CHAPTER –II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the relevant and available work on social network sites and their impact in East India. However, not much of research work is available in the context of East India. Literature from India and other countries as well with same experiences are discussed here.

2.1.1 Understanding ‘Information Revolution’ and ‘New Media’

Culture is encoded in digital form

Nicholas Gane & David Beer (2008) has commented in their book ‘New Media: Key Concepts’ Rapid changes in Information and Communication Technology are creating a new pace and a new communication mode by promoting new abilities among individuals. These changes are creating many pressures on businesses and individuals all over the world. The excessive use of technology might be a shock to the future generation as was stated by Toffler. Alvin Toffler (1970), in his book ‘Future Shock,’ explains

We may define future shock as the distress, both physical and psychological, that arises from an overload of the human organism's physical adaptive systems and its decision-making processes. Put more simply, future shock is the human response to over-stimulation (p. 326).

Toffler dealt with biggest human dilemmas like widening differences between rich and poor in society, ever-growing human population and limited resources, polluted food chain and over whelming of information. The term "future shock" refers to a situation that shows the happenings when people will no longer able to cope with the pace of rapid change. As for example, Toffler illustrated an incident regarding his daughter. His daughter went to a shop in New York but she did not find that in its previous place. Therefore, Toffler feared that New York had become a city without its history. Thus, Toffler precisely anticipated many aspects of psychological, social, and economic infection, and conflicts of the last thirty years. He starts to popularize the word ‘information overload’ from this book. ‘Future Shock’ is an important book,
which raises judgmental and basic questions about the social, economic, and political impact of technologically advanced innovations within traditional society and the way they are flooding into our social environment.

**Toffler Alvin’s (1980)** another revolutionary book is ‘The Third Wave’. This book dealt with different crises of developed countries from ‘industrial age’ to ‘information age’. In his work, Toffler attempted to describe the society in three phases. He also argued that every wave pushed back the earlier society and kept the culture aside. The phases are:

- ‘First Wave’ (which settled down the agricultural society and it also replaces the culture of hunter gathered community).
- ‘Second Wave’ ( in which industrial revolution takes an important role, according to Toffler, key aspects of the second wave are nuclear family, mass production, mass distribution, mass consumption, mass education, mass reaction, mass entertainment and weapons of mass destruction).
- ‘Third Wave’ (which is a postindustrial society, and according to Toffler, it is an information society).

In a synthesis of the third wave, Toffler emphasizes in a part on ‘de-massification of media’. According to Toffler, overload of information makes people less able to cope up with it. People give attention only on those things, which are important to them. According to the writer, the audience is now more specialized regarding their news selection, and even selection of media. The writer also emphasizes that ‘new media’ is not a mass media. Toffler said:

> The Third Wave thus begins a truly new era--the age of the de-massified media. A new info-sphere is emerging along-side the new techno-sphere. And this will have a far-reaching impact on the most important sphere of all, the one inside our skulls. For taken together, these changes revolutionize our images of the world and our ability to make sense of it² (p. 165).

Toffler also explains this third wave as an intelligent environment. Personal computer and internet connection revolutionized the communication system. Toffler has written about the computer:
Because it can remember and interrelate large numbers of causal forces, the computer can help us cope with such problems at a deeper than customary level. It can sift vast masses of data to find subtle patterns. It can help assemble "blips" into larger, more meaningful wholes. Given a set of assumption, or a model, it can trace out the consequences of alternative decisions, and do it more systematically and completely than any individual normally could. It can even suggest imaginative solutions to certain problems by identifying novel or hitherto unnoticed relationships among people and resources.\(^3\) (p. 174).

Toffler critically points out the relation between development and distribution of information which has become the central power of productivity as well as activity of the human race.

**Alvin Toffler (1990)** in his one of the radical books *Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century* reviews all the aspects of information revolution. Toffler argues that our society is facing the era of global ‘power shift’ which is very new in nature. Toffler identifies the new and unnamed phenomenon of our technology based changing society where mass media and its pluralistic approach are also taking a big role. Toffler introduces some new words to identify the said phenomena like ‘info – warrior’, ‘eco- spasm’, ‘fam – firm’. ‘super symbolic economy’ and ‘power shift’. According to Toffler:

> The new system for making wealth is totally dependent on the instant communication, dissemination of data, ideas, symbols, and symbolism\(^5\) (p. 23)

According to Toffler, the new super symbolic economy will be very dependent on the rapid flow of information and the people who will take an active part in information flow will be the decision makers in future world. So he much emphasizes on the massive and speedy information flow.

In the book *The World Is Flat*, **Thomas L. Friedman (2006)** divides the age of globalizations in to three phases. Those are, 1.0 ( in this age countries and governments were the main protagonist), 2.0 ( where the role of multinational companies are remarkable in respect of global integration) and the present age 3.0 in which the world becomes flat by the rise of convergence of personal computers and optic fiber cable and obviously by the help of work flow software. He has mentioned ten “flatteners” that help in leveling the global playing field. These “flatteners” are -
Collapse of the Berlin Wall – 11/9/89: According to Friedman, “When the walls came down, the windows came up”, communalism fall and widows powered personal computer gives the opportunity to its users to create own content to connect with one another by the invent of dial up modem. In the twelfth chapter of this book, Friedman writes,

The flat – world platforms enable you to take your own local culture and upload it to the world. It means you are not stuck downloading Mickey Mouse and McDonald’s. No, no, no. You can now write your own song, create a podcast version in any language you like, and share it with the world on some podcast site, and if people like it, it will spread. ⁵ (p. 174)

The term “New Media” was coined by researchers, in the field of information technology and communication in the US during 1960s. It was accepted in the international academic vocabulary in the 1990s. Therefore, New Media as a recent research domain, which demands continuous, update with reconceptualisation for its core ideas to be established. “New media” mainly refers to new forms of media that are based on communication and network technologies, such as the Internet, mobile phones, and blogs and have the character of “social media” in contrast to “mass media” for proliferation some communication platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Orkut, LinkedIn and others. Those social media have also opened wide opportunity for Citizen Journalism which in turn has incited a fresh debate on the ethics of Journalism and the role of state in controlling this new media.


Attempts to theorize and develop conceptual frameworks for alternative and radical media alone are even sparser” ⁶ (p.7).

But it is well appreciated that Alternative and Radical Media has the potential for what Foucault termed as ‘Insurrection of subjugated knowledges’ where Spivak’s ‘native informants’ can speak with their own ‘irreducibly heterogeneous’ voices.

Gradinaru Camelia (2011) has emphasized on new media communication and has said in a study, ‘The Potential Role of New Media in the Creation of Communities:
In our opinion, the distinction between the traditional and the new communication means could be combined with the distinction between the mainstream media and the alternative media.  

James Slevin (2000) precisely has focused on the emergence of Internet and its impact on society in his book ‘The Internet and Society’. Slevin has emphasized that:

> Compared to the rise of other electronic media, the internet has expanded at a phenomenal rate, integrating various modes of conventional communication, including radio and television, into a vast interactive network. Its use has already reshaped the conditions of mediated experience for many millions of individuals and many thousands of organizations around the world  

To describe the emergence of internet in modern society the author derived three important developments from the work of Giddens. Those important developments are “intensification of globalization”, the “detraditionalizing of society” and the “expansion and intensification of social reflexivity”. Selvine has described the rise of internet from its technological background very well in the second chapter. In the third chapter, Slevin’s approach to cultural transmission and the role of internet is remarkably good. Here the author has quoted from Thompson’s work. The distribution of information and other codified or symbolic content is socially structured contexts involves the cultural transmission. There are three such aspects of this cultural transmission. Slevin has also dealt with some of major weaknesses in understanding the current impact of internet regarding interaction between internet and society. According to the author, internet is reshaping the nature of human communication as well as human association. In chapter four, he has said,

> Technologies such as internet are serving to increase the capacity of both reciprocal and non-reciprocal communication. These new conditions challenge individuals and organizations to seek out new possibilities for reciprocal bonding and collaboration and to create opportunities which were previously only associated with the sharing of a common locate  

In the sixth chapter of his book, Slevin has addressed the internet in the context of the self and every day experience of human being. In this chapter, three important angles are explored very well. The first one is ‘the dilemmas of the self as a symbolic project’ where the author has examined how in late modernity a self might view as a
symbolic project. The second one is ‘life strategies and the internet’ where Slevin explore the postmodern life strategies of Bauman. The third one is ‘the internet and enriching the process of self formation’ where the author has said:

In some cases, the relevance of particular patterns of individual commitment and routine remain largely unquestioned for long period of time. We can find evidence of such routine and commitment in the lists of bookmarks that people create when surfing the WWW. We can also find them in the files containing information about regular e-mail contacts or internet relay chat friends they communicate with 10 (p.178).

In seventh chapter, Slevin has focused on the ‘publicness’ of the internet and to tease out some of the opportunities and limitation of this feature of internet. In the next chapter, Sliven has pointed out the role of internet in globalization as well as cultural globalization. In the last chapter, Sliven wants to examine:

The various alternative modes of internet regulation that have been developed and how they might affect cultural transmission. Government policy is affecting the internet, intranet and extranets in many ways 11 (p. 215).

This entire book is much informative with the research work of many researchers.

Cairncross Frances (1997) focuses on the changing communication process after the invention of computer and internet throughout the world in his book ‘The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution Is Changing Our Lives’. In the first, chapter of the book, Cairncross attempts to describe the phrase ‘death of distance’:

The death of distance is only one manifestation of the astonishing changes taking place as communication and computers are combined in new ways. High-capacity fiber-optic networks and digital compression already carry voice, video, and data around the globe so efficiently that the additional cost of sending a message an extra hundred miles is effectively zero. The internet, an invention that only began to be accessible to ordinary folk in the 1990s, has introduced perhaps 385 million people around the world to the idea that it costs no more to visit a book store in Seattle than in a local high street 12 (p. 2).

In later chapters, to establish the idea of the role of good communication between government and public, Cairncross describes:
In new millennium, governments can be better informed than ever about what other governments are doing. Diplomats can find on the Internet material that would once have been extracted only by a skilled ambassador (p. 185).

This book also deals with the impact of the internet society, culture and the individual in its last chapter. In addition, the writer is very hopeful regarding this information revolution. He says:

A country such as India, with enormous creativity and widespread use of English, or Chile, with its relatively open telecommunications market, or China, with its extraordinary attention to education, might leapfrog ahead of many competitors from the rich world. Distance will no longer be an obstacle (p. 290).

**Nicholas Gane & David Beer:** (2008) precisely want to focus on new media and its feature in their book ‘*New Media: Key Concepts*’. Invention of information and communication technology brings a revolution in global communication process and approach. Gane and Beer give us a litany of six key concepts, which are reformatting our everyday lives and are most important to understand the impact of new media on digital society and culture. Authors emphasize network and “recent technical definitions of networks”. The authors have focused on “three key sociological approaches to network”. According to them, the first key concept is “ideas of ‘network society’ and networked capitalism” forwarded by Manuel Castells. The second idea is to examine the work of sociological thinker like Wellman and thirdly, “the actor network theory of Bruno”. According to them:

A network is not a single structured form, for in practice networks may have quite different architectures or topologies. Moreover, for any network to operate smoothly a set of standards or protocols is needed to enable different machines and devices to communicate with each other (p. 17).

Gane and Beer attempt to define the concept of information and informatics. According to them, it is too difficult to define ‘information’ now than when first it was appeared. In later chapter Gane and Beer address the concept of ‘interface’ to understand “the complex and fast – changing relation between humans and machines, hardware (including bodies) and software, and material and virtual worlds”. Moreover, it is emphasized that interface is not merely a relation between human and machine but is a cultural interface also because “culture is encoded in digital form”.
Gane and Beer describe the importance of digital archives, as these are the storage media and reproduce the information in a collective form. They show two reasons behind the importance of digital archives, - first one is, huge public documents can be stored in private sphere and these archives are easily accessible to the mass in the context of “user-generated world of Web 2.0”. The second reason is, there is less tendency of ‘gate keeping approach’ as the individuals are generating the contents.

Before the revolution in Tunisia, Article 1 of the Press Code provides what Siapera Eugenia (2012) has vividly described as contemporary communication mediation, illuminating new media, from different angles in the book ‘Understanding New Media’. To define new media Siapera has started from digital media, then online media and ends with new media. To examine the relation between technology, media and society Siapera has explored the work of four great thinkers like, MaLuhan, Kitter, Stiegler and Castells. The author has quoted from Hansen (2006) and said:

The importance of (new) media does not lie in their attributes, on whether they are digital or analogue, new or old and so on. Rather the crucial issue regarding the media is that they are at the same time artefacts or material devices, as well as ‘transcendental’, that is, they exist and do things beyond the above their material use.16

Siapera later has introduced the reader with the concept of role of new media in globalization in the context of “economy and work”, “the self and identity” and “the political system”. To address the new media in respect with political economy, the author emphasizes that the production of new media is dominated by some big corporation and it includes several other industries as well, like, entertainment, computer equipment, network equipment, online retailing, computer software producers and telecommunications.” Siapera has sketched the scenario of new media consumption and digital divide with some statistical analysis. The author also has questioned the issue of security in respect of cyber–conflict, terrorism, hacking and online pornography in new media. Siapere has addressed the ‘mobile media and everyday life’ from different angles like – politics, society and culture. The author has dealt with ‘the games and gaming’ on internet. The last chapter of this book has focused on ‘the future of new media’ Here, Siapera has emphasized the current trends
of new media, its future innovations, internet governance and others. This book is wonderfully designed to understand the new media in different ways.

**Kelly Fuery (2009)** has focused the key issues regarding the new media in his book *‘New Media: Culture and Image’*. In the beginning of the book, Fuery wants to address the idea of ‘new’ and ‘new media’. He says:

> Quite often, the label of ‘new’ exceeds either the chronological aspects or topicality, and sometimes both. When ‘new’ is attached to an idea, a concept or in case of technological innovation, its interpretative values are altered\(^\text{17}\) (p. 4).

Fuery also questions the term ‘new media’:

> For example. For how long can it be declared as the ‘new’? How long can it retain such a status? Is the term permitted to continually claim and reclaim media as they come along, so that its definitional sense collapses\(^\text{18}\) (p. 5)?

From different aspects, Fuery examines the newness of new media.

### 2.1.2. Social Networking Site (SNS)

*One difficulty is that the concept of interactivity can be applied to the analysis of interaction not only between human and machines but also between machines and machines and between humans and humans.*

Nicholas Gane and David Beer, in the book, *New Media: Key Concepts*

**Nichole B Ellison and Danah Boyd** gave a definition in 2011 thus:

> A social network site is a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of users supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system provided data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site\(^\text{19}\) (p. 157)

### 2.1.3. Social Networking Site (SNS): Communication and Interactivity

Social networking site based communication has its root in the famous insight from McLuhan “The medium is the message”. McLuhan considered the advent of a new communication technology itself as a message rather than what information or message that that new Communication Technology or medium transmits. McLuhan
also differentiates between conventional media and New Media by terming the former as an extension of the human body and the latter as extension of the human nervous system. Media appears less as an extension of society in his view. He proposes for change in equilibrium between human sensual organs and the world and hence any possible effect in relation between human psychology and society when any New Communication Technology sets in. While communicating each other on social media platforms like Facebook, the most popular one, the way two persons place themselves before each other proves their emphasis on building a relation rather than giving a particular message. They present more of their personality traits and gestures through “like” “comment” “share” rather than message communication. So, it is “Relation Communication” rather than “Message Communication” and it is more “We Media” than “Mass Media”. Xianhong Chen & Guilan Ding G (2009) said that:

In defining the essence of new media, we cannot simply rely on the conventional categories of interpersonal communication, small group communication, and mass communication. However, these earlier communication researchers did not pay sufficient attention to the “relations” of communication. In fact, a core aspect of communication lies in its construction of relations with and interaction between the subjects of communication. Communication is conformity of social relations, and relations are always embedded in the message according to the communicators’ will. Communication reflects, explains, and at the same time maintains a kind of relationship carried by the message content. The relationship is more fundamental than the content; it influences and even decides the content. 20 (p.371)

In terms of quality in new media’s communication, relations communication can be divided into three layers: “interpersonal relations”, “social relations”, and “cultural relations”21 (p.373).

The relations on the interpersonal layer are emotional in nature. The relations on the social layer indicate role relations based on the working division of information in society. The relations on the cultural layer reflect the basic differences in world views. These three layers of relations are integrated into one continual communication process. Regarding the role of relations in social stratification, online relations certainly are not interpersonal but social. This is because online relations are established on social clues instead of those on an interpersonal basis. Compared with face-to-face communication in which personality can be recognized at first sight,
network disseminators cannot immediately distinguish visual cues or differentiate interpersonal clues. They have to be turned into nonpersonality online. In other words, they are a “category online” or a “role online”.

Phone-based communications (i.e. voice calls and SMS messages) have been popular for a long time period since the Second World War. New interactive communicative paradigms have opened by SNS have not only satisfied its user but also has increased connected mobility.

In this context, Adrien Joly, Pierre Maret, Johann Daigremont (2009) in their work Context-Awareness, The Missing Block Of Social Networking, have argued that there are two important factors behind the popularity and utility of SNS. They have said:

Firstly, most popular SNS are designed for an optimal experience on computers, and thus, require users to sit behind a computer to experience innovative kinds of (but virtual) social interactions. Secondly, the social network of users (and their new interaction paradigms) is static and manually maintained (i.e. like address books), whereas people have many opportunities to communicate in their daily life with people that are not part of their social network (p.51).

They have examined how the contextual knowledge can be utilized to improve communication through social networking sites. They give a vivid idea by defining social networking site with graphical representation, which is much helpful to any researcher related to social networking sites. They have discussed the communication modalities, opportunities and utilities of the social networking sites. They also argue that:

In SNS, becoming contacts (often called “friends”) can seem similar to exchanging phone numbers, as it is an explicit action. Nevertheless, whereas one’s phone number can be transmitted to someone without the owner’s agreement, becoming his/her contact on a SNS is a mutual operation that requires approbation from both parties. This mutual agreement enforces the protection of privacy in such that contacts are granted additional communication and personal information visibility rights with each other’s profiles on the SNS. In order to add someone as a contact, the requester needs to know his/her name and other information to make sure that the “profile” being added as a contact is actually owned by the expected person (p. 62).
They have also indicated the ‘meeting room’ facilities of these social networking sites. This paper is based mainly on the analogies of the features of social networking sites.

**Graham Meikle & Sherman Young (2012)** have said, SNS gives new horizon of human communication in comparison with the conventional media in their book, ‘*Media Convergence*’. The future of communication, through SNS is integrated form of the convergence of earlier communication and interaction that helps in blurring the lines between one to one and public communication. The fundamental features of SNS are integrated presentation of important web projects, such as Youtube, Skype, Flicker, Google Map, news feed of big media houses, advertisements of online shopping websites(such as, Myantra, Flipcart, Jabong), gaming apps and other apps. SNS gives a user to create his or her own ‘page’ or ‘group’ or community. Broadcast media model has experienced us to share message to a huge audience of nobody in deed, whereas SNS allows everyone to address a massage to a certain community or audience of one’s own choice. They have said:

This convergence of personal message for nobody in particular is characteristic of other kind of interaction Facebook offers. For example, a basic tool offered by Facebook is the ability to exchange one-to-one messages with Friends, in a format essentially identical to web based email services such as Gmail, it rather more limited. This is a straight forward example of two-way personal communication – except that it’s not unusual to send someone a message in this way only to have them reply by writing on the ‘wall’ area of your page, thus opening up conversation to what may be a much wider audience, privacy settings are applied to the wall in question. 24 (p.74)

**Clay Shirky (2009)** has pointed out that broadcast media is very effective in creating a large number or group of audience, whereas telephone or personal communication is very effective in facilitating conversation as well as impact.25 According to Shirky convergent media is bringing these two together. 26

To describe the communication characteristic **Manuel Castells (2009)** has argued that:

It is mass communication because it can potentially reach a global audience, as in the posting of a video on You Tube, a blog with RSS links to a number of web sources,
or a message to massive e-mail list. At the same time, it is self-communication because the production of the message is self-generated, the dentition of the potential receiver(s) is self-directed, and the retrieval of specific messages or content from the World Wide Web and electronic communication networks is self-selected. 27 (p. 55).

Fuery Kelly (2009) in his book ‘New Media: Culture and Image’, tries to emphasize the issues of interactivity in new media. He says:

“In new media culture, interactivity is used as a metaphor for a wide range of relationships and forms of exchange in terms of information, and play, as well as subjectivity – what it means and how we utilize it – is necessary within a burgeoning new media. Here, we interpret interactivity as a metaphor for becoming an interactive subject and how we as interactive subjects within a new media culture come to be identified within groups that participate as part of new culture, such as online communities” 28 (pp.30-31).

Regarding the use and adoption of interactivity in new media, Fuery identifies three areas for investigation. Those are interpretation, definition, control. In the third chapter, Fuery has focused on three key words – ‘surveillance’, ‘technology’ and ‘paranoia’. Fuery describes that these look at the relationship between technology and the body, briefly considers new forms of technology in the context of surveillance and power relations, and concludes by analyzing these issues in three psychoanalytic case studies” 29 (p.58). Fuery also examines the concept of the “relationship between bodies, technology, art and culture to explore the changes that occurred with the advent of new media” 30 ( p. 84). The author says regarding the digitalization of the body.

Yet even this seemingly uncomplicated equation – body = information in a digital context – presents many issues and complexities 31 (p. 84).

Eugenia Siapera (2012) has said, introduction of wireless network and internet has given the opportunities to the people to interact more in new media as well as social media and it has a profound role in increasing non – market and non – proprietary production. Siapere has sited some examples, like:

Mobile phones have been used in, among others, the Seattle WTO protests in 1999, in Gleneagles for the G8 summit in 2005, and the Athens riot in December 2008. The
rise of internet-enabled mobile phones and the synergies created between mobile phones and social media add new political dimensions to mobile telephony (p.162).

Siapera has also argued that the use of mobile phones has blurred the boundaries between work and leisure. In the chapter nine, Siapera has dealt with the relationship between the new media and the construction of identity very skillfully, as the author says:

The anonymity and disembodiment of online subjects lead to identities liberated from past concern – online one knows who you are, so far Turkle you can be any one you want. At the same time, there is no ‘real’ you, your identity cannot be reproduced to one of your ‘avatar’ or online personas (p. 175).

2.1.4 Virtual Community

It is evident that new media has facilitated creation of “virtual community” in parallel with existing “physical community” in the society. Among the widely known four types of communities, classical, modern, dialectical and postmodern we would say that we are talking about postmodern communities while we talk about social network based communities. A lot of groups are in existence and in activity and one individual usually belongs to multiple communities. The new media thus supports a new form of society that doesn’t necessitate physical presence of human. Interpersonal connectivity in such a society is ensured through social networking sites. This is no doubt a complete shift in social connection patterns of people. Members of the society who traditionally were orientated to neighborhood and small groups and associations reoriented themselves to geographically diverse and dispersed social networks. People are getting their new cultural identity as ‘networked individuals’, who form their own network based new virtual communities. These communities, like real communities are also based on common interests. There is a coherence of comments among the users of new media when asked about the virtual communities that they always find something useful by joining them. People decide to be a part of these communities in order to show their activism on certain issue, campaigning an agenda and to satisfy their diverse psychological needs, desires, and whims or just to get information, to the least to find out the latest trends and many more.
For the experts and researchers, the problem with new media based communities is two faceted. One facet of investigation is the potential of new media in consolidating the “real”, traditional communities and the other one is to study the way in which new media creates virtual communities, and their effects on the “real communities”.

There is a definite consensus among people when asked about Internet related communication situations and the virtual communities that they enter: you can always find something useful by joining them. People decide to be a part of these communities in order to satisfy their needs, desires, and whims, to get information, to find out the latest trends.

**Camelia Gradinaru (2011)** has said in her work, titled, ‘The Potential Role of New Media in the Creation of Communities’ has stated that:

In his approach, Rheingold, who was one of the first theoreticians to popularize the concept of virtual community, expresses his faith in the ability of the Internet to bring about new ways of interacting, capable of abolishing or diminishing the social fragmentation and the lack of communication in the offline life. Therefore, For Rheingold, cyberspace has a potential importance” as far as its ability to change people’s perspective on reality is concerned, the social relationships and the political freedoms being the first to undertake such changes.³⁴ (p. 148)

There is a positive and optimistic view about the potential of new media in creating communities by the utopians; on the other hand dystopians have serious doubts. Utopians strongly argue for people having fear of public exposure. The Internet gives such people a ‘virtual public life’ by providing them with the opportunity to become members of ‘virtual communities’ and to express their views and thus ensures their public life. But dystopians refute it by arguing that such virtual participation would create a ‘spiral of isolation’ and they users will be more isolated. They may lose their potential to become ‘active citizens’. To the worst, social meaning of life might get changed for those people³⁵ (pp. 150-151).

**Siapera Eugenia (2012)** has explored much on the sifts of social communities to the virtual community and face – to - face communication to virtual communication. The author has said that virtual communities can be characterized as the loss of physical proximity and is based on the shared interest. Some important characteristics of social
media are here, like, ‘communicative, open and participatory, provide connectivity, support community, actively encourage and rely on the creation and sharing of contents.

**Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein (2010)** want to show how social media differ from web 2.0 and user generated content in their work ‘Users of the World Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media’. They have addressed the user of social media as a resident of virtual world and their activities as second life parallel activities. They approach their topic in a narrative manner. They have said:

> Virtual social world user appear in the form of avatars and interact in a three dimensional virtual environment; however in this realm, there are no rules restricting the range of possible interaction, expect for basic physical laws such as gravity. This allows for an unlimited range of self expression strategies, and it has been shown that with increasing usage intensity and consumption experience, user of virtual social worlds – or “residents”, as they prefer to be called – show behavior that more and more closely mirrors one observed in real life.36 (p. 64)

**Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein (2009)** have dealt with the popularity of the internet and its role in business press in their study ‘The Fairyland of Second Life:Virtual Social World and How to Use them’. The article shows the increasing importance of social or virtual world and how the business firms can use the popularity of social or virtual world.

At the beginning of the article, it is shown that how the social world fits to the concept of postmodern theory or concept. It is also discussed that how the postmodern philosophy increasingly affect the business world. The word 'hyper reality' is discussed here which means the people are willing to perform such activity, which they are not ready to do in real life.

Then the article discusses about the 'second life' and how it is different from other social media like You Tube (content communities), Facebook (social networking site) or Wikipedia (content communication). The article shows how the success of Second Life motivated other real life companies to start their activities in second life. The authors also differentiate between virtual game world and virtual social world:
Community by carefully choosing the types of video messages posted, avatar customization within virtual worlds tends to be far more flexible. If desired, a Second Life resident can, for example, create an avatar that very closely resembles the real appearance of the associated user, or of a very different person. Finally, while content communities, blogs, and collaborative sites are two-dimensional (i.e., focused on content sharing), avatars within virtual worlds have the possibility of exploring their virtual environment in three dimensions. In many virtual worlds, the basic rules of physics continue to hold, which makes navigation within them very similar to what one is used to in the real world. 37 (p. 556).

The article discusses about five different ways which can be taken by business firm for their corporate use. In their opinion the second life doesn't impose much restriction so it is more flexible. The concept of avatar linden dollar is discussed in the article. According to the study, the corporate firm can use the virtual or social world through advertising or communication. Authors suggest to create virtual flagship buying advertising space in virtual malls or radio station. Authors think that sponsoring events on virtual world may have positive effect on real life press coverage. But they also have the opinion that the companies should have limit in virtual social world's advertising. Besides advertising another way is v-commerce which means possibility of e-commerce in virtual social world. It can be done by selling digital version of real life products or services. It can create a bridge between real and virtual world.

2.1.5. Virtual Community and Identity

The internet is a global network of communication. At a certain hour of a day millions of people are ‘on-line’ and exchange messages among them as a part of relation communication or as members of virtual communities. This has given rise to a tightly inter-related world with integral consciousness, which according to Mashall Mcluhan is a 'Global Village'. This ever expanding communication space has hosted a worldwide communication processes beyond boundaries in which knowledge, values and ethics, aesthetics and lifestyles are being exchanged thus act as a generative framework of a ‘global world culture’. Due to the melting pot role of the new media, diverse cultures are getting assimilated and diffused and are being blended into a homogenized culture, which is not confined to any kind of physical barriers or national boundaries.
This “global world culture” is a “Third Culture” that transforms the local and established culture of a society posing a cultural shock and often cultural threat and psychologically creates “identity crisis”. On the other hand, the new media environment helps understand other cultures and to respect others.

As the new media supports a new society where interpersonal connectivity is possible through social networking sites without real human face to face presence, and this has made social connection patterns of people to shift. The human orientation has shifted from a live neighborhood and association to unseen, intangible, geographically diverse and dispersed social networks. It is giving a new cultural identity to people as ‘networked individuals’ and the same time creating social isolation’.

Charu Lata Singh (2010) in her study, ‘New Media and Cultural Identity’ has stated that:

The ability of modern technology to combine a huge variety of elements together from different times and places has led to the complex cultural identities. Due to continual exposure to media and its new communication technologies, it influences the larger number of audience in shortest period of time. New media is engulfing the culture at a very fast rate. It has left human relationships behind. Media today has taken the role of parents, relations and friends. The changing patterns in human relationships can be called as a by-product of the processes of globalization…The positive dimensions of new media teach the global citizenry to understand other cultures, respect them and adopt good from them and assimilate that into their own cultures. Each culture tells to have a wider plane of understanding. In a wider spectrum, the cultural diversity is maintained…. 38 (pp. 87-88)

With the above comment, Singh also has expressed her fear of identity crisis in this ‘age of virus’. According to her, each time we are threatened by ‘loss of identity’ and ‘feeling of insecurity, lot of tension is overwhelming in the public domain. Moreover, all these panics are changing so fast due to technology that is very difficult to understand for the elder and conservative minded people. And this people feel that youth of the age are moral less as well as direction less.

In an informed manner, Siapera Eugenia (2012) has discussed this issue in different ways, like, gender identity, ethnic and religious identity, race or ethnic identity. The tenth chapter of his book, Understanding New Media is on ‘Socialities and Social
Media’. The author has addressed the term ‘identity’ as plural in nature as it carry both personal and social information of an individual and it has an important psycho social implication.

2.1.6. Popularity of Virtual Community

Growing popularity and the social reach of SNS has opened a new research dimension in communication. Mohammadreza Aghaei, Alireza Salehi, Milad M Shahrbabak, Milad Abyyari, Amir H Vazirifar (2012) have addressed the users of Facebook with different features and facilities of Facebook and the user’s satisfaction regarding Facebook in their work ‘ICT’s Impact on Social Networking Websites and Rate of People’s Satisfaction of Facebook in Malaysia’. They also have examined the status of Facebook after launching different new social networking sites like MySpace, Twitter and Google+. According their work, users gave the opinion in favor of Facebook. In last three years, social media or new media is taking its shape in India. 39

The FICCI-KPMG Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report’s (2012) primary focus is on the digital metamorphosis of Indian media. In the fifth chapter, it has addressed much more on new media. It has shown that the number of internet would come closer to the same number of television viewers. It has explained the new media from different angle, like -the internet use through smart phone, tablet and how much time the users are spending in internet and doing what. It has given an idea on the internet advertisement trends and the payment system. It has described vividly about the growing trends of consumption of e-books, gaming apps by giving different statistical analysis. By segmenting new media, it notifies the social networking sites as the major means of communication. It does not emphasize much on social networking sites, but overall it is quite informative to media related persons. 40

FICCI-KPMG Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report (2013) is a concrete report which has dealt with different issues and tendency of Indian media industry and its potentiality. The report has focused on digitalization of media like DTH connection of television in Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata, as well as radio, advertisement and new media. It has stated that 2003 is an important year, as the promise of wireless broadband is likely to meet its fulfillment. In its fifth chapter, the
The report has addressed the emerging phenomenon of new media. In this report it is found that Facebook is claiming that the percentage of active user in India has grown up 81 percent from December, 2011 to December 2011, which is 25 percentage of world’s active users. The report has said, “Taking into account multiple users for a single wire line connection, the number of internet users reached 174 million in 2012” (p. 92). The report also indicated the growing market of smart phone, increasing market of advertisements in new media, new apps and game through different statistical analysis, facts and graphs.

**FICCI-KPMG Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report (2014)** has focused on different segments of Indian media industries. It has also included the present status of social media in India. It denotes the use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube as a platform of social change and has given the example of UNICEF India’s campaign of ‘Take Poo to the Loo’. This report has shown that the growing tendency of internet users in India and has said:

> The total internet user base in India grew to approximately 214 million by end of the year with almost 130 million going online using mobile devices. Mobile internet users dominated the total internet user base capturing an overall share of 61 percent. With the dramatic growth in mobile usage, content providers and advertisers are seeking opportunities to get their messages across on this preferred medium of the masses (p. 5).

It has also said that the youth (18-30 years) are leading in using the social media and Facebook is in leading position among the social networking sites. This report is quite helpful regarding the present status of Indian media.

In another report by **Comscore**, titled **India Digital Future in Focus (2013)**, it is seen that India has now the third largest internet population. It is on a 31% year-on-year increase, India’s online population grew to 73.9 million. With an extended online universe in excess of 145 million the market is at a tipping point for online business. Facebook continues to be the most popular social network with a 28% increase in traffic and a reach of 86%. LinkedIn emerges as number two, while Pinterest and Tumblr are the fastest growing networks.
In a new study by Nielsen (2012) shows that:

India loves to socialize. By Nielsen’s count, there are over 50 million active users on social media sites like Orkut, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, 80 percent of whom spend more than 15 minutes on social media every day. Naturally, brands want to get in on the action. But before they get all crazy with the Facebook likes, marketers might want to take a look at the results of this Nielsen survey.

In various reports it is found that Facebook is the leading social networking site among other sites.

In a report of Pew Research Center, Keith N. Hampton, Lauren Sessions Goulet, Cameron Marrlow & Lee Rainie (2012) brief that Facebook give more than a user gives to Facebook.

On average, Facebook users in our sample get more friend requests than they make: 63% received at least one friend request during the period we studied, but only 40% made a friend request. It is more common to be “liked” than to like others. The postings, uploads, and updates of Facebook users are liked – through the use of the “like” button – more often than these users like the contributions of others. Users in the sample pressed the like button next to friends’ content an average of 14 times per month and received feedback from friends in the form of a “like” 20 times per month. On average, users receive more messages than they send. In the month of our analysis, users received an average of nearly 12 private messages, and sent nine.

People comment more often than they update their status. Users in our sample made an average of nine status updates or wall posts per month and contributed 21 comments. People are tagged more in photos than they tag others. Some 35% of those in our sample were tagged in a photo, compared with just 12% who tagged a friend in a photo. They use survey method depending on Facebook logging activities.

2.1.7. Social Networking Sites and Personal Relations

Xianhong Chen and Guilan Ding (2009) have illustrated the new media and their relationship in their commentary ‘New Media as Relation’. They have given the recount of the genesis of new era of blog communication, new media communication, linear communication, technique oriented, relation oriented as well as dialogic and holographic communication. Chen Xianhong and Ding Guilan said that basically new media stands upon the communication and network technology such as Internet,
mobile phones and blogs. In China, new media basically follows the western direction (Zhang 2006). From 1990s, there were hundreds of books published in China and being translated in a different language. National Social Science Foundation (NSSF) funded many projects that is in multimedia technologies and journalistic communication, e-publishing industry development and internet communication.

They told about the rise of new media and it’s all about the mankind with the new media society and building the online communication network for the purpose of relationship between people and technologies.

Three propositions for broad argument in New Media As Relation: (1). relation Communication manifests the attributes of new media. (2). Electronic Dialogue manifests the communication characters of new media. (3). Metcalfe’s Law and Long Tal offer good description for the communication of new media (p. 371).

The attributes of new media should not distinguish between information communication and relation communication when overemphasized. The relationship is more fundamental with communication as conformity of social relation. Bateson (1972) has given the relation message.

The most paramount characteristics of new media is its interactivity. Net world media makes use of the spatial dimension and to some extent restores interpersonal interaction as through the face to face channel (p. 374).

There are several significances with this new media and relations. In recent years of research of new media has been based on McLuhanian perspective which is technically oriented. It specifies about the relationship between the senders and the receivers interaction with virtual community and virtual reality. The idea of “New Media as Relation” helps shift new media research from communication technologies to communication relationship, from technological information communication to dialogue relation communication, from informational communication focused on websites to relation communication concentrated on human beings. The age of relationship communication is coming just like Roger (1994) once said:

The interactions will eventually become more widely understood and accepted among community scholars (p. 376).
Biswajit Das and Shankar Jyoti Sahoo (2011) have encapsulated the personal and social life impact on demands to the Social Networking Sites in their article ‘Social Networking Sites – A Critical Analysis of Its Impact on Personal and Social Life’. Today 1.5 billion people across the world have their virtual communication in social networking sites, personal and social human behavior does demands introspection on this growing demand. Das and Sahoo state that the basic concept behind this social networking site is to stay together in groups forming community and also to project their identity by demonstrating their relationship to each other.

Now a day’s social sites have became a reason for anxiety and addiction due to the openness activities and interest of people 49 (p.222).

The world came close with a single click and you can stay connected with friends and members of your family. Given a chart of top ten social networking sites in the world of 2011 for which standing positions are being shown:

With this growing social network competition India ranks with 7TH position after US, China, Germany, Russian Federation, Brazil and U.K. 50 (p. 223).

They mentioned that we had a major risk in a factor like Personal Privacy: There is simply a narrow gap between public and personal life in social networking sites. Many a time personal information can lead to parents, teacher, criminals. There is also Impact of Strange Friends: You are getting into risk of being indirectly accessed of your account by any other people.

In different way 100 million of profiles are hacked in Facebook and it has also biological effect on people and it also leads to cyber crimes 51 (p.225).

According to them social networking many, a time leads to destruction in relationship and acts as venom. The reasons given are:

(a) Spend excessive time online. (b) Usage of computers in bed time. (c) Computer screen changed by partner when you come closer. (d) You don’t know anything or any password of your partner. (e) Internet history is always cleared 52 (p.226).

There are several safety measures given by them. Thus, social networking sites show a significant change in personal and social behavior. It has the purpose of
communication and entertainment with a intense future. However, for cyber crimes there are acting laws all over the world.

Rianne C. Farrugia (2013) has emphasized on the relationship along with Facebook in her thesis ‘Facebook and Relationship: A study of How Social Media Use in Effecting Long Term Relationship’. In the onset of the thesis she has introduced us with the Facebook usage and relationship satisfaction and the jealousy after being surveyed online with 255 respondents. It is also showing that increase in Facebook usage is directly proportional to the increase in jealousy. Face to face interaction, verbal and non-verbal clues along with conversation are today’s prior technology. When all these come in work, there is only just a click of a bottom to stay connected with families, friends, couples, groups by online social networking sites. In her work LaSalle (2004) has accordingly identified levels of intimacy and depth. There are several stages:

One of the most interactive communications is Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) which allows to texting; e-mailing; instant messaging and video conference (6). Wittey (2008) said that “CMC are likely to be true self online communication” (p. 8).

Established in 2004, Facebook has now got its numerous popularity. The most popular social networking site due to the opening of one’s view and opinion. There are some social penetration theories which includes Orientation, Exploratory Effective Change, and Stable Exchange. As the need of social networking sites is in act with our lives, there is also different surveillance. It can be a partner in monitoring on spouse or former lover on their current partner. This leads to jealousy which provokes emotion or it can also be life threatening. Marshal et al (2012) have said that:

Facebook increases exposure to information about one’s partner that may arouse jealousy and jealousy in turns, may increase the time spent on Facebook in search of relationship. (p.22).

An online survey has been done by Farrugia.C.Rianne in 2013 with 255 respondents among which 181 females and 71 males and 3 declined to answer. There are some measures which are being scaled, that is Relationship Satisfaction scale, Interpersonal Attraction Scale, Partner Surveillance Scale, Individual Trust Scale, Jealousy Scale,
Revised Self Disclosure Scale and Social intimacy Scale. Based on the information given by the author, it is encapsulated that social networking sites developing changes in relationships. Facebook does serve some worthwhile work but it also provides different levels of jealousy.

Khouli El Mohamed (2013) has elucidated the negative aspect of using social networking which is affecting the family stability in Abu Dhabi in his Pilot Study: ‘The Most Important Negative Aspect of Using Social Networking Effecting the Family Stability in Abu Dhabi’. He has given a description about the contemporary side of social networking on the internet that is becoming more technical and thus, spreading widely. Arab societies are embracing this type of communication. There are several factors, which create negative aspects among stable families due to this virtual world. Problems like difference between partners, spouses, friends and families. Social networking sites give rise to the misuse of communication. A chart has been provided to show the negative aspect of using social networking sites. After all, the result of this type of communication in Abu Dhabi has created a complicated case such as “Communication with unknown persons without control”; “Cases of abuse of teenagers”; “Isolation of children for real world”. 55

Deborah Chambers (2013) has clarified as to the personal relationships which are shrinking individuals tracer in his work ‘Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship’. Chambers says that the digital communication technologies contribute to the intimacy, friendship and identity display particularly on social networking sites. His main aim was to understanding the mediated nature and intimacies.

Due to Social Networking Sites there are dramatic changes in rituals, social activities and in academic section 56 (p.83).

Personal relationships are becoming stronger day by day due to the new media communication. There are also many questions arising that does this going on decreasing in genuine bond or uprooting relationship. There are several controversies that social networking sites are damaging individual’s time along with mental peace.

Chambers has described the different ways of making relationships in social networking sites, thus by knowing as a cultivation of personal relationship:
People express and give self opinion for the improvement of relationship. It always start with a friend request and ends with a relationship\(^57\) (p. 121).

In today’s world, different types of relations are being made in social networking sites. According to Chambers, relationships are made and often turn into bonding.

**Harry T. Reis and Susan Sprecher (2009)** have epitomized the human relationships building on social networking sites, in their work ‘*Encyclopedia of Human Relationship*’. T. Harry Reis and Susan Sprecher appraise the romantic relationships, which are embedded via social network and communication.

People in Social Network sometimes have smaller networks and sometimes have much expanded networks\(^58\) (p. 1543).

They have given the description of the subset of individuals within a network.

The psychological network--people to whom one feels close that is someone is significant to others. The exchange network--those who are important to the individuals because they provide resources or those to whom the individuals provide support. The interactive network--those with whom one regularly communicates\(^59\) (p.1554).

There is a special social network influence, which gives a different dimension to the romantic relationships among people. It can be a potential partner matching:

Some well and good relationship quality along with different aspect like likelihood and personal connection are made. Relationship can be initiated and it has to be maintained and with time it can also be terminated\(^60\) (p.1546)

They have given a conception of how social networks are being built among people and are being initiated into a relationship. In due course, the maintenance of the human relationship formed by the social networking sites, along with time can also an effect in termination of romantic relationship.

**Rakesh Shirase (2012)** has described the impact of SNS personal life in neighborhood in his work ‘*The Impact of Social Networking Sites on Personal Lives of The People in Pune And Neighborhood*’. He has illustrated the use of social networking sites among people around the community of Pune and its neighborhood.
Social networking sites have their own popularity and thus have become more and more effective. There are several questions arising as the grades are being reduced due to this usage of social networking sites among students. It also leads to the typical relationships and sometimes it also can be life threatening. Shirase Rakesh has given a framework of virtual communication with the concept of group and community formation among people.

While forming a community or a group, one can disclose his or her personal information, thus causing several risk of getting hacked and also revealing of one’s own privacySKI489 (p.369).

There are some measures given on how to maintain safety and remain safe in social networking sites. It includes measures like:

(1) Change in profile privacy; (2) Do not accept friend request from strangers; (3) Be cautious about what type of post you are doing; (4) Do not share personal informationSKI490 (p.370).

There are some of his findings which showed the response of people using social networking sites. It showed the significant change in the social and personal behavior in personalities.

Nowadays networking sites have become an essential medium of communication and entertainment for human beingsSKI485 (p.375).

However, it sometimes causes many offensive activities, which create a huge difference, or resentful activity among close community or relationship. Thus, this type of impact has been noticed by the people of Pune and its neighborhood.

Tara C Marshall, Kathrine Bejanyan, Gaia Di Castro and Ruth A. Lee (2013) made a study on Facebook related close relationship titled as, ‘Attachment Styles as Predictors of Facebook-Related Jealousy and Surveillance in Romantic Relationships’. They tested the anxiety and avoidance related to romantic relations due to the use of Facebook. According to them, SNS may help in romantic relation and help to be intimated. They made two-step study to understand Facebook related jealousy and surveillance in romantic relations. In study one, they investigated whether the attachment in close relationship is being dispositioning due to Facebook jealousy or surveillance. From the collected data from study one, in study two they
checked, whether attachment styles predicted Facebook jealousy and the frequency of checking the partner’s Facebook page over a one-week period.

They recruited 255 participants (201 women, 54 men) and engaged them through an online psychology survey. The active users of Facebook, and who are in romantic relation with their partner through Facebook also, are selected as sample. In conclusion they said that:

In the past few years, the possibility of monitoring a partner’s activities through Facebook has complemented or even supplanted this hyper vigilant behavior because it may reliably yield attachment-relevant cues with minimal effort and little to no risk that one’s snooping will be discovered. Avoidant individuals, in contrast, are likely to eschew the potentially threatening information furnished by their partner’s Facebook page and thus experience less Facebook jealousy. Competing relational pressures may also influence Facebook jealousy and surveillance, with commitment and intimacy exerting downward pressure, and feelings of love and passion exerting upward pressure. Overall, the current studies contribute to our nascent understanding of the role that social networking websites like Facebook play in romantic relationships. ⁶⁴ (p. 31)

From this study, it is clear that Facebook is performing a certain role in personal life and Facebook accelerates the previous communication ways in a new way with minimal effort.

D. Trottier (2012) has examined the changing rules and environment of visibility on Facebook, as a case study, in the research work ‘Interpersonal Surveillance on Social Media’. This study was carried on by a series of thirty interviews. According to the author, interpersonal social media warrants the users to take personal care of their virtual existence and security as well. Watching others updates may reflect poorly on the users mind. This study showed that many of interviewees have their presence on social media whenever they are not the users of that particular media. They are on social media for their peer connections, through, uploads and conversation of those peers. So personal privacy often is violated in social media. There are many interesting findings in this study, such as user’s personal broadcasting of his or her immediate location may pressure another to be on Facebook. Sometimes, the users used to deactivate their account, but again they have returned to Facebook. Because they think, their absence on Facebook gives others more spaces of criticism. ⁷¹
Respondents are fully aware that Facebook allows others to access his or her personal information in a large amount and they are aware of their parental scrutiny over Facebook. The author concludes that:

Users join because their peers are online, and they build a presence to remain visible to these friends. No single act seems risky or malicious, but when taken together over time, maintaining an online presence can have damaging consequences. Moreover, Facebook's continued growth—in terms of audience, contexts, and features—increasingly adds importance to the content on the site. This is especially true at a time when Facebook's user population is sharply increasing, with a concomitant increase of the contributors to any user's visibility, audiences of that visibility, and social contexts in which that visibility will have consequences.  

This study is basically concerned with the surveillant relation with family, friend, classmate and of romantic interest.

**Keith N Hampton, Lauren Sessions Goulet, Lee Rainie and Kristen Purcell (2011)** had conducted a study on behalf of Pew Research Center on ‘Social Networking Sites and Our Lives’ in American society. According to the study, 79% of adults used internet and half of the adults (47%) or 59% of total internet users used at least one social networking site. The researchers used the survey method for the study. According to them, Facebook was dominating by 92% among other social networking sites, such as, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Twitter. By using regression method for demographic factors, they found that Facebook user was more trusting than others are, Facebook users had more close relationship, got more social-support from others and Facebook users were much more politically engaged. According to the study:

Compared with other internet users, and users of other SNS platforms, a Facebook user who uses the site multiple times per day was an additional two and half times more likely to attend a political rally or meeting, 57% more likely to persuade someone on their vote, and an additional 43% more likely to have said they would vote. 

The study has proved that SNSs are playing an important role in our daily life.
Keith N. Hampton, Lauren F. Sessions, Eun Ja Her and Lee Rainie (2009) made a study on behalf of Pew Research Center on ‘Social Isolation and New Technology’. They examined the role of cell phone and internet in their real social network. Researchers reported that the Americans were not as much isolated as were previously reported. Moreover, social media were providing the American society with different beneficial social activities. Their important observation was:

Internet use does not pull people away from public places. Rather it is associated with engagement in places such as parks, cafes, and restaurants, the kinds of locales where research shows that people are likely to encounter a wider array of people and diverse points of view. Indeed, internet access has become a common component of people’s experiences within many public spaces. For instance, of those Americans who have been in a library within the past month, 38% logged on to the internet while they were there, 18% have done so in a café or coffee shop.

2.1.8. Social Networking Sites and the Youth

Now a days the Internet users and social media users have become synonymous. Rarely such a person will be found who uses the Internet but doesn’t use any social media. In a recent study Nielson reports that nearly 80 percent of active internet users visit social media sites (Nielson, 2011). It is also observed by many researchers around the world that the youth are the main users of new media. Ninety-three percent of college students have a Facebook account (Sheldon, 2008). The present study has also found that youths of age 19-30 tops as the users of Social Networking Sites. Youths are really crazy about social media. “Nearly a third (32%) of people aged 18-24 use social networking in the bathroom. More than half of people aged 25-34 use social networking in the office, more than any other age group.”

E Middaugh and J Kahne (2013) deal with youth and their behavior in their study, ‘New Media as a Tool for Civic Learning’. According to them, youths may face risk with social media because they have limited capacity for self regulation and are more susceptible to peer pressure. Very often, they forget the difference between online and offline behavior and there happens online expressions of offline behaviors. Behaviors like clique-forming, harassment and cyber-bullying have become very common. Sometimes peer pressured or experimental sexual behavior like sexting through social media happens. As a result, Facebook addiction and depression have
emerged as new psychological phenomena among the youth. “As youth are increasingly spending time online, what happens online matters more for their quality of life and material conditions.”

Despite these limitations and possibility of adverse psychological effect, new media has many positive effects on a youth’s life. The most important one is that through new media the youth are able to express their views what they do not usually express due to social taboo. Youths always want them to be heard. They do it as individuals or by forming online community.

While youth have long had opportunities to create media, advances in digital media have brought new capacity to produce and manipulate media and to reach an audience, both of which can support youth in discovering and expressing their point of view. Remixing and responding to existing media can be a mechanism for youth to explore their own point of view. Sharing media with others and receiving comments provides youth with an opportunity to feel as if someone is listening and their point of view is important. 

The best thing new media does for the youth is transforming them into active and engaged citizens rather than passive one. It helps them to critically think about social issues and respond:

New media has played an important role in helping youth engage in critical thinking about social issues for educators who work with youth in urban settings. Youth in these settings are keenly aware of issues that need to be addressed in their communities, but thinking through the structural factors that allow these issues to persist is a complicated endeavor for adults and youth alike. Media is a tool for both discovering and participating in the definition of social issues. When this activity is networked, it can becomes an exercise and grappling with differing perspectives on social issues. 

Brittany Grube (2012) explains with how social media is influencing the young generation. In the study ‘Social Media’s Influence On Youth’ Grube shows the relation between improvement of technology and the easier access of different social networking sites. The research study particularly emphasizes four aspects. The article is based on a narrative study depending up on various surveys books and articles.
The very common problem of social networking sites is that the users are facing different types of cyber crime. It is known as cyber bullying which is less faced by the non-social media users.

Then the article deals with the problem of age bar of social media users. How the youth below thirteen are using Facebook while the age criterion is minimum thirteen. Some other social networking sites like Twitter has no age bar. Times spent by the youth in the Internet and social media are increasing day by day due to proliferation of smart phones, tabs and game console. But definitely PC tops the list. But the potential problem with new media is lack of parental control over the media unlike TV or web browsing. In the case of TV, parents are able to block some channels using the settings of TV set itself. Certain websites could be blocked by changing browser settings. For 18 plus people, control over content is not required. But while he was under parental care, it is very much required to ensure controlled content to set his positive behavior about new media.

- “Time spent on social media sites is increasing.
- Cases of cyberbullying — bullying through social media sites — are escalating.
- Age limitations on social media sites are inadequate.
- Parental controls on access to social media are lacking; monitoring youth online is becoming more difficult for parents.”

Brittany Grube thinks that the parents need to be more careful and teach their children how to use these sites properly as the parental control is almost impossible. The article suggests that these sites also need to create parental control and impose more penalty for cyber bullying to prevent it.

There are two hypotheses of participation and building community by a youth in online environment. Adolescence is the most essential time for a person for his social development. In this period teens learn how to form and maintain good friendship. They also learn other essential social skills. These skills play vital role in young adulthood when peer groups provide the prime emotional support.

Some data points to adolescents who are already socially adept using the Internet to maintain relationships and connect to new groups. This phenomenon is known as the
rich get richer hypothesis. Other research supports a social compensation thesis, in which youth who are less socially adept use social networking websites to self-disclose and make new friends when they might be too shy to do so in real life.  

(p. 2)

The research, observation and survey made so far about the effects of SNS on youths are observed in present situation. But there is no prediction or projection about the long term effect of using SNS on the life of the youth. This area is yet to be discovered and needs long term observation.

Social media sites are still relatively new. Current studies show the immediate effect of social media in the life of youth; however, long-term effects have not been studied. Social media is expected to be a part of young people’s lives for the foreseeable future, and more communication and media options are likely to become available

The article is a guideline for both the social networking sites and the users of these sites so that they can use it safely. Though the author has also mentioned that as the social media are competitively new so the research is on the immediate effect of the social media and the long term effect of social media is missing in the study.

Madhur Raj Jai, Palak Gupta, Nitika Anand (2012), published an article titled as, ‘Impact of Social Networking Sites in the Changing Mindset of Youth on Social Issues’ - A Study of Delhi-NCR Youth. They took a sample size of 100 and made a survey. By using of IBM SPSS 19.0 (a statistical software), they presented their analysis through graphs and charts. They also used ANOVA. The age group of respondents was 18 – 30, who were from Delhi NCR region. The methodology is quite similar to the present study. To address the problem they said:

However, certain issues yet require study and research like impact of SNS on youth’s minds and loss of privacy as earlier people believed in keeping their data private but now they enjoy going public and showing wall posts, status updates, tweets and infact every thrill of their lives. In this way, we are ourselves breaching our privacy and personal space at the compromise of publicizing intimate details so as to attract hundreds of online readers and even strangers.  

(p. 37)

In this study, they found that SNSs are taking an important role on mobilizing the public view. People, especially youth, are feeling free to raise their voice against different kinds of social issues through SNS.
It is also being generated from the information so obtained that people are getting more aware about the social issues mainly from Facebook. But instead of getting this knowledge the people generally don’t discuss them and if they do, they just sign off the sites after discussion and the issue just remains focused on web only.

This study has focused on the youth in generating information and gathering information through SNS.

**B. L Chawada, R. P Choksi, S. B Choksi, U. T Dari, A. B Pawar and R. K Bansal (2010)** undertook a study on ‘Addiction to Social Networking Websites and its Effect on Lifecourse of College Going Students in Surat City’. It was a field based cross sectional study where 300 students were selected from various colleges of Surat city on basis of convenience sampling between age group oh 19 to 24 years. They conducted this study with the verbal consent of the respondents. The researchers wanted to examine the popularity of SNSs among the youth of Surat city and the addiction level of the youth to this as well. In conclusion, they said:

Youth- the life stage of creativity, innovation, exploring of social and cultural life, cheerfulness, physical activity, shaping of personality and social skills etc. seems to be eroded by the evil in the form of social networking websites. Timely counselling of school going children who are susceptible to addiction of these websites and their parents is the pressing need of the hour.

This study has considered the evil effects of SNS as the youth are becoming addicted to these sites. They were worried about the mental health of the youth and advised the important role of teacher and parents to identify the mental disorder due to the addiction to SNS among the youth.

In another study on **M Neelamalar and P Chitra (2009)** on ‘New media and society: A Study On The Impact Of Social Networking Sites On Indian Youth’ wanted to examine the impact of SNS among the youth on their social interaction and social behavior. They took the sample size of hundred (100) and divided them into two categories of each 50 and used the survey method. One was the indicator of teen (age group of 17 - 19) and another one was the indicator of the youth (age group of 20 - 22). The samples were randomly selected from different schools and colleges. This is similar to the present study. In the conclusion of their study, they have described the youth as “techno-savvy” and said:
These digital natives see these technologies as a logical extension of traditional communication methods, and perceive social networking sites as often a much quicker and more convenient way to interact. That they are aware of the danger and risk involved in these sites is a positive indicator that Indian youth are not only techno-savvy and socially active through social networking sites but they also possess social consciousness. (p.143)

According to this study, 95% of SNS users used to spend a varying amount of time from less than one hour to five hours every day. With it, 95% users think that it is helpful platform to communicate with friends and others. Therefore, it is clear that SNSs have a positive impact on the Indian youth.

Kbedo K.K, Suntoo R, Elaheebocus S.M.R.A and Mocktoolah A. (2013) have conducted research on the impact of the Online Social Networks over the local youth of Mauritius titled ‘Impact Of Online Social Networking On Youth: Case Study Of Mauritius’. They have carried out the study using web based questionnaire and paper based questionnaire where is needed, targeting the teenagers aged between 12 to 18. They wanted to study the usage pattern of online and impact of online social networks among youth and the impact of online social networks in their social behavior. They have received positive response from the respondents.

From the survey results, it is found that OSNS have a great impact on social relationships. In order to gauge the survey’s participants’ perception about the effects that the use of OSNS has on them, some of the main impact factors derived from our initial pilot survey were used in the questionnaire. These factors were from both negative and positive categories. Respondents were allowed to provide multiple answers, that is, for example, someone could indicate that OSN help him/her in a positive way but at the same time affect him/her negatively; therefore, overlapping of answers is possible. This can be seen in the case of ‘maintain relationships’ and that of ‘communicate with friends’; where the former pertains mainly to family members, siblings and couples while the latter refers to casual communication through facilities offered by OSNS between friends.

This study showed that there is also a parental monitoring regarding the use and sharing of personal information on Socials Networks, among the youth. 63% of total respondents who are teenagers said that they had faced negative experience on online
social networks, like, use of slang language, being bullied by strangers, sharing of inappropriate pictures and videos and spreading of threat.

2.1.9. Social Networking Sites and Socio-Political Movement

There is a steep rise of market fundamentalism throughout the world. It gives emphasis on privatization, commoditization, and individualism. The public discourse has radically changed by ignoring social relations and values crucial to a democracy. Public values, public spheres, and social relationships that provide the formative culture necessary for a democratic polity are waning. Under the privatizing logic of neoliberalism and the regime of market fundamentalism, Privatization has run rampant, inflicting institutions of diverse goals which ranges from university, hospital and up to prison. That utterly means institutions that were chartered to care human sufferings and misfortune are either weakened or abolished. This shift was all part of a broader process of withdrawal of state support for social goods.

The decline of public values has become obvious in a society where neoliberal order is dominant because the foundation of social solidarity, the bonds of social obligation become naturally irrelevant to the existing contemporary neoliberal order because it promotes the ability of markets to solve all social and individual problems. The whole thing results in erosion of democratic public values, weakening of democratic pressures, a growing inability to act politically, frustratingly a massive exit from politics and from responsible citizenship. Core public values such as compassion for the common good has been abandoned under the regime of a market driven society that promotes a survival of the fittest economic policy. Public problems are redefined as from personal troubles and there is shrinkage of public sphere where personal problems were dealt as public or social problems. The promise of a substantive democracy is in crisis and there is no questioning agent. So, it is time to regain public values, reclaim public sphere and a better public pedagogy. Many experts consider public pedagogy as the central issue to understanding the new media as a powerful educational force to establish a viable democracy.

Henry A. Giroux (2011) works on this phenomenon and says in The Crisis of Public Values in the Age of the New Media, that:
As social problems were privatized and public spaces were commodified, there was an increased emphasis on individual solutions to socially produced problems, while at the same time market relations and the commanding institutions of capital were divorced from matters of politics, ethics, and responsibility. In these circumstances, notions of the public good, community, and the obligations of citizenship were replaced by the overburdened demands of individual responsibility and an utterly privatized ideal of freedom. A vision of the good society has now been replaced with visions of individual happiness characterized by an endless search for instant gratification.\textsuperscript{81} (p. 9)

In the study we also find that, the critiques of neoliberalism are seriously lacking in taking into account the role and power of ‘formative culture’ and ‘public pedagogy’. These two fuel the values and social relations for ‘market fundamentalism’ and ‘market democracy’ to survive and to dominate. The ‘cultural apparatuses’ of the neoliberal society produce such a ‘formative culture’ and ‘public pedagogy’ that ruthlessly erase any residue of self regulation and public accountability. These are also instruments to the elimination of the ‘language of self-reflection’ and any form of discourse that promotes common good, public welfare, and providing for all the equality, justice, and dignity. Market-led culture differs with the positive assumption that freedom is a shared experience and in true freedom, interest of self is under subordination of ‘public values’ and requires its affirmation. The pre condition and essential requirements for restoration of these public values is establishment of such a concept of social responsibility that prioritizes the recognition and transformation of those conditions that make the survival of others insecure\textsuperscript{82} (p. 18). Giroux (2011) argued that the growth of democracy largely depends on ‘dissent’. For ‘dissent’ to support the growth of democracy ‘critical citizenship’ is essential. But in a society with widening gap between political democracy and socioeconomic capacities, inequality will not appear as a passive unquestioned inevitable outgrowth but will play the role of political toxin which will weaken public values and boost division among people and to the extreme will erode a society from within\textsuperscript{83} (p. 24).

Siapera Eugenia (2012) has dealt with the impact of internet on social movements in the book ‘Understanding New Media’. The author has explored that the short term movement is much more effective than a long lasting movement. The author has stated that:
They appear to be more successful in short term campaigns rather than bringing about lasting change. For example, online campaigns against sweatshops run by Nike, GAP and others have been relatively successful, but broader neo-liberal politics still remain widespread. Similarly, environmental online activism may be able to claim some local success, but as we have seen in Kyoto and Copenhagen in 2009, pressure from environmental movements has failed to influence the relevant political agenda \(^{84}\) (p.94).

However, **Siapera** is much more optimistic on the arrival of Web 2.0 technology in the context of politics as the author assumes that blogs and Twitter may replace mainstream media. According to her:

> Web 2.0 is democratized publishing, these political functions may be undertaken over by people themselves, who can undertake the provision of information, the expression of public opinion and watching the political actors \(^{85}\) (p. 95).

The author has cited some examples as Tunisian revolution.

**Vinit Jha & Utpal Kumar (2012)** have focused on the social networking sites as a tool of social change in his study, ‘Social networking sites: Instrument of social change’. Addressing the importance of You Tube, Facebook, Twitter, the authors have said that social networking sites are becoming “the new weapons of mass mobilization” \(^{86}\) (p.107). To justify their opinions they have quoted from Keneeth Payne, BBC news producer, and said that the media is an important instrument of war as, it gives the platform to create domestic as well as international public opinion. They gave several case studies where SNSs have played a big role. Such as; Egyptian revolution; kidnapping case of Japanese journalist, Kosuke Tsuneoka, who used Twitter to sink out the message in Afghanistan; twitting of Sohaib Athar, regarding Osama Bin Laden's death in Abottabad; in India, news of shooting and bombing in Mumbai in 2008 was first reported via Twitter and Flickr; Justice for Jessica; Anna Hazare movement in India and many more. In conclusion, the authors have said:

> To conclude the study on social networking sites, information as well as social movements found that the development of the social networking sites as a news provider is often described as a series of information vantage point of formative moments, each of which highlights from a respective vantage point of the evolving dynamic of online journalism. This alternative image of the social networking sites identify itself with information sharing societies is based on the social promotion and
practices of the exchanging and sharing knowledge originating from many different societies and help to rise social revolution\(^8\) (p.109).

**S.K. Parida and A. Das (2014)** have focused on the political communication through SNSs in Odisha ahead of Assembly Elections of 2014, in their research work ‘Social Media in Relation to Politics in Odisha, India: an Overview’. They admitted that social media were increasingly getting importance as a tool of communication among not only the youth but also among politicians “by sharing a campaign or candidates’ message”. Their article indicates that more and more MPs and MLAs are creating their account on Facebook, Twitter and Orkut and politicians basically want to woo the young generation towards politics. To describe the reason behind the opening of the ruling party Biju Janata Dal (BJD) the authors say:

The latest to join the band wagon is the Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik who has asked his party men to use social media to woo young voters, who constitute above 40 percent of the total electorate in the state\(^8\) (p. 46)

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) was not far behind the BJD. The general secretary and Odisha in-charge of AICC, B.K Hariprasad inaugurated social media unit for Odisha before Assembly Electoin 2014 in Odisha. More interesting thing is that the authors admitted that:

However, social media are quickly becoming standard communications tools for political figures and institutions and the citizens they serve. Only further experience and analysis will resolve the current uncertainty about their benefits and harms for representative democracy\(^8\) (p. 47)
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