



## **The Impacts of Social Media on Adolescents of our Society: A Case Study of the Liyari Town Karachi**

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### **Abstract:**

*Social Media has brought drastic change in the life of the people. It has provided platform and bulk of information to them. But at the same time it has imparted negative impacts on adolescents in their different aspects of social life. This study aims to discover the impacts of social media on moral values, language and social relations of adolescents which have been deteriorated due to their frenzy involvement in various applications of social media. For the purpose of study a sample of five males and five females' adolescents was selected between the ages of 10 to 19 years old, of the schools and colleges of the Liyari Town of Karachi City. The nature of research study is qualitative. Following this, some male and female adolescents were interviewed by open ended questions and their responses were recorded as findings of the study.*

**Key words:** Social Media, impacts, adolescents, Liyari Town



## **Introduction:**

The importance of social media in this modern technology cannot be overlooked. People are connected to social media in every aspect of their lives. They can communicate with one another via the channel of social networking sites. What's app, Twitter, Facebook, Imo, YouTube, Snap Chat and Instagram are important social networks. Where people can create blogs, share news as posts, exchange pictures and upload videos. By the virtue of social media the world has been transformed into a small village. Twitter and Face book like important tools for news, journalists and their organizations have performed high wire act (Asough, 2012).

Though Social media has imparted many positive effects on the lives of people. They are getting awareness what's going around the world be this knowledge about politics, society, education, business and other unique things happening into the world.

But beyond this fact social media is full with such kind of social networking sites which can impart negative impacts on the lives of users. In this scenario it depends upon users that they use social media in positive or in negative way. But regret to say here that adolescent particularly between the ages 10-19 do not possess enough mental maturity that they can use social media in positive way.

For this research study qualitative approach has been applied. Five girls and five boys between the ages of 10-19 were interviewed. During interview they were asked different questions which were related to social, lingual and moral aspects of their lives in context of the impacts of social media.

According to W.H.O any person between the ages 10-19 is adolescent World Health Organization.(2021). According to Merriam Webster forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos). Social Media (n.d).

In current era social media includes social networking sites as such Snap Chat, Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tiktok, Likee and Camfrog etc.

## **Brief History of social Media:**

People were not aware with the term “social media up to fifty years. But today everyone knows about it, particularly this is very eminent among youngsters. It is the source of the

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entertainment for them. On the platform of social media they communicate across the world, share pictures, posts and videos. For internet users social media brings new advancements year to year. Today social media includes Facebook, Imo, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Blogger, My space and so on. The short back ground of social media is herein after contained.

The history of social media dates back from 1978. In this year Ward Christensen and Randy Sues created Bulletin Board System (BBS). The forum of BBS used to be utilized for announcement of meetings and sharing posts. Thus BBS can be regarded as the founder of virtual community in the first dial up history.

While new advancement was witnessed in the development of social media in 1995 after launching of internet “WWW”. In this year Beverly Hills Internet (BHI) launched Geocities. Basically internet users could create their simple websites after acquiring permission by Geocities. Thus Geocities provided web hosting service to internet users.

In 1999 the era of blogger and live journals started. Through blogs and journals people were able to share their posts and thoughts with their friends. They could communicate by their blogs and journals with their friends who live far way.

In 2002 Friendster was launched. On the platform of this social network people designed their profile and made connection throughout the world. Currently Friendster is used as a social networking site for paying games.

In 2003 other social networks were introduced as such My space, LinkedIn and word press. Those users who had interested in Music and band they used my space. Those who had interest in business they joined the forum of LinkedIn. While open-source content system was provided by word press (Edosomwan, 2011).

In 2004 Facebook was introduced by Mark Zuckerberg in the field of social media. Initially this network was created for the students of college.

In 2005 employees of PayPal Jawed Karim, Steve Chen and Chad Hurley launched You Tube. On this forum of social media users are allowed to upload and share free videos.

In 2006 for short messages Twitter was launched. Here internet users were allowed to send the message based on 140 characters. By the virtue of this property short messages were given name of Tweet. In other words Twitter was a micro blogging site on social networking system. On twitter along with short messages the video of 30 second can also be shared.



In 2009 whatsapp was founded. Brian Acton and Jan Koum are the founders of this popular social network. Earlier both were regular employees of Yahoo. Later on they left job and launched new application. Koum named that application as whatsapp that sounds like what's up. This is a popular app used by several internet users. On this application people can share videos and pictures. They can chat and make voice and video call.

In 2011 Google plus was launched by Google. It was a new product of Google in the field of social media. Where internet users can do video chat and share information.

In 2012 Pinterest was created. It got popularity after gaining 10 million users faster as compare to other social networking sites throughout the history of social media. Pinterest is a social scrapbooking. Where internet users' album photos can be shared and created (Jackson, 2020, December 15).

### **Effects on the lives of adolescents through Social Media:**

As per definition of the world health organization adolescents come between the ages 10-19. This age in other words is called teen age. Teen agers are not enough mature to make difference between wrong and right. There is probability that material exists on social media can distract them while they are going to do anything productive. This research study aims to discover the effects of the use of social networking upon the, social relations, language and moral values.

### **Literature Review:**

Akram and Kumar (2017) in a study on positive and negative effects of social media on Society states that students have easy access on social networking sites thus their research and discovery capability is being badly affected. Their learning ability is reduced and they rely on provided information on social networking sites. Furthermore they waste their time on social media and lessen their attention towards studies. Consequently they get low grades. Thus social media is affecting their education badly.

Cabrera (2018) in "Impact of social media on English language learning: Utilizing S.W.O.T Analysis" states that social media is imparting worst effects on language. Users of social networking sites use ungrammatical terminologies, expression and words. Slangs words are becoming part of modern English language. Short messages and abbreviated language are causing improper way of interaction which is resulting communication breakdown. In addition to this social media has put negative effects on writing skills. Short cut writing and cyber slang language has been often witnessed in the



formal writing of adolescents. They neither care grammar nor spelling. Their total focus is merely on how to write fast any message or post comment on social media sites.

Sara (2006). *The Internet and Social Interaction: A Meta-analysis and Critique of Studies, 1995-2003.* "Computers, Phones, and the Internet: Domesticating Information Technology", states that the popularity of social networking sites is increasing day by day. It has been noted by researchers that users of social networking sites are using internet under the object of communication and downloading of films and music.

Fallows, (2008) Search Engine Use. Pew Internet and American Life Project 2008-2009 conducted a tracking survey that internet is used by 73% of adults.

O'Toole, (2006) in *Public Posting of Illicit Photos Revives Hazing Issue*, discusses that on internet large numbers of photos are posted. In these footages underage drinking, provocative clothing and improper attitude and an illegitimate and questionable activities are exposed.

Williams (2009) in "The Lack of Ethical Standards of Online Social Networking, (2009) states that Internet users appear to endorse actions that had been previously seen as socially unacceptable. He says that "I don't know when partying and behavior got connected to cameras. But kids are taking pictures of everything they are doing."

Ehmke, (2016) in the article "How Using Social Media Affects Teenagers" discusses that it has been witnessed that the adolescents have been found to communicate most of time on their phone/PC/laptop screen instead of direct communication with persons.

Due to overuse of social media kids are fail to possess social skills. Nonverbal communication is exacerbating via online communication and texts. And this phenomenon caused death of vocal reactions. Online communication renders face expression and body language invisible. This causes great obstacle in clear communication. For growing up it is necessary to learn the way of making friendship with others. And its bit a risky process. No doubt making a friend is a great task but for maintain friendship the person needs to be honest with his friends and listen their worries face to face. On many occasion people's body language and facial expression lessen tension, while speaking with friends. But unfortunately such sort of relation is missing while communicating on social networking sites (Ehmke, 2016).

### **Findings of the study:**



For analyzing the impacts of social media on moral values, language, and social relations of adolescents, five males and five females were interviewed between the ages from 10 to 19 years.

Male adolescents revealed the fact that they have account on different social networking sites. In which face book, what's app, twitter, snap tube, snap chat, tiktok, imo, Camfrog are on the top list. They stated that they have their accounts on more than seven social networking sites. They disclosed that social media has put the worst effects on their social relations. They are not able to pay attention on those friends who are physically present with them while they are busy on social networking sites. They further said that the elders of their family expressed anger on many occasions when they use social media. In the opinion of their elders, social media has deteriorated their life due to their frenzy involvement in the social networking sites. They said they feel joy while talking on with their friends on social media instead of making direct communication. This phenomenon is giving birth to nonverbal communication. Thus social media has contrast relation with vocal reaction and it is the death of facial expression and body language, which are counted as social skills.

The adolescents expressed their concern that they have become addicted to social media, just as the drug habit cannot be relieved similarly they cannot leave the use social media and whenever they get chance they check their social media accounts on different sites and they use social media approximately six to seven hours regularly.

The second area of this study was to explore the impacts of social media on the language of the adolescents. When they were asked about the impacts of social media on language. They had mixed views. In their opinion social media has imparted both positive and negative impacts on language. As social media has increased their vocabulary. They get a lot of material in the form of posts for reading which has strengthened their reading habit. But along this they have borne negative consequences of social media as well. As they have become habitual to write short and slang language. Whenever they have to express condolence. They precisely write "RIP". Which full form is "Rest in Peace". And it's a pray. The full form provides soothing and relief to a sad person whose love one has expired. While merely using "RIP" gives the sense of cold nature.

Likewise when they need to say "Thank You So Much" to anyone. They just briefly say "TYSM". Similarly for my pleasure they use term "MP". Emotions are displayed just by short language. This trend is making new generation emotionless.



Social media is full with these slang words. Slang and abbreviated words are changing English language rapidly. The person who is highly literate and writes a formal language and he is unaware the terms of social media. He is considered fool and illiterate in the view of teenager users. The list of some slangs words is hereinafter contained.

Lol	-	Laughing out laughter
Brb	-	Be right back
Btw	-	By the way
Lmk	-	Let me know
g2g	-	Go to Go

In this connection they have openly accepted that their writing formats have been changed. Instead of writing complete words they write abbreviated language, which is not acceptable in formal writing. They admitted that they make too much mistakes when they have to write and thing formal and often they write English language with wrong grammar, using unknown terminologies with too much spelling mistakes.

Likewise they admitted that their hand writing has been badly affected. Social media has not only reduced their writing speed but it has damaged their handwriting as well.

In the view of male adolescents social media has its own language and this short language should be promoted. The research study considers this suggestion as a great dent on English literature. They think that to write a full form is the wastage of time. This is a serious threat for a literary language whether the language is Urdu or English. As we have English of United Kingdom and of United States. Similarly social media has taken as much importance in the lives of the youth of the world that they stressed that a formal dictionary should be arranged for looking for the meanings of the words used in social media.

In beginning Roman language shattered the Urdu language and now English language is being destroyed by slang/abbreviated language.

The third area of this study was to explore impacts of social media on the moral values of adolescents. This research study uncovers some shocking facts. Which were recorded as the responses of adolescents and these facts clearly show that social media has badly destroyed the moral values of our adolescents. Male adolescents confessed that for getting access on adult sites they enter fake information while making account. As for visiting adult sites 18 years age is required. But a child whose age is merely thirteen years. He can get access on these adult sites by entering fake age. And on those sites they



watch immoral movies, which degrade their moral standard. By entering fake information they need to learn tell a lie. It has been witnessed that social media is full with such kind of videos which teach users that how to make fake account.

Beside this by watching violent movies on social media they loose the power of tolerance. Inside them anxiety and rebellion arise. With fake accounts they deceive people. Thus since the little age wickedness, vulgarity, greed and violence become the part of their nature.

Adolescents accepted in hesitant style they visit adult sites. As they feel attraction. There are many adult sites where they can watch immoral movies after payment. But the craze compelled them to collect money by hook and crook and watch those movies. When they asked why they adopted the way of sin and this act is not allowed with the point of religion. They replied that on social media you watch such kind of videos frequently which omit the concept of sin from their mind.

Adolescents confessed that there study disturbed a lot. As they use social networking sites till late hours, even at the time of study they are not able to prevent themselves from social media. They check posts/messages on the sites of social media. Just the bell of message rings and they check post. Doing this they waste their study hours as well.

Similarly female adolescents were also interviewed and their views were recorded. When they were asked about the impacts of social media in their social relations mainly with friends and family members. They responded that they are not able to connect mentally with their friends and family members who are physically present with them, when they are busy on social media. However the research study discovered that this tendency is lower among girls as compared to male adolescent. As girls face criticism by their family members and for preventing that criticism they try to pay more attention on their family members as compare to boys. The second reason is, female adolescents meet with their friends occasionally. In this connection they avoid to use social media in presence of their friends. Yet their interest cannot be ignored in social Media. Because during interview they admitted that they have seven plus account on different social networking sites. Girls admired social networking sites because through social media they know how to decorate home. What kind of dresses are in fashion. They learn a lot about cooking.

Girls disclosed that with the delay of short span of time they constantly make the use of social media. Except sleeping hours, they are always in touch on their social media's accounts.



Female adolescents were asked about the impacts of social media on their language. Their responses were mixed. As they said their reading skills have been improved. Their vocabulary power has become strong. However their hand writing has become very slow due to over use of typing messages on various sites of social media. Their Urdu writing has become badly affected as they use Roman Urdu. Which has no place neither in formal Urdu and English and It will not bring any beneficial effects in Urdu and English language, except that it spoils the writing structure of Urdu and English.

Likewise different questions were asked in respect to know the effects of social media on their moral values. They told that they started to use social media from the age of eleven years. In hesitant style they admitted that they use adult sites but not those adult sites which are totally out of morally boundaries. Similarly like male adolescents they said same that the channel of social media has no security of evaluating the age of user. Thus they enter fake age and get access on adult sites.

However about fake IDs their responses were negative. But in their original IDs they enter fake information. Such as fake educational institution, fake date of birth, fake residential address and fake family back ground. They accepted the fact that they have more than 150 contacts. In which majority is consisted of strangers. During interview it has been noticed that female adolescents after looking the pictures of handsome males make their dream world. In this connection one of interviewee told that for years she is looking for a person whose picture she saw on Facebook. It is her great desire to talk that person. She tried to search but could not find.

The tendency of acting has been found more in girls. As the family norms of Pakistani culture doesn't allow them to do acting. Modelling and acting is not considered good in many middle class families. For fulfilling this desire they examine their talents on their social media accounts. Almost all female adolescents have their account on Tiktok and Likee. Tiktok and Likee are those social networking sites where girls demonstrate their acting abilities. But the negative aspect of these accounts is imparting negative impacts on the moral values. All contacts which are saved in their cell phones they watch their videos when they put those videos on the status of what's app. Their videos and Pictures can be saved by anyone from their contact list through an Application Status Saver. This will end their privacy. Their pictures and videos can be misused. This can create mess in the lives of these girls.

Another shocking fact was disclosed by them that on Face book and Instagram they receive threats that their accounts would be hacked.



The results of social media in the lives of adolescents are cleared like an open book. One can easily drive from the contents of this research that social media is imparting very negative impacts on the social relations, language, education and moral values of adolescents.

### **Way Forward:**

It is the duty of the parents and the elders of the adolescents to keep check on them, when they are using social media.

Parents should be cautious about adolescents, language both in writing and speaking and prevent the negative effects of social media on language in any case of their children.

Similarly parents should incline them towards people and books by applying different techniques when they feel that their child is being cut from society. It has been witnessed that parents themselves always be busy on social networking sites. Following them their child since the beginning age start to use android phone and through internet connect with social media sites. Parents have to develop their own habit of reading books or watching TV or doing any constructive works.

Last but not least parents must notify the change in the behavior and character of their children. When they notify any odd element in their behavior. They must handle this issue in a sensible way. Proper care and precaution in true sense can only protect our children from the bad effects of social media.

### **Conclusion:**

Adolescents between the ages of 10-19 are not enough mature to protect themselves from the harmful impacts of social media. Social media has no check and security that what age of child is using social media sites. Thus the child of any year can get access on the sites of social media. The age of adolescents is very low. The videos and posts on social media attract them. They watch vulgar material on social media. They get easy access on adult websites of social media. They have no system of checking. This flaw of social media shatters their character.

Social media makes adolescents addicted to use slang and abbreviated language, which imparts negative impacts on their speaking and writing. The use of informal language can affect their educational credibility. It is deteriorating their lingual capability be it in writing or speaking way.



Morality is a training which expresses about the family ground of any child. Good moral values are generated into the character of child after tireless hard work. But it is regret to say that social media is killing these moral values with invisible weapon. This is a great threat to the adolescents. The serious though is an only solution against the devilish effects of social media.

### **Future Implications:**

The research study will open new doors for future researchers. Its future implications can be listed in the following lines:

- (1) The research study will help future researchers to disclose impacts of social media on other aspects of the lives of adolescents such psychological, health and emotional feelings.
- (2) Furthermore this research study is limited only to the adolescents of Liyari Town. The scope of research study can be expended to the different cities of Pakistan.
- (3) Due to shortage of time the population of research study is too short. It can be enlarged for making study more viable and authentic.



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