

Social media has changed the way humans gather knowledge and create opinions. The useful part about social media is that everyone can share what they know and think. The dangerous part is also that everyone can share what they know and think. Because there are so many people sharing their ideas, chances are that many people share the same ideas. This can, in combination with the social media algorithms, lead to 'echo chambers'. People that get caught in an echo chamber get fed the same opinions from different content creators by the algorithm. This can lead to an unintended change in the opinions and behavior of the social media user.

This phenomenon can be dangerous, as many people share misinformation on social media platforms. This could be intended or unintended. An example would be the Flat Earth movement. Over the past couple of decades, the amount of Flat Earth believers or 'Flat Earthers' have drastically increased. The reason for this is the Youtube algorithm in combination with the great amount of uneducated people sharing their ideas and 'knowledge'. The Youtube algorithm, just as any other social media algorithm, has the purpose to keep users as long as possible on their platform. So, when you watch a video about the flat earth, the algorithm will give you more videos on that topic, as it most likely interests you. Unknowingly people watch dozens of videos on this topic and start to believe what they hear and see.

So, from this information we can conclude that echo chambers seriously impact the lives of many social media users. But, is the impact dangerous? People that start to believe in things that are scientifically disproven, can lead to great distrust in science in general. Skepticism about the world leads to, and has led, to great discoveries. Skepticism is the start of science. But, skepticism about the scientific method leads to conspiracy theories, instead of constructive hypotheses. Echo chambers are dangerous for social media users, as they can mislead people heavily. Echo chambers are dangerous for science, as people start to trust their echo chamber more than scientific research.