SOCIAL MEDIA:
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES, APPLICATIONS AND BENEFITS AND DANGERS

by

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Advances in information communication technologies, ICT's and most notably the evolution and convergence of computer and the internet led to drastic changes the way we communicate. On September 2, 1969, when Len Keleinrock at the University of California , LA joined two computers with a cable he enabled the flow of information between the computers, the Internet was born. Initially intended for military use, internet now is part of a global network linking millions of people worldwide on academic, governmental, commercial, private, nonprofit computer networks.

The book, Social Media: Global Perspectives, Applications and Benefits and Dangers, by Bennet, Annmarie, is part of the series of Media and Communications - Technologies, Policies and Challenges published by Nova Science Publishers, New York. This book which came out in the year 2014 is divided in five chapters and is a compilation of various research studies conducted by academicians. Theses independent studies touch upon various facts of use of social media. The book throws light on the social media users privacy concerns; the negative impact social media messages on different populations; employing social media by Universities for job placements; the possible ill effects of social media usage on the mind ; role of videos in transmedia storytelling.

More than ever, the personal information transmitted over the social media platforms is rising. Everything from the personal shopping preferences, the places they visited and plan to visit, their social group, financial transactions. One way the websites gather personal information of the user is by asking her/him direct questions and requesting them to participate in surveys this I endorse is an ethical practice. There exists another route wherein the websites anonymously trace the cookies which lead them to which all websites the user has visited. Chapter I of the book, An

Instrument for Measuring Social Media Users' Information Privacy Concerns by Babajide Osatuyi, draws on Social Penetration theory and Communication Privacy Management theory to explain social media users information privacy concern. Drawing on a sample of 270 avid social media users, this study examines the factor structure of the dimensions of concern for information privacy instrument from prior research. An exploratory factor analysis followed by a confirmatory factor analysis reveal three first-order factor structure of social media users concern for information privacy measurement instrument.

Over the years it is a proven fact that a well planned communication intervention can bring about a desired change in the behaviour of the target group. It was the mass media through its varied communication channels like the radio, TV, film, theatre have been instrumental in bringing out desired changes in the audiences through its well crafted and suitable messages. According to the Centre for Disease Control and prevention, USA, amongst all the ethnic and racial groups the African Americans account for a higher proportion of new HIV diagnoses, those living with HIV, and those ever diagnosed with AIDS. Chapter II, of the book, Fear or Danger Threat Messaging: The Dark Side of Social Media authored is authored by Fay Cobb Payton and Cherie Conley of North Carolina State University. In order to study and revise the prevention messages about HIV on an online health awareness platform, ealthImpactNetwork.org. The researchers banks on the Extended Parallel Process Model. This commonly used model in health communication which has is based on inducing fear as a persuasion technique is an outcome of a Communication Monographs published in 1994 by Kim Witte. The present study employs the EPPM to understand and check the level of threat perceptions of HIV amongst the African American college going students, and how effectively social media can be used to create awareness about HIV.

Apart from imparting quality education, making available suitable facilities and impressive infrastructure along with research activities, a University also earns some recognition in terms of facilitating and providing avenues for placement of their students. Gone are the days where any graduate would go and register themselves at the employment exchange office and eagerly await call letters to attend interviews based on their qualification and skill set. There is a growing demand from various stakeholders, the prospective employer, and the student community, that the University needs to embrace the social media to be more effective in the placement activity. According to a study by the Mckinsey in 2009, companies benefited and gained measurable business by using social media platforms, including more innovative products and services, more effective marketing, better access to knowledge, lower cost of doing business, and higher revenues.

Authored by Ginevra Gravili, the Chapeter III of the book titled, 'The Use of Social Media for Job Placement in Career Centres of Four European Universities: Opportunities and Risks', elaborates on the advantages of employing the ICTs particularly the social media platform in the placement process where both the prospective employer and employee can exchange information and ideas. It brings them on a platform and enables a dialogue between them. The students can

have a better idea of the company their activities and job profiles and on the other hand the company can get to know the student beyond what is mentioned in the student resume. The Author took a sample of 152 public universities in Western Europe and through questioners collected data on various use of Facebook at the placement offices of the chosen universities. How Facebook as a social media platform, influences, facilities and supports the hiring process was analyzed in this section. The study concludes recommending that for Universities to remain competitive in the every changing environment should embrace and actively use Facebook in the placement centres.

The 2006 Time Magazine person of the year 2006 was You, The award was bestowed on to the social media users who in huge numbers contribute to the content on various online platforms like the You Tube, Face Book MySpace etc. Like any new technological invention which has its own set of advantages as well shortcomings, it comes with some harmful effects in terms of socio, economic and cultural implications on the population which adapts it. Chapter IV of the book authored by David Brunskill and titled, The Dangers of Social Media for the Psyche, put forth the argument on different aspects the user of social media platform undergoes and how it affects his psyche. The prestigious National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in Bangalore have set up a clinic for mobile and internet addicts. According to Dr. Sharma, a senior clinical psychologist at NIMHANS, Children are spending far too much time on the Smartphone, on Facebook, and when denied the use of the devices they are complaining of anxiety, loneliness and boredom.

The ever existing conflict of the preferred image and identity which is represented on social media, the social avtar and the persona in reality is spelt out clearly by the author. The mental trauma a person experiences when they are bullied over the social media and ill effects on the mind of the social media user when they turn out to be excessive users and spend most of their time over the internet than in the real world turning out to be addicts has been detailed out. The chapter also raises an alarm and warns of a serious repercussion on overuse of social media which the author says will lead to psychological erosion. Wherein, socializing, privacy, authenticity and personal integration which form some of the inherent human needs may be forgone.

In 1980, Alvin Toffler in his seminal work, The Third Wave, coined the world "prosumer" which he is goes on to define as 'someone who blurs the distinction between a consumer and a producer. It is activity wherein the consumer proactively participates and contributes to the production process of information content. In today's information loaded ecosystem, the Prosumers typically embrace Web 2.0 technologies and gets onto the social networking platforms and contribute to the creation/recreation of information content. Chapter V of the book, The Matrix Hero on Youtube: Fan Vids as a form of transmedia storytelling authored by Dorothy Wai-sim Lau dwells upon how the active participation of fans employ what is known as

viding, using some clips/scenes/photographs and then recreating the plot, sequences and context by adding electronic music. This compilation is then uploaded onto the user generated and video sharing platform You Tube. Henry Jenkins, an authority over transmedia storytelling opines that Transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Dorothy Wai-sim Lau has observed in his research how the science-fiction movie Matrix which has become a cult amongst movie goers was represented in the transmedia storytelling. Two fan vids, ―I, Neo and ―Matrix Vs. Excision where chosen as unit of study which were generated by the fans and uploaded on to the YouTube. The author investigates how the content is transformed when it is transposed from cinematic space to cyberspace.

On the whole the book gives insights into various uses of Social media and is helpful to students, academician of Mass communication and acts as a useful source for methodological practices and literature review in the broad field of social media. The Book opens up scope for further research in the application of social media in various avenues.

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