of technology.

RECOMMENDATION:

We must remember that social media is really only a decade old. That's very young in the history of communication technology, it has been influential, but it hasn't really settled into a routine yet. As social media becomes more normalized, we'll stop seeing it as changing things and start seeing it as the way things are. As a society we'll be OK—we've always adjusted to new technology. So whether it's wearable communication media, such as Google glasses, or more cloud computing, we'll change and adapt. Communication is constantly evolving. Some people are as used to seeing their friends' online avatar as they are their face. People increasingly prefer quick and frequent engagement with instant updates on news than a prolonged chat and are also finding new ways to catch up with friends from the comfort of their sofa (can we call them couch potatoes!). At the end of the day, nothing can replace face-to-face conversation and interactions. Despite the explosion of online endorsements and social media

dialogue between individuals and brands, researchers have found word-of mouth exchanges and in-depth conversation are still most influential.

CONCLUSION:

There are positive and negative impacts due to the proliferation of this medium. While social media has definitely helped marketing and marketers, it has brought along with it a new perspective about how things get done and has impressed the youngsters in the impressionable age group. While appreciating the speed of disseminating information, the consequences of such actions to making the youngsters more lackadaisical and lazy has to be considered. Youngsters seem to prefer isolation and they seem to be in their own imaginary world rather than the real life friends and interaction with neighbors and elders in the family. Lack of respect towards elders in the family and friends circle is a development which needs to be taken with caution! But progress cannot be stopped. It has to stand the test of times!

Information overload and lack of privacy are two major issues in social media. There is no control over the information that you will get through social media for example through what's App. Getting more information before people are ready to receive and process the same for useful consumption makes them confused. The continuous bombarding of messages through hand held devices leaves no time for reflection and analysis and leads to some kind of addiction and resignation to the situation. This leads progressively to avoidance of face to face communication. There is difficulty in separating virtual reality from reality and loss of privacy. Since massive information is spread through social media, there is no room for privacy-everybody knows everything about the other person. This is a dangerous situation leading to herd mentality and the individual loses his discretion. Humans are progressively made into robots processing commands. And these commands can originate from anti-social elements including terrorists!

Collaboration through online mode becomes easy if it is facilitated by social media technologies. For instance, learners can collaborate on team projects. Learners in the same study groups can co-draft documents, spreadsheets, presentation slides and more with Google Docs. Faculty members are cashing on the growing popularity of blogging and micro-blogging by using blogs as additional teaching/learning resources. Social media provide simple, inexpensive ways to organize members, arrange meetings, spread information, and gauge opinion. As more systems emerge, there will be greater capacity for groups to organize and participate in collective action, a hallmark of civil society. Social media can be effective for building social authority; individuals or organizations can establish themselves as experts in their fields, and then they can begin to influence these fields. Thus, one of the foundational concepts in social media is that, with social media, one cannot control one's message completely, but one can contribute to discourses. Social media technologies are capable of reaching audiences all over the world.

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Abbreviations

AIWC	All India Women's Conference
AIR	All India Radio
CD	Community Development
CNCP	Children in Need of Care and Protection
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CPS	Child Protection Services
CWC	Child Welfare Committees
DC	Development Communication
DVB	Digital Video Broadcasting
DEO	District Education Officers
DLO	District Labour Officers
FB	Facebook
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ID	Identity Document
JJ Act	Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
OSOU	Odisha State Open University
MJMC	Master in Journalism and Mass Communication
RTE Act	Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act/Right to Education Act
SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Units
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRC	State Relief Commissioner
ULBs	Urban Local Bodies
UN	United Nation



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