Chapter 1 Introduction

Recent cases/incidents exhibiting the role of social media

Narendra Modi and Social Media:
Social media has played a major role in Indian politics in the recent times where the present Prime Minister Narendra Modi used it in the last general elections of the country. Narendra Modi, who was the prime ministerial candidate of the Bhartiya Janata Party, has been praised by the critics for the usage of non traditional mediums of communication to seek for votes from the general public. Various social media including facebook, twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ were effectively used to bring the feeling of anti incumbency for the then government. The entire election campaign also ran on the digital side during the period. The agenda of the party, their future plans etc were demonstrated on the various social media platforms. This was almost a one to one communication which has been very rare in the history of elections in our country. Another benefit of this communication was the awareness in the people in terms of what to expect from the party. Ultimately, this turned out to be very vital element in the entire campaign with the biggest win of last 40 years of a political party and thus bringing the field of politics to the relatively less explored and with tremendous potential field of social media. Today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has more than 30 Million people liking and following him, he was the one of the top most followed personality on Twitter throughout the globe. This is a huge figure and it talk about how smartly he has utilised the social media to conquer the top political position in a country.

A recent major news in the Prime Minister Narendra Modis’s visit to Russia happened which created a large buzz on the various media as well as social media when he was asked by a
new reporter of NBC (National Broadcasting Company) if he was on Twitter! This ludicrous scene occurred while the PM praised the reporter’s display picture on Twitter, responding to which the reporter asked the said question. To her response, PM Modi laughed off. This was the beginning of a huge troll criticizing the ill preparedness of the reporter. PM Modi has the top largest followers in the world on Twitter and they could not accept this and trolled about the reporter a lot showing various images even with comparing the follower numbers of her and that of the PM’s. Social media has proved to be as powerful as traditional media is or even more at times. [1]

**Indian Railway Twitter Handle: (Suresh Prabhu case)**

Another case belongs to the use of social media by a railway passenger. Mr Akhilesh Sahani, a passenger of Karnavati Express was travelling from Mumbai to Ahmedabad when he purchased a water bottle from the executive of the pantry of the same train. He was asked Rs.20 instead of Rs.15, which was the MRP of the water bottle. He denied purchasing it and additionally he also twitted of the matter and complained instantly to the General Manager, Western Railway and the Railway Minister. Within 15 minutes of the posts, Mr Akhilesh received a response and received a call from the Railway authority. The complaint was taken very seriously and the Railway TTE came to meet him personally and scolded the sales executive. Additionally all the passengers who were charged higher for the water bottle in entire train were returned with the additional amount. Finally the railway ministry asked the TTE to provide the report of the whole incident to the government. [2]

**With the help of Twitter two Indians could enter India from Bhutan in time:**

In the recent event, the border guarding force helped 2 Gujarati-Indian residents to cross over to home country with the help of Twitter. They were in Bhutan for a trip and meanwhile the border was sealed due to the assembly poles in the state of West Bengal. They were denied to enter the Indian border hours before the planned journey. They tried to approach the Indian embassy but in vain. The embassy asked them to take the air route which was relatively much costly. Here the role of twitter came into place, one of the residents put the request on twitter and tagged many politicians and officials including few of the oppositions asking the
permission to enter own country via the roadway. The ministry had to come into action and they contacted the forces’ commanders on the Indo-Bhutan border. Ultimately, both were allowed to cross the border and come back home in planned time. Both later on responded on the social media with their latest pictures thanking the officials and the officials replied in a courteous manner to be happy to help the citizens in every possible manner. The story had a happy ending with a productive role of social media once again. [3]

**Reservation movements for Patels in Gujarat State:**

“I allowed Hardik to run social media and he portrayed himself as the leader”, Lalji Patel, founder president of the Sardar Patel Group. Patels, one of the largest communities in the state of Gujarat have been in the news for their demand for considering them in the backward caste and to provide them with reservation benefits like many other castes in the state as well as the nation. The comment is made by Mr Lalji Patel, who heads the SPG group, which works in the direction to get the reservation to the Patel community. According to him, he had given the responsibility to manage the social media campaign for their reservation movement Hardik Patel ran creating an image it as if he was running the entire show. Lalji also criticises Hardik for not providing the passwords of the account through which the campaign was running in the state. Hardik, who was admitted to the group at the age of 19 has outwitted the actual today by mere effective use of social media, claims Lalji Patel. The incident throws light on the vitality of social media. This has been a very effective weapon not only to fight external parties but also to hold and maintain internal control. Online marketing and promotions of the social/political organization was once a small department which nowadays is having paramount importance in any organization. [4]

**Anna Hazare Case:**

'Social media sparked Anna movement, can lead to demise too'
Gaurav Bakshi asked Arvind Kejriwal to leverage the power of social media when he was asked and invited to be the part of the nationwide movement in December 2010. Although he distributes the credit to the fellow party people, Bakshi, who had returned from the States, was the face of social media for Lokmal movement and Team Anna in the next few years. He dominantly used Facebook to communicate and spread the messages of Team Anna. Then after, Bakshi was not part of the team when Anna started another Fast, the team sent him a
legal notice from one of the core members of team Anna committee, Mr Prashant Bhushan. The notice accused Mr Gaurav of transiting misleading information about the movement to the media and trying to harm the reputation of the movement. Evidently, he consulted the legal experts and refused the allegations made on him in the notice. According to him, he had been asking Arvind and the team to utilize the social media as much as possible but when he realised that was not the case, he created some community fan pages for the movement on unofficial basis. He further claims that it was team Anna’s inability to understand the cause for the reason of his relationship with the campaign was not the same smooth and cordial later on. He didn’t disclose what exactly went wrong against him but the legal notice said he was keen to become the core committee member of the IAC. Bakshi was later asked to pass on the social media credentials to the team Anna, and to be free from any legal action in exchange in this regard. To which, Bakshi negatively responded and justified that the social media pages were his own creations out of his own will and were not official webpages of the Anna Hazare movement. Team Anna even approached Facebook to gain the access of the said webpages but it all went in vein as the legal ownership remained with Mr Bakshi, as per Facebook. The incidents highlight the vitality of social media platform and its impact in present day. [5]

How did Anna Hazare use Social Media for his anti corruption campaign?

It is really interesting to understand how Anna Hazare, an Indian Social Activist, has utilized the social media to get the support of general people in the country. Anna had on a fast unto death for the support of Lokpal Bill in New Delhi in April 2011. One of the followers of Mahatma Gandhi, Anna Hazare, inspired Indians thoughts the classes and age groups, including the young most people of the country to get their support for the said cause. This entire event can be tagged as the beginning of active use of social media and the first ever real movement with social media active support. Although most of the major news channels in the country responded to the movement. The campaign got the attention of middle class people in the country who came out on streets holding candles, carrying placards, chanting slogans, singing songs for the country and some of them were even fasting in support of their idol, Annaji. Initially this number was not huge, but active campaigns on social media created the scale larger day by day. This was something like the ‘romance’ of following Mahatma-like figure for the new generation of new India, which they had never experienced. Along with the great platform of social media, the sequence of huge scams then, was also adding to the fuel of this oppose. [6]
Recent article in News paper:

Increased psychological problems related to social media in youth of Ahmedabad” says the article in published in the ‘City Bhaskar’, a supplement of the Divya Bhaskar, a leading newspaper of Gujarat and a part of Dainik Bhaskar Group, one of the major media of India. The research revolves around the various problems faced by the youngsters of Ahmedabad and found that the individuals suffer from ‘social media anxiety disorder’, ‘narcissistic obsession’ and ‘fear of missing out’. The psychologists are facing such cases in an increased numbers in the recent times. [7]

Election going high-tech! Most of the Political parties using social media to reach out the voters:
The Uttar Pradesh State Assembly Elections of 2017 witnessed a new era in the election and politics as most of the major political parties have been actively using social media with dedicated teams approaching the elections in a very organized and formal manner. The four major political parties, BJP, INC, SP and BSP, all were well organized and competing on the major social media platforms to win the shares in the state elections.

The external affairs minister of India, Ms Sushma Swaraj, well known and well appreciated for being always approachable on social media for help for the citizens of the country. She recently helped a two day old infant from Bhopal suffering from heart disease. The kid, whose photo was uploaded, was suffering from critical congenital heart disease. Ms Swaraj responded on the tweet seeking help and received the medical records from the Bhopal. The department also organized for the baby’s surgery at AIIMS Delhi.[9]

“Amazon writes to Swaraj, says sorry”

Another recent event happened which showcased the vitality of social media as a platform in India. A seller on Amazon, outside India, was selling the doormats with Indian National Flag Image. This was well captured on major social media and the issue even reached to the Govt
of India within almost no time. The Minister of external affairs minister Ms Swaraj took the matter very seriously and opposed with a strong voice. She asked Amazon to remove the product and to tender an apology failing which she warned not to be issued visa to any Amazon officials and the existing visas also to be waived off. On the response side, the Amazon expressed regret for the event and removed the problematic product from their portfolio of Canadian website within no time. The main culprit of the entire matter was a third party organization who was selling through Amazon in Canada. The VP of the Amazon India Mr Amit Agrawal, regretted on the social media saying Amazon had no intention of hurting the sentiments of the Indian citizens. Social media played the crucial role of a platform that highlighted the issue and save the pride of nation by making the seller stop selling such problematic products. [10]

Some more incidents where the Prime Minister Narendra Modi responded to individual tweets from the citizens of the country have been shown here. This reflects the vitality of social media in terms of providing a platform for people to reach to almost anyone on the earth. [11]

**Time spent by people on Social Media**

With the passage of time, people in general have been more shifted towards active use of social media. The teenagers lead the chart in this analysis. As per the research, on third of total time spent on internet is on the social media. Out of this, nearly two third amount of time is spent on social media via mobile phone by the users. For ease of understanding the influence of social media landscape, the total time spent on it has been calculated and further it is projected in comparison to many other regular activities.
On a surprising fact, an average person is spending almost a couple of hours per day on social media; this further has been estimated that the same person is spending 5 years 4 months of life on the social media. And additionally, this can be increased as the person becomes more and more addicted to this, he/she might be spending more time over there. In the same calculations, an average person spends around 7 years 8 months in front of the ‘box’, television! And this faces close competition from the social media since it has been growing at a great pace and has a very strong penetration into routine life of an individual. At present, the total time spent on social networks by an individual exceeds the time taken in eating, drinking, actually socializing and grooming together. Further, time spent on social media can be divided into various social media as well which is shown further. [12][13][14][15]
Comparing that to common daily activities:

- Watching TV (7 years, 8 months)
- Social Media (5 years, 4 months)
- Eating/Drinking (3 years, 5 months)
- Grooming (1 year, 10 months)
- Socializing (1 year, 3 months)
- Doing Laundry (6 months)

What can you do in 5 years & 4 months?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fly</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Watch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To the Moon and Back 32 times</td>
<td>The Great Wall of China 3.5 times</td>
<td>The Simpsons Series 215 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climb</td>
<td>Run</td>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt Everest 32 times</td>
<td>10K+ Marathons</td>
<td>Your Dog 93K times</td>
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The Oxford English Dictionary elaborates it as, “The Social media basically refers to the web-based sites which allow and empower the user to create, share and/or to make them participate in the social networking.” [16]

The Cambridge English Dictionary elaborates the social media as, “Websites and computer-based programs that allow internet users to communicate and/or share information on the global network with the use of electronic gadgets like a computer, smartphone, tablet etc.”

The Indian Express, defines it as, “Social media are computer mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share and/or exchange information, career interests, ideas and picture and/or videos, in virtual communities and networks.” [17] [27] [28]
History of Social Media

Social media are internet based sites offering the users a platform to communicate, share data and content including pictures, audio and video; create and participate in discussions about almost any topic relating to their interest and create and live a virtual life with the use of a mobile phone, computer, laptop, tablets or even a smart TV. Users get occupied in one-to-one as well as one-to-many conversation on such platforms. The social media appears in various platforms like discussion forums, micro blogs, messaging platforms, news focused sites, storytelling, scrapbooks, podcasting and many more. There exist hundreds of sites offering various types of platforms like such on the internet.
Since the earlier times, the collective memory of the world is basically and majorly developed by the traditional sources of media only. Dating back to the colonial phase of the USA, traditional media platforms have been the strong most platforms to effect and influence the mass about each single even and the development of various such events. By such process, the media has many a times reflected its views directly or indirectly rather than to reflect the voice of the masses. The entire narration including what to narrate and what not to, its timing, the flow of the story, the taste developed in the story, the sentiments created in the news were all dominated by the traditional medias and it many a times lacked a response of an individual reader/listener/viewer i..e the normal audience. Precisely, the media journalists have shaped collective memory with reference to most of the vital events and the audiences learn about the news in the same shades as created by them. Contradictory to this, in the present day scenario, where social media sites are polluted by users, everyone acts as a journalist, their individual responses is being shared, and they all together provide a great platform of alternative media.

The increasing use of social media has gradually empowered individual users particularly the young generations and this has shifted the informative and influential power from the media to the users of social media. Some of the cases and incidents discussed above supports the logic. Social media has played the key role in getting people together and making their voice heard to the society and the government on many cases in recent past in India.

In terms of international events, social media played a role leaving strong impact by giving exposure to the revolutionary occurrences of disturbances in the Middle East and North Africa in the year 2011.

One more international campaign in the recent past was the Kony 2012 that successfully brought on the highlight initially on YouTube and post which created huge focus by the mainstream media. The situation has reversed today where even the journalists and the media houses keep their eye on the major social media platforms to be instantly aware about the event and not to miss any of the latest trends coming from the large audiences. Additionally, the use of social media by the political parties has already been discussed in the initial part of this chapter, all this in a developing nation like ours! In case of developed nations like USA, use of social media particularly the Facebook and the Twitter is in trends in politics for a long time. As per the research by Oxford Institute Internet Experiment, the ex US president Barack Obama had more likes than opponent Romney and the masses on social media used to follow
him more than his opponent. This could be one of the factors behind the victory of Barack Obama.

**History of Social Networking:**

Social networking has been an inevitable part of the youngsters’ life in the present day scenario. The youngsters without a social media connection are basically a ‘minority group’ on a lighter note! Social media has been a large contributor in making the distant relations alive by offering them a vital platform of communication almost at every time. Social networking is a subset of social media basically used for networking related purposes including communicating, interacting, learning from each other, and ultimately entertaining own self and others.

Today, social networking is an essential part of life for people from around the world. Social networking is basically used to interact with other users, for educational purposes, to give and receive information and/or to entertain and get entertained. Social media has various forms, although all of which have been related: forums, blogs, photo/video sharing, social bookmarking, podcasts, widgets, to name some of them.

Present day, most of the social media allow the users to create their profile, upload content including images and audio/video clips, and communicate and interact with their connection online. In the recent times, the social networking has been an effective tool to connect to various groups online, get to know the latest updates and news events, play online games, communicate, and share audio/video clips. Some of the top social networking sites of today are: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+.

**Early times**

Communication and living into groups and getting connected to people has always been one of the basic needs of humans. Before the discovery of technological instruments, people used to visit each others places and used to keep in touch that way. Distance was a deciding factor in terms of making the relationship stay and last long. Long distance relationships were difficult to survive at that time as it used to get harder to communicate. All the way through the history, men has found various means of communication be it pigeons, post, telegram, or even telephone. These traditional tools of communication were costing lot of time and were
full of hurdles; additionally the response time was large ranging from hours to days to weeks and so on! The constant thing in this communication is the growth in terms of upgradation, identification and discovery of newer, faster, more reliable and more efficient ways. The latest one in the 21st century is internet!

The first step towards this revolution happened on 1971 when the maiden email was sent and delivered. Both, the sender and the receiver computers were physically next to each other in the same premises. The message sent was, ‘qwertyuiop’. Bulletin board system, famously known as the BBS were created in the early phase of 80s. The data exchange was happening on personal computers via the phone lines with the help of a host computer using a modem. This was the pioneering system offering the personal computers to connect with each other. The system was obviously far slow but it offered the direction to today’s high speed connections. In the same year later on, with the use of Usenet, the maiden web browsers were also distributed, also known as the initial online bulletin boards. Usenet was different from the BBS in terms of not having a central server. This was the pioneering idea for today’s group features like facebook groups, yahoo groups etc! In 1988, the internet world welcomed the first version of Instant Messaging (IM), known as IRC (Internet Relay Chat). This service was not for masses and limited to only a restricted number of users in the initial period. Almost within no time the initial copies of web browsers were available on Usenet.

**The Maiden Social Media**

Geocities, was the first social networking site that was created in the year 1994. The users could have their own websites, which was grouped into the various cities, on the basis of the content available. Closely followed by, theglobe.com was offered to the mass audience, it gave the freedom to the users to connect to other users sharing similar interests. The users were also able to float their own contents on the platform so that other likeminded people could be attracted.

Another few then famous social media, Sixdegrees.com and the AOL IMs (Instant Messengers) hit the market in the 1997. IM was another revolution in this phase, offering the users liberty to talk to friends and even unknown people across the globe. The users were required to have their created profile for this.
The model developed by AOL has acted as a ‘model’ for many other social media in the later on years. The users could write biography and receive testimonials from other users. An innovative feature was that the users could search for their friends in the site and attempt a connection, called as friendship. Many other social networking sites followed this pattern, some of which were, Classmates, Friendzy, Hi5 etc. During this period, many adult dating sites were also floated in this growing market, many of which were mass market and some were focused ones!

Out of all these, one of the oldest one was the SixDegrees.com, although with quite unique and apt brand name, the site failed to receive the response it could have. The name was based on the theory, ‘Six degrees of separation’ saying that any two living persons in the world are apart to a maximum of six degrees only. Like other social media sites, this also offered the individuals to create the virtual profile, have connections, create groups based on various interests, search for individuals on the platform and so on. The site motivated the existing users to bring more of their friends on the platform and had a heavy load of new members joining the site. This ended up diluting the brand image of the social media as many people were tired of membership invitations and they also complained such invitations to be fake and it occupied lot of their email space. Ultimately the site got sold at a huge sum of $125 MN and got closed down eventually in the following year. Some other focused segment social media were AsianAvenue (introduced in 1997). By the end of the 20th century, the world had some more focused sites like BlackPlanet and MiGente focused for the Hispanic servers only. During all these growth stories, the parallel growth story was running which was of the Internet itself! The internet connections were at a rapidly increasing stage and newer individuals were entering on this virtual world each single day. By this phase the famous email offering service Yahoo began its business.

**Evolution of social media**

In the present day scenario, a young individual cannot imagine his/her life without social media. The total number of users of many of the leading general social media surpasses the total population of many of the countries in the world. At the same time, there are many focused social media catering to the various niche markets as well. Other than the general
social networking sites, there are sites that are specifically catering to music, cocking, parenting, language specific, business specific, books related, maternity related, based on nationality, based on ethnicity, research related, based on movies, based on erotic and adult content, dating specific, online learning related, NGOs related, based on gaming, travel specific, religious and so on!

**User nets**

Truscott and Ellis presented the Usenet system to the world in 1979. Users can post their content (posts, mostly news) to the newsgroups on the Usenets. Usenet was different from other forums in a sense that it lacked a centralized dedicated administrator. The various blogs and news sites of the present day are being fed by RSS have received inputs from the Usenet indirectly. Additionally the various group sites present in the industry like Yahoo groups and Google groups use many of the developments offered by the Usenet only.

**Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs)**

Bulletin board systems were introduced during the later part of 70s. There were restrictions on the number of users to a single person at a time could access. Personal computers were originally hosting the BBS and the individual users needed to use the host computers modem and dial in to get the access. There used to exist legal as well no legal BBS, some of which involved into unethical and illegal practices. Some of the examples are virus material, porn material, files attempting to hack the computer etc. BBS are also the pioneer site offering the users to interact with other users, although this was not as swift as it is today, but as a beginning, it was a huge move setting the stage for today’s hectic social media’s communicative lifestyle.

**Online Services**

CompuServe and Prodigy like online services were offered after the introduction of BBSs in the internet world. Such services were the initial genuine attempts to leverage the internet benefits. CompuServe was a bit expensive though but was also the initiator to offer a chat program for the users whereas Prodigy made the internet services economic and accessible to larger markets. Another one was Genie, which was offered by the General Electric Subsidiary
in the mid 90s, which survived in the market for around one and a half decade. This basically was a text based facility which also created considerable competition to CompuServe, the then leader in the category. Genie was basically leveraging the resources in a sense that it was utilising the unoccupied time sharing mainframes post the routine hours in a schedule. Online shopping, online gaming, online forums and of course the email facility was offered by the Genie. It also had a magazine during a given time period. In the similar time frame, the AOL initiated the internet services and was successful in offering internet at an assessable rate in the United States.

**Internet Relay Chats and Instant Messaging**

Internet Relay Chat, popularly known as the IRC, heavily in action for sharing of files, links and other messages, had been developed during the 1988. It was also used as a tool of communication between users effectively as it also supported data sharing as a reasonable decent speed. This could also tagged as the pioneer of the IMs that the world easily uses at its finger tips today. One of the flip side of this was it being a UNIX based system and not based on the popular, Windows. During the mid nineties, ICQ was introduced which was the first IM program, and it was the major platform where various avatars, emojis, abbreviations (like lol, rofl etc) were created. This was later on copied and adopted on many other competitors.

**Forums**

The credit for the tremendous growth and development of the social web in so small time goes to the online forums. BBSs can be considered as the ancestors of the online forums but forums were far better in the interface, which was quite user friendly. Even the users without computer background could easily operate on the online forums. Even till the present day, the online forums have been a successful aspect of the internet world, which are being developed on various platforms like php and bulletin. Although many literatures identify dating sites to be the pioneering social network, such type of sites lack the basic characteristics on being a social networking site as most of them were not allowing the individual users to have a list of connected friends.

**1969**

CompuServe was the pioneer ISP (Internet Service Provider), for the mass audience in the USA. Dialup technology was largely used at that point of time, prevailed successfully competing in the market from 80s to the mid 90s.
1971
The historic first email got sent and delivered.

1978
Bulletin board system more commonly known as the BBS was firstly developed. The major purpose of this platform was to spread awareness about the various events like meetings and announcements. This was the real starting point of the virtual community.

1979
An early bulletin board names Usenet connected two universities, the Duke University and the University of North Carolina.

1994
‘Geocities’ started by the Beverly Hills Internet, offering the users a platform to initiate personal websites modelled in consideration of the various civic territories. This was a hit in no time and crossed the 1000000 MN figure within three years. This had around 38 MN web pages by the time it went into liquidation from the USA by the year 2009. By this time, the world saw introduction of Yahoo, a strong player of this industry, a leader for a long time and a challenger turned survivor today. Presently Yahoo has the ownership of geocities today and it is offering the single product in Japan: web hosting.

1997
By this year, the internet website traffic reached to a million numbers.

1998
Present search engine leader, Google initiated its operation and was grasping market at a fast peace.

1999
Basically to gather the lost friends in Great Britain, Friends reunited was founded, is considered to be the first online social network.

2000
In the millennium year, the industry got blurred future vision when the dot.com bubble got burst, nearly 70 MN personal computers were having global connectivity by this time.

2001
Another pioneer in the area of online encyclopedia and the largest encyclopedia of today, the Wikipedia was introduced to the world.
One of the most innovative mobile phone company, Apple introduced iPods to the world.

2002
A social media platform, Friendster got launched to the general audiences of the United States. The site got instant success and it reached to around 3 MN account holders within the first 3 months of its launch.

2003

Another close competitor and almost a clone to the Friendster, My space got introduced in the US market. For a different segment of professionals and business persons, LinkedIn started its operation in the same year.

2004

In this historic year, another social media site got launched named Facebook. This was originally only restricted to the students of the Harvard college only. In the same year Myspace overtook the leader Friendster in terms of total page views. This was also the year of introduction of Podcasting on the internet. Flicker image hosting website opened. Digg was founded as a social news website where people shared stories found across the internet.

2005

Blog Early Blog Often, famously known as BEBO was introduced and added to the competition in the world of social media. In this year, Facebook also introduced a special version dedicated to the high school students. In this year, Youtube, a video based social media initiated the online storing and relaying video clips.

2006

By this year, Myspace had been one of the highest followed social media site in the states, which spot was eventually to be taken by Facebook just within the next two years! Historically, the Facebook took the decision to allow the users of at least 13 years of age, which expanded the market of this social media into next level. By this phase, Twitter was also introduced in this competitive market which was basically a micro-blogging social media site. Since being a ‘micro-blogging’ site, it contained restriction in terms of maximum number of characters to be posted in each single share, the upper limit being 140 alphabets in a single tweet.

2007

Another landmark decision was taken by Facebook in this year allowing the third party application developers letting them develop applications on the platform of Facebook. This visionary decision has resulted in a long term growth for the Facebook.

2008

Myspace was overtaken in terms of total unique reach of individual users in a month by the strong challenger Facebook. Another vital event was an unsuccessful attempt of Facebook to
purchase the micro blogging social media website, Twitter. Meanwhile the AOL successfully bought BEBO (Blog Early, Blog Often).

2009

Facebook started the lead in the social media industry by this year with around 200 MN users globally. It had overtaken Myspace by creating double the traffic of that created by the later one. Another vital development was around one MN Trillion unique uniform resource locator famously known as URLs after deduction and elimination of the repetitive ones by this year.

2010

A tremendous increase in the user base witnessed by Facebook reaching the gigantic mark of 400 million users in contrast to the close competitor Myspace, which had around 57 MN social media accounts. During this phase, google launched Buzz, a social media website connected with the Gmail of google. By 2010, the worldwide population of internet users reached almost 2 billion, measuring one third of the global population.

2011

By this time, a user could access social media from almost any place and they were a vital part of a large chunk of users amounting almost more than 550 MN users on facebook. Around 65 MN messages were sent on Twitter within every 24 hours; and almost 2 BN video clips were viewed on youtube in 24 hours. By this phase, we have seen the growing concern of the privacy of the users as most of them are sharing quite some of their private life and personal moments on the platform of social media.

2012 Onwards..

By this phase, internet has become a vital part of a large chunk of social media users with facebook reaching a benchmark of one billion users. Newer segments were added day and night to the world of internet and to the world of social media eventually. A huge contribution was from the tremendously growing smart phone industry strongly backed by the latest upgradation from the telecom service provider industry. It was researched that almost half of the youngsters between the age group of 25-35 were found to be available on social media at the office. [18][19][20][21]

New Era in Social Networking

Friendster is regarded as the maiden modern social media website which did utilized the degree of separation logic and called it the circle of friends, which was quite likely to the
model of Sixdegrees.com. It started as a dating site but later on managed to get out of that segment and targeted a mass market from a niche market. Friendster had fast peaced success within the first few months and it reached to more than 30 Million users within the first 3 months. For better understanding, 1 out of a total of 126 internet users in the world had this account.

This was closely followed by the Myspace, who simply adopted the model of Friendster and almost copied the model with slight variation. Within ten days of coding, this was offered in the market, and was an instant hit, which eventually overtook the popularity of Friendster. Myspace differentiated itself from the competition and their users were given far more freedom than the Friendster in terms of customization where the users could put their choices in terms of audio and video. Myspace reached ninety million registrations and even in present day scenario where it doesn’t really exist in the competition, it still has a user base in the states.

The shining days of Friendster have been over and it has lost markets by the strong competitors like Facebook. Friendster has put the official message on its page confirming that it is taking a break and rethinking on strategic actions for future. Another few interesting players in the world market today are LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+. Facebook is a relatively late entrant in this cluttered market of social media. It was a restricted market to the students of Harward only when it got launched in 2004. The original motive behind developing Facebook was to connect the students within the states. To join this social media, one needed an invitation from an existing Facebook user, hence it was being exclusive, and probably this part played the role behind the massive success it has today. Within its launch, almost half of the students from Harvard registered on this and within the next two years, this restricted social media went mass market. By 2008, Facebook overtook the other giants like Myspace and Friendster and became the world leader in social media industry. As per the latest data, Facebook has a massive 1.94 Billion monthly active facebook users with an 18% increase year on year! The research has detailed analysis about these in the coming pages. [22] [23]
Facebook

Styled as ‘facebook’ is originally American, is a for profit organization social media and social networking service from California, United States of America. Facebook was launched on 4th February, 2004 by the students of Harvard, Mr Mark Zuckerberg and other fellow students and roommates, Eduardo Saverin, NAadrew McColum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes. The site was restricted only to the college students in the initial phase but later on was open for the students of the Higher education of Boston area and eventually it got opened for the mass market. Facebook offered the user account to anyone beyond the age of 13 after 2006. The name facebook basically evolved from the practice of the university to provide the students with a facebook directory. Facebook, largely followed in the world of social media, runs on multiple instruments including desktop computers, laptops, tablets, Smartphones. An individual users is required to register on the site after which he/she can create his/her profiles and add own content. The user has the options to add various academic and work related information in the profile. The individual users can establish virtual connection by making applying to other users to become ‘friends’, other users who have received the friend request are required to respond to the request by either accepting or rejecting the request. There is another option of not responding and keeping the friend request
pending as well. After accepting a connection, the users gets notified by mobile notifications as well as emails whenever a friend has a post, updated some data, posted a picture/video etc or even accepted a friendship from any person. The users can search for various groups based on their interest and join them. Some are open whereas some are closed group, requiring the permission of the group to join in. Users can like and follow various pages including their friends, celebrities, politicians, likeminded peoples’ groups like groups on travelling, reading, documentaries and so on. The users have the freedom to segment their connections (friends) as per their will and can organize their facebook pages accordingly by choosing to see or not to see any updates from the given classifications. Users can also complain inappropriate behavior form any known or unknown person on the virtual world of social media, and they can block other users to stop the communications and to avoid to see any updates from them and also not to let them be aware about his/her updates on this platform. A huge part of the earnings come from the advertisements which keep running on the various pages of this social media.

Facebook Inc went for an IPO in February 2012 and started selling shares to general public post three months of it. This was a historic moment when the facebook received huge response from the equity market and reached the heights of $104 Billion capitalization in almost no time. By 2015, this was one of the fastest growing organizations in S&P 500 index reaching the market capitalization of $250 bn.

**Twitter**

Twitter, a social media aiming for relatively shorter messages for 140-characters called as ‘tweets’. After getting registered on the site, the users can post tweets and read other’s tweets as well. Even the internet users without registration can read tweets but cannot tweet. Like other social media, Twitter can also be accessed via multiple instruments like web desktop, laptop, tablet pc and mobile phone as well. Twitter Inc has its headquarter in San Francisco, and it has presence all over the globe with 25 offices in different cities. Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass launched Twitter in 2006, which was an instant hit in the social media industry, it grew further and more than 100 mn users were posting more than 340 mn tweets per day within the four years of its launch. Twitter has been handling around 1.6 MN search queries in a routine day. It has been awarded the website with highest visits
and it is also called as teh “SMS of the Internet”. As per the latest data, Twitter has more than 300 MN monthly active users and the figure goes on with the passage of time.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a differentiated social media catering to the business and employment related social media services operating on the website. LinkedIn was founded on December 2002 and launched on 2003. The core purpose of LinkedIn was professional networking; it has been used by both, the potential employers and the potential employees as well. Employers seek talent and the employees seek opportunities. Till the recent times, most of the revenue of the LinkedIn was coming from the sales of access to information about the users to the potential recruiters. By March 2016, LinkedIn had reached more than 425 MN user accounts, around 40 percent of them were active accounts. A user can create a profile on this platform and connect to other users and create a group which actually can represent the real relationships of real life situations. The users can also send invitations in the mailboxes of other non users and asked them to join this network. LinkedIn also been ranked 15th Popular Website at the prestigious ranking of Alexa Internet Ranking. LinkedIn has been originally based at the USA and it is available in 24 different languages including Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Romanian, Russian, Turkish, Japanese, Czech, Polish, Korean, Indonesian, Malay, and Tagalog. LinkedIn went for the IPO in January 2011 and its first share got traded in the same year under the New York Stock Exchange.

Google+

Google+, also known as Google Plus, is from the world most searched engine, Google. The Google Plus is a social media focusing on interest as a differentiating factor in the world of social networking. Being the Google’s venture into social networking it has seen strong growth in the early years of its launch but it lacked to show a sustained growth. Earlier to this, the company had started Google Buzz which was launched in 2010 and was taken from the market in 2011. Before this, Google offered Google Friend Connect, which was launched in 2008 and was taken back from the market in 2012. And before both of these, the Google had offered relatively more successful Orkut, which was launched in 2004 and had a long and a relatively far more happier journey before it got retired in September 2014. Google+, launched in 2011 had features like posting images, updating statuses, searching for the
interest based communities, create categories of relationships and use tags form them (for the benefit of the user), talk to a contact by messaging and video calls (using Hangouts), create and share events and invite others to join, checking-in on various locations, and use cloud based albums to edit and upload photos. [24] [25][26]

![Indian Population 2015](image.png)

[49]

**Justification of the selected social media:**

**Porters Five Forces and Social Media:**

Social Networking websites are becoming integral part of community engagement. Things that are happening around, may it be sports, politics, entertainment or anything else, it has its discussion platform on social media. This itself
has presented a huge opportunity for marketers in utilizing this platform to market their brands and products and for a past decade since the evolution of different social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, YouTube, Google+ etc. has happened, social media marketing has significantly influenced both personal and commercial environments. Social Media itself is a self explanatory term which emphasizes on platform which offers different means of communication. Social Media Marketing refers to marketing a brand through different channels of communication medias. Each of these channels has different characteristics with different approaches. For instance, Facebook is all about networking, sharing photos, updates, videos etc. wherein Twitter is more about sharing updates or views in a form of short messages. This makes social media marketing more unique and effective as it provides readily segmented audience in terms of likes, interests etc.

Effect of Political, Economic, Social and Technological trends:

Social Media is much of a stand-alone industry in terms of these factors. Any of the changes does not cause much difference to the industry. Economical factors have very less influence on social media because no matter how much downfall an economy can go to, people will still use social media. To some extent it may reflect into its commercial part but on industrial level as whole it will still continue to influence the community.

Political factors also have no significant influence on the industry apart from work ethics. Although due to recent events and movements, governments of different countries and states have had asked all social media giants to block or remove the inflammatory contents which might offend Indian sensibilities. India Against Corruption was a latest protest movement related to political issues that took its toll on Indian Government which received a huge support throughout the country and was reflected on several platforms of social media.

Porter’s Five Force Model:

Porter’s 5 forces model up to some extent has failed to recognize the power of the communication media and its impact on consumer behavior, which eventually impacts their buying decisions. In the past decade or so, people have become more internet and social media savvy. Posting reviews on products and services being offered, sharing information about brands and offering; both positive and negative, and providing instructions to users to
get the most out of products is what this part of the community offers and this makes it almost impossible to ignore the power consumers and social media.

Social Media Industry can be seen in two types of business models, B2B (Business to Business and B2C (Business to Customer) Lot of organizations tend to promote their brands themselves and lot prefer to promote others’ as a part of their business models generally known as agencies so we will consider both the models in Porter’s five forces model.

**New entrants:**

In terms of both the business models, social media has almost negligible entry barriers which come with economies of scale which provides new entrants an opportunity to analyze the market properly. In B2B model, agencies initially have to face low buyer loyalty, shift in focus during the process if model fails to sustain but it also comes with advantages like low initial investments in starting the agencies and price-performance decision powers and adaptability by reducing both according to the clients’ budgets which also means that a new entrant can also challenge an established player with a proper strategic planning on the basis of costs. Lack of knowledge or talent or experience can prove to be set back though which can directly affect the reputation in the industry. Low entry barriers also indicate low exit barriers for those who accept B2B as their business model. Social Media represents a proper mix of opportunities for new entrants into the industry.

**Substitutes:**

Substitutes are fairly self-explanatory. Again they can be considered in terms of competition and other online marketing options available in the market for example Search Engine Optimization and Search Engine Marketing. But second option cannot be considered as an entire switch as social media marketing is much cheaper, effective, and quick as it takes less time to establish than Search Engine Optimization or Search Engine Marketing. In terms of competition, it is very vulnerable as clients tend to sacrifice the performance for lower price or increase the performance for higher price. This makes the trade-off in this industry more complex as social media is governed by the skills and experience which changes the perception of whole industry pertaining to the buyers.
**Price/Performance trade-off:**

Let’s consider the graph on the basis of which we can plot agencies according to the price and performance. Social Media agencies in the lower most quarter will be offering their services for cheaper price for which in return they will be churning out work such as merely managing the presence on different platforms like Facebook fan pages or Twitter accounts etc. Wherein mid-level agencies will ask for a bit higher price for which they will be managing the presence along with the engaging content and qualitative and quantitative research for higher return on investment values. For the agencies which are at top level, they will offer premium services like top-down social media business advice, strategies by linking social to business objectives so as to come up with better outputs and boosting sales and brand reputation, but all of this for premium prices. This is the most important factor of social media that amount invested equally reflects into the performance and end results which creates exponential growth curve for the price / performance trade-off.

Porter’s five force model would raise an argument that substitute businesses are a bigger threat because they promise a significant improvement in performance or price but this is where social media industry has potential to mature further. Currently, industry have three brackets operating as we have seen in the graph but as clients become increasingly understanding, impact of social media which we have been experiencing will be spread out over all the brackets. We currently have a whole host of business operating in the two lowest price brackets, but as clients become increasingly understanding of the potential impact of social media, we’ll see agencies spreading out over all three brackets.

**Buyers:**

Social media Industry has a huge impact on buyer’s; as an end user of the product, in terms of purchasing decisions only as main motive behind this is brand positioning. Having said that, buyer still possesses significant amount of control as industry has got great exposure which provides number options. In business models, types of buyers differ from organization to organization. If an organization is promoting itself on different platforms of social media, then it’s the end user of their product i.e. customer and if an organizations is working as an agency which promotes other brands on social media platforms, then those organizations are their buyers. For those who operate on their own by acquiring proper amount of resources for
social media marketing, often have to look out for the proper content management strategies and communication channels as industry provides huge exposure with word-of-mouth which is extremely viral on all social platforms and can turn business upside down. Considering business-to-business model agencies tend to compete on price than on performance as we have seen. There’s also an added complication of buyers looking to manage social media into existing budgets again, lead by price and not necessarily by performance; as well as the perception that it’s easy to switch from agency to agency. The opportunity for the industry will come when it matures and agencies spread across the price-performance brackets we have seen.

**Suppliers:**

Supply is an issue in terms of knowledge and experience which faces bottleneck. Those who have experience can provide confidence to their clients or the upper management in respective business models but those without experience present greater risk in an industry which is already has been looked upon as risky so experience becomes exponential while inexperience struggles. This can be claimed as one of the part of vicious circle where price/performance trade-off takes place. Being a new industry, only time can present itself with the opportunities in terms of supplies for both the industry and organizations.

**Existing competitors:**

Competition is a crucial part of social media industry which has various faces. Considering B2B model, there’s a large pool of agencies in the social media industry and severe price undercutting is endemic – which acts as a substitute not in terms of product but in terms of competition but this seems to be characteristic of an industry which is still maturing. The competition can increase because of the low entry barriers and investment costs but for surviving, it is still challenging just like every other industry. In terms of B2C model as well, lot of brands which are trying to promote themselves on their own have to face feared competition so as to establish themselves before their competition does and again it has presented itself as a substitute for the business models which work online.

**Conclusion:**
From the analysis we can conclude that social media is a very vulnerable, but effective and efficient industry which has potential to influence the community in many ways. It can also be stated as unattractive industry by Porter’s five force model but that could remain only in theories as it has presented a great opportunity in terms of information, employment, and marketing and will mature given a chance and adequate time. Social Media has revolutionized the marketing segment of many business models in different ways, where if optimized properly can help businesses to flourish. It is not difficult but can get tricky so every marketer must make proper moves. It can be the quickest, simplest yet powerful platform for business to establish itself in the market and lot of big brands from almost every sectors of other industries like Mahindra from automobiles, Starbucks or Café Coffee Day from food and beverages industry, Reliance, Airtel, Vodafone from telecom industry, lot of international magazines like Maxim from fashion industry or Mashable from technology and advertising industry and many others have realized the power of social media and have started utilizing it and the amount of response they have received is huge. From all these activities we can predict social media’s future to be attractive not only in terms of community but also in terms businesses as well. [29]

**SWOT of all four social media taken:**

**Facebook**

Facebook, one of the most popular social media across the globe is also the most common platform for a user to connect to maximum number of known contacts. It needs a basic computer with internet to get online with facebook, like many other social media platforms, this is free for the users to open an account and get active. Initially started with the college students, facebook now is open for all and the world market is a potential target audience for this social media irrespective of age, gender, profession, religion, cast, creed, occupation, nationality etc. it has been effectively positioned as a mass market product and the largest social media in the world as of now. It is almost synonym to the word ‘social media’ in many
of the countries with the highest active customer rates, and it has created trust within the various individual as well as business user groups, with carrying decent business and marketing load from variety of organizations across the globe. A large chunk of customers at a global level has been a greatest strength of facebook, which further helps it to expand the business and grasp marketing opportunities and acquire other businesses. Same is the logic that facebook is a most trusted platform to get in touch with lost contacts, as it has very high probability that anyone available on internet and using social media should have been available on facebook! Another strong advantage facebook reaps is the penetration that has been achieved by the firm, it offers this platform of social media in more than 70 languages! Facebook has also linked itself with many of the online games, joining facebook account in many of the games in android and ios leads to certain benefits as offered by the game producer company. Thus its connecting gaming with social media by the way of getting rights from the users to put content on their social media pages and luring his/her connections to get active with games. This acts two ways and benefits both: the game producers and the facebook.

Undoubtedly facebook has been the leading player in the industry of social media, just like any industry leader has some weak areas, facebook does find weak areas where it needs to actively work to sustain the growth peace and to maintain the leading position in the industry. To keep the innovation quotient always on, facebook has been constantly updating and changing the appearance and the interface of the webpages, which at times is not really appreciated by the target audiences since too many upgrades doesn’t let them work with the same comfort zone which they usually achieve with the present design. Another leading drawback with facebook is that the larger market of facebook comprises of the casual users who are using facebook more for personal casual uses, and it has not been the same attractive like many competitors in terms of bringing the professional user accounts. In terms of user data and privacy, there stands questions as over a period of time; we have seen issues with the data, privacy and issues related to hacking facebook account and/or creation of fake user account of facebook. It needs to develop much better and robust mechanism to counter the said issues and make user safer in the same regard. Facebook is all virtual since the beginning, but it can definitely leverage this into physical markets as physical markets are still a very huge part of the markets particularly more in developing and underdeveloped nations where facebook equally holds a remarkable market share in social media business.
The developing and underdeveloped nations comprise huge potential market for Facebook as they can introduce themselves at the initial life cycle to the potential user, which is not the case in developed markets. In the developing markets, with the parallel development of mobile phones, internet capabilities, internet service providers, economical growth, Facebook can penetrate even far more than it did in the developed nations. Still, there stands a massive market comprising of small and medium B2B and B2C organizations which are not yet present on social media. Facebook can create some business model for this and convert the physical markets to compete on virtual world simultaneously. Another potential exists in an alliance with a mobile operator in which both can create a win-win position with some mutually benefitting business model. Even the customer would be at benefit if such might happen. Further to this, Facebook can aim for an integration as well and can leverage the social media presence to this industry and get far more penetration with huge negotiation power in future.

By this time, the other competitors are working on their own platforms and constantly improvising their social media site, which can be a real threat to Facebook in the coming future. Facebook need to hold the connect with an individual user and need to be careful while innovating their user interface at a very frequent rate as this might be a cause of irritation to an average user. Another major threat is that the industry of social media has no effective entry barrier i.e., the restriction on new entrants in this industry. There have been many new social media websites in the recent past, and few of them are catching the wagon at a decent pace. In addition to such threats, issues with relation to fake account, hacking, threat to user data, governance issue etc. have been acting as a threat to Facebook. Avoidance of all this might result in loss of active account which in turn can further result in financial losses in future. [30]

**Twitter**

Unlike Facebook, Twitter is a micro-blogging website for social networking. The USP of Twitter is the celebrity accounts, which are largely followed by general users and are genuinely credible. Twitter offers the social media users a platform where they can follow the other users based on their area of interests. The potential market is as large as Facebook as anybody with a computer and an internet connection is a potential user of Twitter. People usually signup on Twitter to follow their favourite celebrity from various fields of life i.e.
politicians, movie actors, singers, social workers professors, news anchors etc. the core positioning of twitter is that it is a micro blogging website for social networking.

On the positive part, twitter holds the credibility and a positive brand image for having genuine celebrity accounts (as opposed to what the facebook is criticised for having many fake accounts). Twitter also holds an initial mover advantage in this particular segment of social media and it offers a fast paced, concise and crux news updates in multiple platforms. Within short time, twitter has created a strong, favourable brand image in the Indian market. The brand identity of twitter is getting spread at an equally good rate where most of the media and news channels are also using their twitter accounts to get response from their viewers. Even as discussed in the 1st chapter in this thesis, twitter has played a decent role in the Indian government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to get response from the citizens of India and to act and respond quickly on the issues/matters raised on twitter. The Foreign minister of India, Sushma Swaraj has also been appreciated by the media to be responding the fastest among all ministers on her twitter account. In terms of marketing as well, twitter has been an effective platform to exchange information with customers online.

On the flip side, there is tremendous imbalance in terms of active participation on twitter where around 90 percent of tweets are found to be posted by merely 10 percent of the users. This shows a risky future as entire growth story of twitter relies on a very small portion of their customer base. Another aspect is innovation, as opposed to facebook; innovation is being lacked in the case of twitter, where twitter does not work much on the web pages or user interface. Innovation is an inevitable aspect particularly when dealing in the business of social media. Not offering newer features may lead to an image of dullness over the period of time and customers may be shifted to competitive social media sites. Additionally, twitter need to work on developing newer business models or look for some alliances so as to keep the maturity phase in the life cycle going.

In terms of opportunities, twitter holds the potential to become the most dominant social media as far as the business to customer communication is concerned. They can leverage the celebrities and being genuine part and increase the market share. Twitter can attract the other casual social media users and offer them a platform for formal/official updates. Even the integration with a mobile operator company can be a part of future growth plans for twitter. In terms of threats, the intense competition seems the biggest threat since twitter is neither a
leader nor it has huge chunk of active social media users. Additionally, the social media market gets more crowded with new users and new companies are coming in this. [31] [32]

LinkedIn

LinkedIn, a website for social networking professionals has been an important part of social media industry offering efficient professional networking platform to the corporate world. Just like its slogan, “relationship matters” the website offers individual users to connect beyond the company/organization/industry/geographical premises and socialise with other users, mainly working people. The major target customer for this social media is an individual user who is tech-savvy and is inclined towards networking mainly for the purpose of career development or business. LinkedIn has been originally positioned as a business social networking and identity services all over the globe.

On a stronger front, LinkedIn has decent collection of credible professional account and it posses strong amongst the corporate which is truly a huge potential for the social media organization. LinkedIn has been actively used for various purposes like sourcing talent and offering openings other than professional social networking. It has been offering assistance in proper filtering for the same purpose effectively. The minute detailing offered with the profiles seems to be vitally effective for the same purpose. Various professionals across the age, gender, life cycle stage, looking for better career and growth options are seen to be forming the major chunk of the customer base for LinkedIn. On a weaker front, LinkedIn is not a very popular option in the word of social media particularly for the purpose of direct one to one communication. It is also not totally free from the non-verified or fake profiles.

LinkedIn still has huge market potential in the world market. It can expand itself beyond the geographical boundaries and capture larger markets of the world. Since its main market is business communities / professional users, it can collaborate with some messaging provider services like Skype so as to leverage each other’s strength. Even the option to integrate with a mobile operator remains lucrative to expand the market share and create a better reach in the market. An important issue here is to consider the government regulations which can ask social media operators to follow strict guidelines to maintain the users’ privacy and data. LinkedIn is also facing threat from the upcoming professional social media websites which will closely be competing for the same customer group. Additional technological issues like hacking and fake accounts are yet another matter that brings attention. [33]
Google+

Google+, part of the most popular search engine in the world presently have a large active user base and is growing further. A major advantage with this social media is its integration with all the services of google including google mail, google maps, google chrome, google play and the most famous in the category: youtube! In addition to all these, various services and mails are increasing using google as a sign-in service at an increasing rate. Google has a positive brand image in the mind of the target customer and has excellent track record of seamless performance on multiple devices. It has a customer friendly user interface and comfortable to navigate. On a weaker front, privacy concerns comprises of the vital most part. The services of google are not integrated with any other hardware or software manufacturer (like Apple has done). Inspite of all these benefits, this social media still lacks behind when compared with the industry leader facebook. Although google is available in most parts of the world, there still are some countries where google is restricted.

Google+ has huge opportunities, many due to the strong brand of parent organization. Integrating google+ with google search engines would definitely add much advantage to the social media. An another great advantage with brand google is their collaboration with android, as the mobile phone markets is growing at a fast rate and it is further predicted to grow, huge benefits goes to android, which in turn moves to google and google+ being preinstalled on android phones. Google+ is also facing close competition from facebook and other competitive social media at the same time. Another threat is from those social media sites that are country specific and offer focused benefits with regional languages. An interesting aspect to discuss at this point is in the year 2016, when Google+ was considered a serious threat to the Facebook as seen by some leaders of Facebook. Mark Zukerberg has sent strong signals to stay at par in terms of new features introduced by Google+.

The Youth

The term youth is considered and used in various senses; generally does not have an exact definition and much depends upon an individual’s social circumstances and not on chronological numerical figure representing total time spent on earth.
As per the National Youth Policy, the youth are defined as an individual between the age group of 15 to 29. This comprises of nearly 28 percent of national population today. As per the census 2011, nearly 57 crore young individuals comprises the age group of 10 to 35.

http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/india/

Young generation, also referred to as “Youth” is considered as a highly vital phase of life across all the cultures, although this belief is being changed in many of the societies. [35][36]

**Social media and youth: (Behavioural Pattern)**

In recent years, India and the world have seen tremendous growth in terms of usage of mobile phones. India has been a centre of attractions for the business communities all over the globe. India is seen as an investment avenue by the corporate fraternity and MNCs across the globe. It has been recently aiming double digit growth in the recent past before the world was hit by recessions. The India today is quite different from how it has been for many decades. The urban, semi urban and rural India is literally competing amongst themselves in terms of development. Service sector is doing well in today’s scenario which itself is a symptom of a growing economy. Similar story has been observed in the mobile and telecom industry as well. As per TRAI, as on 30 September 2016, the total number of mobile for users in India is 1,04,97,40,000 which is the second highest number in the world. Nearly 83 percent of citizens in India are using mobile phones. On an average, a million cellphones are being added to this market each month. [37]

Before the end of 2015 in India, nearly 1,00,00,00,000 smart phones were sold and this number is further forecasted to be 2.5 billion by 2019 whereas just about 36 percent population of the world is expected to be using smart phones by 2018. [38]

**Smartphone penetration:** Total Smartphone users all over the globe will reach the figure of 1 crore by the next two years. By the mid of this year, the same figure is expected to reach at 33 percent of the total population in the world. An important aspects here is the tremendous growth of China, which has made it the leading manufacturer of mobile phones in the world market, beating the earlier leader, Unites States far behind in the race. We, being the second most populated nation in the globe, hold an equally huge market for the smartphones. It is also estimated for us to overtake the United States in terms of total smartphones users by mid of this year which is 220 million users. In India, this figure has been doubled in just 3 years, which shows the fast paced growth of this industry. [39]
Recently JIO, a giant India MNC has ventured into wireless 4G Long Term Evolution services in India and is a newest and one of the biggest newcomer competitors to in the telecom operators industry. This is the only fully operated Voice Over Long Term Evolution operator in the nation offering its services to total 22 circles in the country. JIO offering free voice calls and free 4G internet as part of the promotional policy, has reached more than 70 million users in just last 4 months. JIO has equally fuelled the demand and usage for the smartphones in India and is very popular across the nation irrespective age, gender, occupation geographical background. This certainly has penetrated the use of social media amongst the large bunch of users offering them easy access and a no cost for last few months. Other leading telecom operators like Airtel, Vodafone, and Idea also endangered and had to respond to this wildfire JIO movement across the nation with various promotional schemes.[40] [41] [42]

The young generations, particularly the teens of the present era have been another vital element behind the story of this social media penetration in India today. The young generations in India is far more tech savvy than their elder counterparts, and quite different in terms of using technology.[43][44]

Gadgets, tech savvy, gets to new things fast etc content. These teenagers of today are different than their siblings in terms of being more tech-savvy, although they are not digital pioneers, they can be tagged digital “homesteaders”. According to Allison Hillhouse, the vice president of insights innovation at MTV, teens unplug as and when they need to break the schedule, but they post afterwards to seek and offer another life to their performances. Social media is used as weapon to refine and sharpen their own brand and social media is also used majorly as a personal showcase to highlight the real or hyped achievements. This is the most active generation on social media which has grown up with social media and they comprise of the major chunk of active users with highest drive to stay connected to their kiths and keens. [45] [46][47]

Looking at the use of social media from the view point of relatively mature users (in the thirties of their life), the vital purpose clearly seems to be the expectation to be reconnecting the old friends of childhoods and college life. This particular user group has, in spite of hectic lifestyle, managed to get updates and be updated on the platform of social media. [48]

Here we have some of the question that arises about the social media. What is the demographic profile of users of social media? It is widely accepted the “Men are from Mars
and Women are from Venus”, does the same goes while using social media? Do people of opposite gender have similarity or differences using social media since they are from a particular gender? Do responsibilities of being married change the way a youngster use social media? Does occupation and income together, play the decisive factor for the usage of social media? As per the general notion, the income level of an individual doesn’t affect his behaviour in terms of using social media but if income, clubbed with occupation, will impact the same? Do people across the various occupations exhibit similar usage behaviour? Since the various areas/zones/suburbs of any metro city have close resemblance to many characteristics, can there be any difference in the usage of social media with reference to different area of the city? Income level reflects an individual’s behaviour in many aspects; does it affect their habit of using social media in any way? Is tenure spend on the virtual world of social media can be a deciding factor for the usage behaviour of social media? What are the general hours spent on social networking sites by youngsters on a weekly basis as well as on weekends? How much the youngsters are involved into virtual networking in terms of the total numbers of friends/contacts/connections they have? Which is the social media where they have maximum friends/contacts/connections? What is the frequency of youngsters changing their profile/display photo on the social media? What are the preferences of young generations while using social media? What are the influential factors of using social media? What will be cumulative impact of social media on youth when we consider the various factors? How the education of an individual gets affected by his/her habits of using social media? If any, does social media has positive or negative influence of the youngsters in terms of their education? What is the general behaviour of youngsters in terms of the marketing efforts made by the companies on the platform of social networking sites? What response do they offer if any? Do youngsters consider such activities on positive or negative note? Is this platform so powerful that it can influence the entire nation to choose a prime minister? These and many other questions that can potentially arise in the mind of an individual have been attempted to provide with due analysis and justification in the research.