Analysing the role of Social Media in Education and Skills Development among Youth in Arunachal Pradesh

Shashanka Gogoi* & Saurav Bhaumik**
*MA Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh
**MA Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh
shashankagogoi001@gmail.com*

Abstract

The study investigates the multifaceted role of social media platforms in the education and skills development of youth in Arunachal Pradesh, a geographically and culturally unique state in Northeast India. The study focuses on the emergence of new possibilities and threats associated with the growing use of social networking sites among the young people of the region. It reveals how these platforms are being harnessed for academic purposes and online learning, tool for sharing knowledge and skills, as well as for building and expansion of networks; together with the negative impacts like distractions, networked misinformation, and cyberbullying. By a synthesis of previous research and contextualization, this paper seeks to give findings about the consequences of the social media use in the current educational systems and the youth's future in Arunachal Pradesh to guide methods that might utilise social media in a positive way and minimize the possible negative effects.

Keywords: Social Media, Education, Skills Development, Youths, misinformation, and Online Learning.

Introduction

The 21st century has become a period of the dominance of digital technologies with social networks, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and WhatsApp being in the spotlight as the main channels of communication, the exchange of information, and interaction on a global level. Arunachal Pradesh, a state in India which represents rich tribal culture, some amount of challenging geographical terrains, and young and energetic populace, provides a premise to investigate the effect of social media in its youth community.2 Although the formal educational resources are scarce in some areas of this state, social media has made a significant difference by bringing mobile internet and affordable smart phones into its purview of youth. To analyze the specifics of the mentioned topic, it is unavoidable to comprehend the role of social networks for several reasons. Firstly, it may provide insights into the way young people in Arunachal Pradesh are using these platforms for education purposes, avail information other than physical context, and interact with educational networks. Secondly, it can enhance understanding of how social media promotes the acquisition or inadequate of formal skills for the functioning and communication in the contemporary society and engagement with the ever growing

employment marketplace. Third and last, the negatives of this form of interaction and communication such as negative influence through information relay, bullying, abuse of privacy and compromise of learning among students.

Concept of Social Media

Social media as signifies any website or any other Information Communication Technology tool that is designed for the creation and exchange of information, ideas, interests, and other forms of transactions involving the use of virtual communities and networks. These tools are distinguished by user's contributions; information sharing and interactive communication; freedom to show one's true identity regardless of physical location. Some of the widespread social media networks that target the young people are:

- **Facebook**: Currently popular tool for communication with the friends and relatives, joining the groups, posting the messages, and reading the news.
- **Instagram** : A social media based mostly on sharing photographs and videos used majorly for self-identity posting, trend and following and identification with related influencers.
- **Twitter**: A microblog site used to spread short (160 characters or less) massages, focus on current events and trends and having public discussions.
- **YouTube**: A video-sharing platform offering a vast library of educational content, tutorials, entertainment, and user-generated videos.
- **WhatsApp**: A familiar means of communication and instant messaging system, video/audio calling and sharing of files/multimedia content.
- **Linked In:** A professional social site used to look for career opportunities and to connect to numerous professionals.

It is crucial to differentiate between the concept of Social Media and the various classifications of social media to identify the definite role of Social Media in regard to the enlightenment and skills of the young generation in Arunachal Pradesh.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the role of social media in education and skills development among youth.
2. To study the challenges and potential negative impacts of social media among youth.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the understanding of how social media could be used to support policies and education strategies that meet learning and skills needs of the youth in Arunachal Pradesh. It has advantages and disadvantages, and offers information on youths' particular requirements, and to the recommendation of social media in educational classes. It can further help in the promotion of positive uses of the new technologies and safe use of information technology hence positively impacting the youth and the region.

Methodology

The study is purely based on secondary sources of data and descriptive in nature. The data collected for the study are from various secondary sources viz. research paper, journals, government official publications, books, different websites, newspapers etc.

Role of Social Media in Education and Skills Development among Youth

Today, social media is one of the most effective tools that can be used in the process of communication and acquiring knowledge. Regarding social networks, the youth develops into an inseparable part of existence and turns into the main factor of connection, identity, and knowledge-sharing.

Opportunities for Education

Social media is a phenomenon that has rapidly gained prominence and acceptance ever since in the education sector of Arunachal Pradesh especially among the youths. In areas that are filled with difficult landscapes and have a poor number of educational structures, these sites are a window to knowledge, cooperation and transformation.

- **Access to Information and Resources: Social media is also known to play a role of sharing information freely across the society. Out there in the online world, we get to find social platforms such as YouTube, Facebook pages, groups, and even communities in developing applications and AP Some platforms include but not limited to YouTube, educational Facebook groups, and WhatsApp groups contain recorded lectures, subject-specific tutorials, documentaries, e-books among others. Thus, such virtual content serves as a desirable supplement for students living in the remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh where physically they cannot have access to a number of libraries or educational institutions.**
- **Online Learning and Collaboration: Incidentally, social media does not only allow for passive reception of information but also for active working within the educational process. Online learning platforms also use social medial to make it easy for students to register for courses offered online, webinars, workshops among others after school hours. In particular, social media groups and forums enable learners to ask questions, share difficulties faced by them in their learning process and get responses from classmates and even teachers. This type of learning environment fosters youth belongingness, freeing the youths in Arunachal Pradesh from isolation that results from learning in isolated or lack of resource-a areas.**
- **Updating oneself with current affairs and knowledge:** It is mindful to always update oneself on the current events and activities that occur in the social and academic spheres, including science and technology. Sources like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook news pages are the first-hand sources which provides real time updates and discussions. Students are in a position to follow those authentic news handles, educators and experts who are able to provide relevant coverage on national and global concerns. This way the young people

become more knowledgeable about what they are allowed to say as well as be in a position to enhance their critical thinking and part take in more academic and civil discourses.

- **Language Learning and Cultural Exchange:** Social networks as an essential tool that contributes to the acquisition of a foreign language and intercultural communication. Sources like Instagram, YouTube and Facebook enable the young people to interact with content in English, Hindi, and other regional languages. Sites such as Duolingo or exchanging language learning groups on Facebook are helpful because it brings together the learner with a native speaker. Additionally, such social relations expose the youth in Arunachal Pradesh to other cultures, traditions and beliefs held across the world which in turn enables the learners to embrace the world and the environment.

- **Career Guidance and Awareness:** Last but not the least, LinkedIn as well as many other Groups which are based on career provide significant information. Such posts, webinars, and shared working experiences explain that one can opt for various professional fields, know the demand for a particular job, and the skills needed. Such groups include the career-oriented groups where members share the list of available scholarships, job openings, and various tips about entrance examinations, among others. It assists the employment of the youth to develop a roadmap on how to plan their future through closing the gap between vision and the actual chance.

Opportunities for Skills Development

It has been deduced that the use of the social media amongst youths in Arunachal Pradesh is not only influencing their acquisition of info but has a strongly encouraged their personal and intellectual transformation. Besides academic benefits, one gets to develop other soft and technical skills that are useful in today's world of technology.

- **Digital literacy and Technological Proficiency:** Consequent to the extent of the use of social media it enhances the technological proficiency among the young people. Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and LinkedIn are social apps which familiarizes them with application options, new technologies, and several applications. They imbibe the principles of sharing content online, protection of self and others from what is posted online, understanding and following cybersecurity measures and even fixing small technical problems on our computers.

- **Interpersonal Skills:** Social media also help in enhancing interpersonal competencies such as communicating effectively. Interacting with the post, responding to them and participating in a discussion, creating, or studying, boosts their capacity to express ideas and thoughtful responses. These platforms also made the youth embrace various ways of thinking and ensure that they listen as well as communicating with understanding. It is useful in class projects where a number of students are pooled together; or projects posted online where there is need to coordinate duties and work in groups.

- **Freedom of Creativity and Self-Expression:** This is also a main advantage because creativity is set free. Social media applications such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube provide youth with outlets to explore and express themselves in areas like photo journalism, telling a story, singing or dancing, dancing among other forms of arts. This is because its

about the matter they learn it allows them to experiment with the content they get and practice in the editing of what they post and as the follow caters grows they become more confident.

- **Critical Thinking and Information Evaluation: In an environment which contains tremendous amount of information, social media helps the young people to think critically and evaluate the received information. They learn gradually about how they can confirm information, coming up with methods of establishing the reliability of the sources used and identifying fake news. It enriches their conversations if they engage in discussions in newsgroups or bulletin boards because it enhances their ability to reason well and look at issues in many perspectives besides improving their decision-making abilities.**
- **Networking and building connections: The last benefit is the ability to interact with people on the various platforms where the young people can meet and interact with seniors, human resources managers, and other young people with similar interest. These can include understanding the availability of job openings, internships, and career advice, allowing the youth to better prepare their education employment pathways.**

Thus, social media provides a number of positive outcomes that may contribute to students' academic achievement in Arunachal Pradesh as well as equip them for living in a world which is increasingly shifting to digital.

Challenges and Potential Negative Impacts of Social Media among Youth

Social networking sites have numerous advantages for the young generation such as connectedness, self-actualization, and information access but also various challenges and drawbacks. Social media addiction is recorded to threaten individuals mainly on mental health issues, social comparison, cyberbullying and poor attention span.

- **Frequent Interruptions:** Notifications from the social media cause a lot of interruptions that may make the student lose concentration hence, having short attention spans.
- **Misinformation and Fake News:** Due to the sharing of unconfirmed information within social media regardless of its source, youth is at a risk of developing wrong attitude or actions based on misperceptions arising from misinformation and fake news.
- **Cyberbullying and Online Harassment:** Social networking sites have become prevalent in cyber bullying and online harassment and in any given power point presentation, the victims are mostly the young persons, such types of harassment can lead to lot of emotional and psychological problems and even drop out amongst the affected students.
- **Privacy and Security Issues:** The disclosure of personal details on the social media sites poses a high risk in privacy and security where the youth can fall a target to identity theft or even misuse of their identity information.

- **Social Comparison and Negative Self-Image:** Due to the presentation of the best image of life on social media most youths develop social comparison and low self image especially on issues for body image.
- **Segmentation**: Although mobile Internet use is on the rise, unequal access to good quality in terms of Internet connectivity and easy availability of devices may well deepen the issue of the digital divide among the youths in Arunachal Pradesh compared to those in other states.
- **Potential for Addiction and Excessive Use:** Because of the addiction, users of the social media platforms may spend most of the time on the sites leaving out many important activities like reading, exercise, and interaction with people face to face.

Conclusion

Education is a vital and dynamic segment in imparting skill to the young generation of Arunachal Pradesh through social media. This availability makes social media very advantageous as it provides opportunity for users to access information, pursue learning online, acquire the much-needed digital literacy, enhance creativity as well as networking.31 With Arunachal Pradesh being a relatively vast state with distant reaches, social media play a vital role of breaking barriers and connecting user to much needed resource and networks. Nevertheless, there are certain social impacts of social media which should be recognized and discussed. Possible negative effects include distraction, receiving/ disseminating fake news and information, cyber bullying, and violation of privacy among the youths. Other issue worthy of discussion is the digital divide that should be managed in order to extend the utilities of social networks to youth in the state. In conclusion, social media is a potential tool that gives much strength to the youth in Arunachal Pradesh in their educational endeavors and skills enhancement. Thus, if the essential features will be developed and managed properly, social networks can actively contribute to the further responsible growth of the young generation in this bright and active state.

References

Ansar, J. A. N., & Khan, N. A. (2020). Exploring the role of social media in collaborative learning the new domain of learning. *Smart Learning Environments,* 7(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-020-00118-7 .

Asuncion, J. V., Budd, J., Fichten, C. S., Nguyen, M. N., Barile, M., & Amsel, R. (2012). Social Media Use ByStudents With Disabilities. *Academic Exchange Quarterly,* 16(1), 30-35.

Fardouly, J., Diedrichs, P. C., Vartanian, L. R., & Halliwell, E. (2015). Social comparisons on social media: The impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood. Body Image, 13, 38-45.

Kalia, G. (2013). A Research Paper on Social media: An Innovative Educational Tool. *Issues and Ideas in Education,*Vol. 1,pp. 43–50.

Kumar, D. R., Upadhyay, K., & Bhaskar, D. K. (2024). Role of Social Media in Developing

Creativity Among Youth. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(6), 2040-2046. https://doi.org/10.5958/2829-7863.2024.00039.9.

Liu, Y. (2010). Social media tools as a learning resource. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange,* 3(1), 101-114.

Lockyer, L. & Patterson, J. (2008) "Integrating social networking technologies in education: a case study of a formal learning environment. *Proceedings of 8ᵗʰ IEEE international conference on advanced learning technologies, 529-533.*

Meena, V. K. (2013). Role of Social Media in Education. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT),* 1(3), 957-960. www.ijcrt.org.

Piotrowski, C. (2015). Emerging research on social media use in education: A study of dissertations. *Research in Higher Education Journal.* Vol.27, pp.1-12.

Rideout, V., & Fox, S. (2018). Digital health practices, social media use, and mental well-being among teens and young adults in the U.S. *Hopelab and Well Being Trust.*

Srivastava, P. (2012). Social Networking & Its Impact on Education-System in Contemporary Era. International Journal of Information Technology Infrastructure, Vol. 1(2), 11-18.

Stanciu, A; Mihai.F. and Aleca, O. (2012). Social networking as an alternative Environment for education.. *Accounting and Management Information Systems,* Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 56-75.

Williams,R.W. (2012). Emerging research on social media use in education: A study of dissertations. *Research in Higher Education Journal.* Vol, 27,pp.1-12.

Zhao, S., & Liu, C. (2019). The negative impact of social media on youth creativity: Mechanisms and interventions. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth,* 24(2), 210-224.