

# COVID-19: THE IMPACTS OF DIGITAL MEDIA ON YOUTH

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Accepted: 14.03.2022

Published: 01.04.2022

**Keywords:** Digital Media, Youth, Covid-19.

## Abstract

Digital media has rapidly transformed the ways in which youth interact and socialize with one another in their daily life, which has contributed a lot to an ongoing debate about whether social media is helping or harming youth of today in this COVID-19 pandemic. In this period of the pandemic, media has played a key role in both ways; either positively or negatively. It is up to the user how they see it and use it; either they are using it as a blessing or a curse. This paper throws light on some impacts of uses of social media during COVID-19 lockdown and how people see it; a boon or a bane.

## Paper Identification



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## Introduction

In the last 50 years, media influence has grown rapidly with an advance in technology. First there was the

radio, then the newspapers, magazines, television and now the internet. Today, we all live in a media-dominated world. Media is a way for the members of the society to keep themselves informed about what is happening around them. It is also the major source of entertainment. By creating an image appealing to the youth, media controls the variety of material youth incorporate in their daily lives. Their images, which mostly consist of sexuality, violence, coarse language and revealing clothing, have a negative impact on the youth. Exposure to violence in the movies, video games and music videos increases the likelihood of physical and verbal aggressive and violent behavior, thoughts and emotions in youth. Watching certain programs may encourage irresponsible sexual behavior.

Consumer behavior among youth is also shaped by media to a great extent by lucrative offers and trend setting. There are different types of media used by the companies to influence the purchase decision of the consumer. It has led to materialistic culture and caused a situation of cultural lag, a state of dilemma for youths who are in a state of transition between tradition and

modernity, it creates a loophole for those who are not able to access these products, at this juncture media gives them alternative ways to solve their feeling of relative deprivation. This is often observed in form of growing rate of crime among youth. It has led to inculcation of usage of alcohol among youth as a fad.

Family school and peer group have transferred, to some extent, their socialization role to media. However, in this role media proves as a protective or risk factor for youths. Youths today set their life goals in form of their career, their role models under a great impact of media.

Media is thus becoming a third parent for youth to suffice their aspirations.

The youths of today spend inordinate time watching television, listening FM music and interacting on social websites over internet, but, the most important catch here is that they have grown up along with television. Among all other mediums at least TV has been there with them almost all the time. Such enormous exposure of the youths to the TV tends their aspirations, psychology, behavior, culture and socialization a little away from the normal course. Although, the scientific debate over, whether media impacts the youth or whether it brings about aggression, unrest, isolation among the youth, seems to be quite complete, the main critical task that remains is to investigate the views of the youth themselves on these issues.

### **Positive uses of social media during lockdown**

Our planet is currently going through a crisis situation that we have never imagined. This is the right time to use social media as a boon and utilize different opportunities that social media has provided us with. Social media marketing is an excellent tool for businesses using social media. Everything is now just one click away. One can create their own online

business stores. People can increase their brand awareness, boost sales partners with influencers and also promote their business to the targeted audiences. In the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a lockdown either completely or partially, everywhere. So the market sellers started doing their business online.

School, colleges, and universities students were attending their lectures via different social media apps, for instance, zoom meeting app, Google meet app, Google classroom app, Telegram or WhatsApp, etc.

Youngsters who were free from their online education learned many skills. In this lockdown, people were using social media to gain information about the COVID-19 pandemic, its causes, and prevention.

Somehow one can say that people took many advantages from social media while staying at their homes. But everything has some negative aspects as well so now let's discuss some of the negative aspects of social media during COVID-19 lockdown.

### **Negative uses of social media during lockdown**

During the lockdown, people used social media platforms to spread information about COVID-19 to some extent it is a positive point but the nature of the impact of social media panic among people depend on an individual's gender, age, and level of education. Many users spread fake news, treatments of covid-19 and also the propaganda against vaccination. Social media has played a key role in spreading anxiety about the COVID-19 outbreak in different parts of the world. During social media youngsters spent/wasted their precious time playing games like Pubg or Ludo etc. This created anxiety and frustration among them. Using social media apps, like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, continually is harmful to the physical and mental health of youngsters. Some students were even distracted from studies and lost their interest while

attending their online sessions and they normally switched to the social media apps for scrolling.

Social media has both positive and negative impacts on our daily life. Its uses were increased during pandemics. It is up to the user whether they use it either boon or bane. It is more than dangerous for them if they especially our teens and youth use it negatively. Social networking has been evidenced to have both positive and negative effects on our youths. People should come to an end conclusion whether to go on using the sites or stop or even moderate their usage. Parents should guide and advise their kids on current matters just like the usage of social media and warn them of its negative impacts to them when ill-used or overused. The education syllabus also should be revised in order that it can include social media studies in its disciplines so as to alert students that they have to take care in their social media usage.

## Conclusion

Whether social media is a boon or bane, a blessing or curse totally depends on how people use it. Social media can give huge benefits if they use it positively, on the other hand, if they waste a big chunk of our time on social media just to pass the time.

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