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SOCIAL MEDIA A NEW TOOL TO SPREAD HATRED AND ITS CONSEQUENCES ON NATIONAL SECURITY IN INDIA

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Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to critically analyze the current scenario of social media users and its impact over the Indian society at large. It also addresses the cyber threats that can impact over the National Security while using social media. We have observed several recent examples of using Social media for Terrorists activities and Communal Violence in India. Cyber threats can come from various sources like criminals, hackers, virus writers, terrorist, communal group etc. over the social media. This can turn out to be threat for the national security of a country. In this paper we have discussed cyber threat through social media website, and some crucial cyber ethical aspects for social media users to mitigate the risks and safe browsing.

Keywords: Social Media, Impact of social media, youth and social media.

This article is dedicated to eminent academician Dr. G. R. Krishnamurthy, Mangalore.

Introduction:

Millions of people are connected over Social media across the world today. Social media users are increasing day by day and it is creating many issues in our society. Using Face book, WhatsApp or twitter is becoming status symbol nowadays. These advanced technologies offer new capabilities and benefits, but they also introduce new risks for its users and society. In this age, social media can turnout to be the alternative weapon for terrorist organizations. Most of the users are not aware about cyber crime and its precautionary measures. They can become victim easily. We notice that our youth are attracted towards terrorist groups for their activity. Today's main formula is "Information works as a power". Without using any weapon cybercrime can impact more dangerously on a large scale on national security. The utilization of social media as a new communication podium introduces serious personal as well as national security and privacy issues that can't be ignored. This paper aims to recognize the current status of Social Media users, general concept of Social Media, basic of Social Media, and Awareness of cyber crime among the social media users and how it can lead to affect national security of India. Use of Social media for Terrorists activities, Communal Violence and Revolution can become threat to the national security. Social media not only has risk for National Security but also has an opportunity to strengthen national security and to be used to benefit the government.

Objective of the Study:

1. To study the current status of social media users and impact of social media over the society in India
2. To observe threats of social media over the National Security.

Methodology Adopted:

The present study is based on secondary data. Therefore, the required data is been collected from various sources such as, Government publications, survey records of various agencies, relevant research papers, books, newspaper articles and websites.

➤ **General Concept of Social Media as follows :**

Social media means Internet-based application software for mobile or pc that allows people to interact and share resources and information with closed groups or in public. Some instances of social media incorporate blog, discussion forum, chat room, wiki, YouTube channel, LinkedIn, Facebook, twitter etc. Social media can be accessed through computers, smart and cellular phones and mobile phone text messaging. [1]

➤ **Three basics that describe the use of Social Media:**

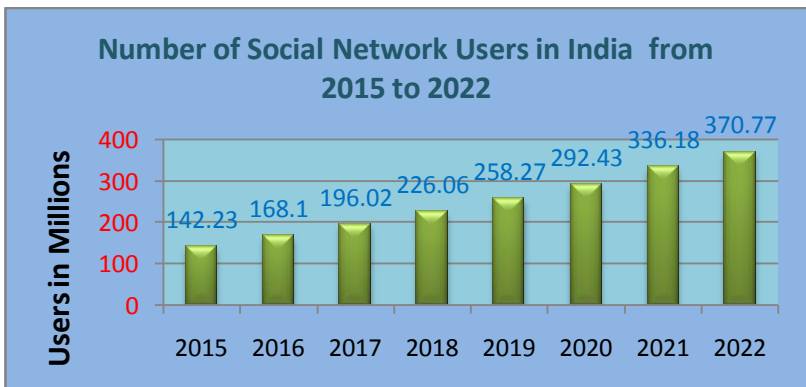
- A virtual space where the user can activate and set his own profile (account); this location is basically available with an application providing 'social networking' services (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.);
- To make such a profile public (in full part or half), with the other profile linking and then, an opportunity to put it in the network; in doing so, the user can communicate with another profile connected to his / her network. In addition to creating your own profile, the user can decide how to make his profile on public network

- An opportunity to handle your own network, continuous development and updating.[2]

➤ **Social Media fact and figures from India :**

- India has world’s biggest number of users on Facebook ie. Over 195 million. India's leading Facebook users are between the ages of 18 and 24 and Indian users can use Facebook in 12 languages. There are around 155 million monthly active users (MAU) in India; 147 million of them are using Facebook through mobile phones. Facebook is the only social network crossing 150 million users in India. [3]

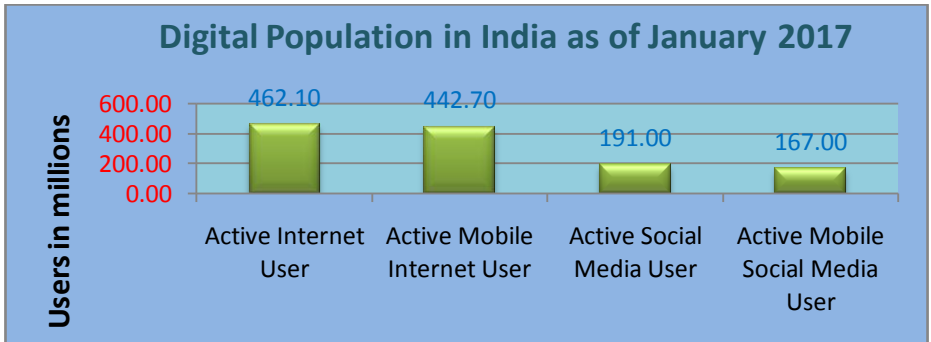
Figure -1 Statistical data of Social media user from 2015 to 2022



(Source - <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278407/number-of-social-network-users-in-india/>)

- WhatsApp Mobile Messaging Services announced on Friday 24 February 2017 that there are 200 million monthly active users in India.[4] As per WhatsApp mobile messaging services India is the highest country for video calling minutes with over 50 million video calling minutes every day[5]

Figure -2: Statistical data of Internet and Social media on Mobile Statistics



(Source-<https://www.statista.com/statistics/309866/india-digital-population/>)

➤ Aspects' of Social Media Utilization In India:

1) Social Media and National Security:

The peril in front of any element of national power creates security problems and any security problem is considered as National Security Issue. Every government wants to keep nation secure from Internal as well as external threats. Ethnic, religious and cultural conflict can become internal threat to National security. Today, Social media is the most impressive and forceful way of mass motivation and also the most important element used to break the togetherness and integrity of the state.

2) Use of social media for riots:

India is secular country which includes various religions castes and sects. The population of India is distributed in religious communities and Cultural diversities but still we can found tolerance in the society. Riots happen in very rare cases due to some

misunderstanding in different communities. We will study some cases of riots happened before in various region of India and misuse of social media to trigger the violence.

On 27th August 2013 ‘Muzaffarnagar Riots’ happened in two communities, the Muslims and Jats in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli. Muzaffarnagar is communally sensitive district in Uttar Pradesh. This riot claimed more than 43 lives and 93 plus injured. Through fake stories, on social media a terrible and purposeful attempt in spreading hatred between the communities was seen as an vital element of the role played. On the other hand, with the support of the representatives of political parties, they used social media like Facebook, MMS and CD’s as a tool to provoke abhorrence in the communities. [6]

The riot in Vadodara is Second Example where social media was used wrongly. A youngster posted a picture which hurts people’s reverence. After that the post went viral and triggered violence in Gujarat’s Vadodara. The violence continued for a week after which for precautionary measure mobile internet facility in the city was suspended to stop the spread of rumours which could increase the sectarian tension in the city. [7]

In another example tension gripped in Pune due to misuse of social media. Crowd has gone wild in the city over picture shared on Facebook and WhatsApp which hurt people’s reverence. An angry mob attacked and killed 24-year-old Muslim IT professional, who was returning home from offering namaz. He was not in any way connected to the circulation of the pictures. [6]

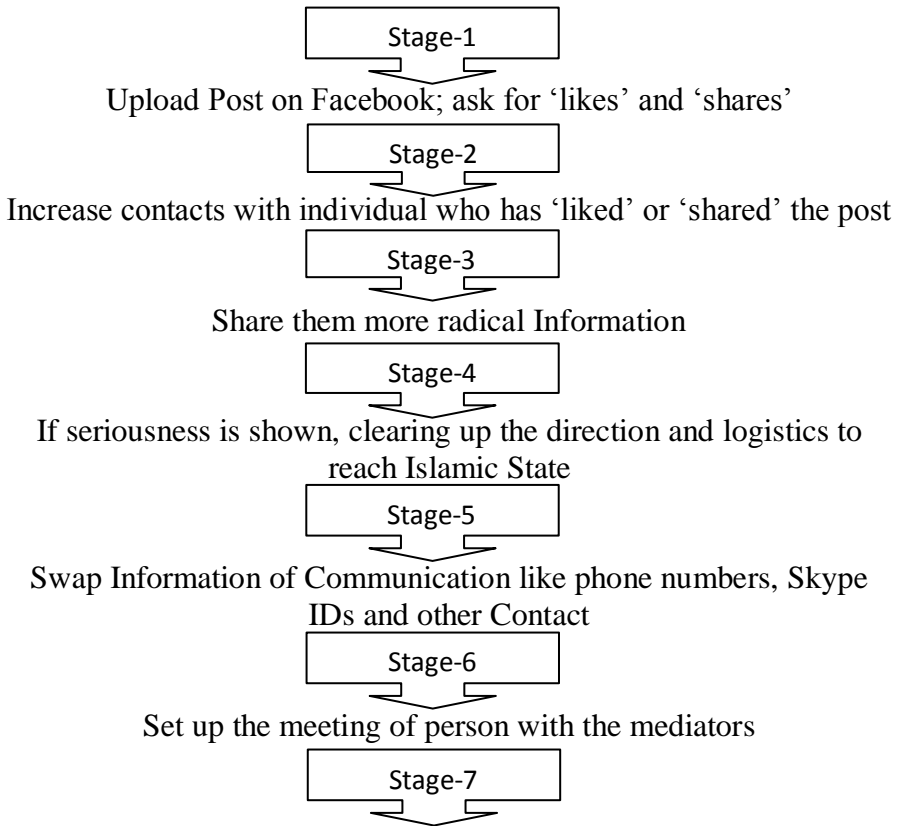
3) Use of social media for Terrorist Activities in India:

As per ATS sources the ISIS has a fully developed online recruitment team. This team operates from various parts of the globe. This team monitors youth who supporting for taking up arms to

defend Islam or shows an interest in the ISIS' ideology. Once such "vulnerable" youngster is recognized, they are radicalized, put through to several recruiters, and ultimately, handed over to an Indian handler. The Indian recruiter then facilitates their journey to Syria through various routes. [8]

In September 2015, an Indian woman, who was involved in recruitment to the ISIS, was Exile to the country by the United Arab Emirates and then arrested in Hyderabad. A 37-year-old Afsha Jabeen alias assumed name Nikki Joseph was showing herself as a British national Encourage the youth to join the ISIS through social media.[9]

ISIS strategy to recruits the subject



Further act based on the readiness and capacity of the person to join the ISIS.

(**Source:** Fighting The Islamic State: Centre plans anti-terror cyber-push, 11 April 2016, The Hindu and Shruti Pandalai (2016) “The ‘social media’ challenge to national security: impact and opportunities a conceptual overview”(<http://www.idsa.in>))

According to the information from intelligence agencies, approximately 10-15 educated youngsters from Kashmir may have been recruited by different terrorist groups working in the region. The security agencies also reported to centre increase in the action of the terrorist groups in the Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the use of online medium and social networking websites by the terror operators to hire the local youngsters. A number of Militant Groups, including Hizbul Mujahideen, have posted pictures of their members online to attract local youngster. Military had earlier expressed concern over recruitment of educated youngster into terror outfits. Highlighting concern, General Officer Commanding-In-Chief, Northern Command, Lt. Gen. DS Hooda, during the interaction with PTI, had said that there are attempts to attract the youngsters by such organization through social media which is having “several impacts” and steps are needed to answer it. [10]

4) Protest using Social media:

Maratha Kranti Morcha:

After Independence in India, the Maratha Kranti Morcha is the biggest ever silent protest by the Maratha community. It is being appreciated across the country because of its discipline, cleanness and Nonviolence. Background story of this umbrage was 15-year-old girl is alleged to have been brutally raped and killed by three men in Kopardi village, in the Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra. The occurrence was not exposed by the mainstream media for some time. This has inspired the youngsters in Koparadi and Nagar districts to

spread awareness about the incident on social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. Angry social media posts became viral and the crowd gathered immediately, forced the local police to take action and arrest the criminals within 24 hours. After this the details of the incident had become viral across the state and youths from many parts of the state got together to support the family. This incident gave birth to Maratha Kranti Morcha which started from Aurangabad district and covered almost every district in Maharashtra. [11]

Result and Analysis: According to our research, social media is also being used to create domestic disturbance. Terrorists and religious fundamentalist organizations are using social media to create religious turmoil among the people. Terrorist organizations like ISIS are dragging the youth in their trap and for this purpose they are working on the Internet. This can become threat to Internal Security of India. It is the need of the time to make the youth aware of Internet threats. Today's youth is vulnerable; they believe what they read/see on social network sites. Recent examples show that on social media youth react so aggressively in religious matters this leads to religious turmoil in communities. A fake account over social media is very big issue. Social media allows creating fake accounts. There should be a process so one can control the fake accounts over social media. Recent examples indicate that religious fundamentalist organizations spread rumor in religious matter this deteriorates religious reconciliation between communities and creates tension.

Suggestions/Solutions:

- **Personal Level**

- If you are using social media apps on your mobile, make sure to secure your device with a strong password

- Be choosy with Friend Requests on social Media accounts if you do not recognize the person, do not accept request. It can be a false call.
- Check out the details of religious groups before adding them
- Do not fall prey to the promotion of religious organizations before reacting. Make sure is it true and valid
- Be careful regarding information shared on your social media account like religious, personal and professional. Avoid sharing personal details.
- Be cautious when clicking on links: Hackers are searching on social networks even if they're from friends
- Change your passwords frequently and don't enable auto login

- **Government Level**

- A National security policy should be created for post upload procedure on social media
- Identity proof should be verified before creating an account on social media, so it will control the fake accounts on social media.
- Continuous monitoring of the users through government agency.
- In India there should be one policy that can cover standards, protocols, and statute across the nation in Information and cyber security domain.
- Government can encourage for Research projects in to information and cyber security domain.
- To enhance Information and cyber security government can tie-up with private agencies.

Conclusion: Social networking sites permit hatred groups to recruit and share out propaganda online. Social media can be a weapon for the spread of fake rumors and untrusted information. Terrorist groups are running their agenda for recruitment through social media portals. This is very serious problem which needs to focus by government on top priority. This threat can harm our nation integrity and internal security. Some bright sides of social media cannot be denied but if we observe from a national security perspective then this matter is dangerous. Legitimate protest is a pillar of democracy. People gathering through social media and protesting for any incident, may be a sign of democracy. But the exaggeration of this may lead to national harmony and must be stopped for the integrity of national security.

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