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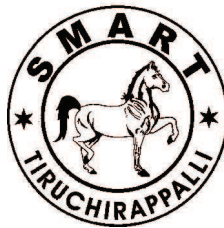
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**SOCIAL MEDIA EMPOWERMENT ON YOUTH CAREER
DEVELOPMENT - A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO INDIA**

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Abstract

Social media is one of the powerful modes to create awareness in the entire world. In the last two decades, social media have become more popular among the people, irrespective of age, sex, rich, poor, etc. It is noted that 3.2 billion people use social media in the world and in India, 351.4 million are in social media. India is the second largest country, next to China, in youth using social media. Having this in mind, the current study has explored the use of social media in youth career opportunities and career development. The core objective of the study was to analyse social media's influence on empowering youth in their career opportunities and development in India. For this purpose, current study used a non-random sampling technique and a sample size of 560 respondents. Youth, who were studying or professionally qualified freshers, were the respondents. The study identified the existence of relationship between youth and social media for career opportunities in areas like information for recruitments and entrepreneurship (start-up).

Keywords: *Social Media, Youth Empowerment, Career and Development*

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1. Introduction

World has entered the networking era and the rapid and enormous expansion of the World Wide Web has very high degree of influence on the development and growth of the Indian youth. India, with 451 million internet users, is the second biggest country in the entire world, next to the Republic of China, in terms of internet users. In the world, around 2.5 billion people are regular users and this rate is growing very fast over the years. In India, 351.4 million people use social media, with a penetration rate of 26%. By the year 2022, the population of India is expected to have more of younger age population. It is going to have 500 million Indian citizens, at less than 25 years of age and more than two-thirds of the Indian young population will belong to workable group. By considering this fact of growing India's young generation, there is a need for appropriate infrastructure in education, to develop their skills and provide adequate opportunities, to get employed or to become start-up entrepreneurs (<http://timesofindia>). The need of the hour is that India requires overall development of the youth, so that they can contribute to the development of the nation (Kumar et al., 2021). The only way to achieve this is to empower youth. It is stated that the vision of the Indian government is to identify the key potential areas like education, employment, skill development and entrepreneurship for the Indian youth (<https://iasscore.in>). World Wide Web and Social Media are innovative instruments with a very wide scope for career opportunities for the youth. Social networking enables access to information, videos sharing, social groups, learning opportunities and career development. With the growth of high speed internet access and advanced smart phones, it has made the social networking an unavoidable media for Indian youths to explore the vast opportunities in career

development around the world, which might not be possible without internet and social media. On a professional level, Indian youth should empower themselves by making use of social media like Facebook, Orkut, Google+, WhatsApp and Instagram LinkedIn or other similar social media, to expand and broaden his or her career.

2. Review of Literature

Advent of internet and social media has turned the world into one country while accessing information, across boundaries (Purva et al, 2015, Shabnoor, 2016). All over the world, people use social media to share information and get connected with likeminded people (Mahmoudi, 2008). Social media refer to “the many relatively inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools, that facilitates anyone to publish and access information, through a common effort, or build relationship” (en.wikipedia.org). Social networking saw an enormous growth in India and also the social networking sites are growing fast. Youth use internet for online purchasing, downloading e-contents and reading e-books (Neelamalar, 2009). The influence of social media and social networks on young generation is very significant now-a-days (Tariq,2012). Generally, people develop social network/relations with other like minded people, having similar personal or career interests (Akram, 2017). The concept of social networking is grouping of individuals. They are like small communities, formed through online. These communities can be students of one or more universities, college, or people belonging to the work places who share their information and ideas/knowledge among each other (Vital, 2008, Rithika.M, et al, 2013). Majority of these groups always include the youth because of their altering behavior with respect to their personal activities (Acquisti, 2006). In the use of social media, compared to the adults, the

Indian youth are more focused and they meticulously use social media for their career development. Some authors feel that social media have opened the Pandora box of unwanted pictures, images and unwanted videos among youth, also some religious links not suitable for them (Shabir et al, 2014).

Zahid et al, (2015) revealed that users of Social Networking Sites (SNS) avoid social gathering and experience less physical interaction with people. Akashdeep, et al (2017), in their study on social networking impact on the Indian youth, report that the direction of the culture of a country is evaluated by the direction taken by country's youth. Samy (2017) made an effort to develop ethical guidelines for internet-related research and faced unresolved ethical challenges. The effects of social networking reveal both positive and negative aspects. Social network helps and assists young professionals, to explore their skill set in the market and look for more business. Communication and information sharing has become more simple among youths through social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram etc (edudemic.com). Newer technology, in the field of storage, has made it simple for the MSME businesses to use the social media platform to project their business in a wider market (Shabnoor, 2016).

3. Statement of Problem

The popularity of social media, among the youth in India, is measured by the fact that on an average, 3-4 hours are used in such media, for sharing social and personal information through these platforms. In the recent period, youth enrollment for higher education is 27.4% (AISHE) and graduation rate also has steeply increased. Under these circumstances, they are forced to compete in upgrading their skills and grabbing the opportunities in the competitive

employment market. Thus, social media has emerged as one of the backbones of modern technology, which highly influences them in enhancing their career development in job placements, or in starting a new business.

4. Need of the Study

The basic idea of social networking is sharing of information. Young Indians have developed more interest in social media and it helps them to share more and more new things, new ideas and innovations much faster. In other words, social media is an excellent way to gain new ideas and sharing career opportunities among the youth. Hence the development in the social media and its high growth rate in sharing the career opportunity information have to be explored.

5. Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the influence of the social media in empowering youth in the society.
- To identify the factors of social media for youth career opportunities and development

The current study proposes to measure the influence of social media in youth empowerment through their career and development. In this research, the researchers had identified independent factors, namely, education, entrepreneurship, employment, and socio-cultural, which directly affect the career and development of the youth (dependent variable), through the intermediate variable of empowerment of youth.

6. Hypotheses of the Study

NH1: There is no association between education and career opportunity and development

NH2: There is no association between socio-cultural and career opportunity and development.

NH3: There is no significant mean difference between the social media access and career opportunity and development

7. Research Methodology

Research Methodology is a systematic and structured way, to solve a problem. Research methodology provides the work plan of research.

7.1 Sample Selection

A structured questionnaire, on a 5 point likert scale, was used as the survey instrument. More than 600 questionnaires were distributed in major metropolitan cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore. Youths who had completed their studies, were chosen for the current study. 588 questionnaires were returned, of which 28 questionnaires were incomplete and 560 completed were found usable.

7.2 Sources of Data

The study employed two sources of data. The primary data were collected through structured instruments and secondary data, through published information like newspapers, research articles, thesis and digital sources. The Reliability Test was carried out and all study constructs' reliability scores were found to be more than 0.82

7.3 Period of Study

The study was undertaken during the period from December 2019 to February 2020. During this period, India witnessed more usage of social media among youth in all the areas like entertainment, educations activities and information sharing.

7.4 Tools used in this Study

To analyze the data collected, the statistical tools used were the KMO and Bartlett's Test, Analysis of Variance, Chi-square and SPSS. Version 16 statistical software was used.

8 Data Analysis

The **Table-1** shows the respondents' primary use of social media. 20.5% used

WhatsApp as the primary social media, 19% replied on Face book, 18.4% used LinkedIn, 17.5%, Twitter, 13.6%, Instagram and 11% of respondents employed You Tube as the primary social media.

8.1 Descriptive statistics of factors for the career and development

The **Table-2** shows the perception of youth towards career opportunities and development. Youth were asked to rate their opinion towards their perception of career opportunities and development. Mean and standard deviation values were calculated for each statement. The calculated mean values ranged from 1.73 to 2.37. From the mean values, it was found that employment reported a high mean of 2.37, followed by education (2.16), socio-cultural (2.09) and entrepreneurship (1.73). Further, the calculated deviation values were between .644 and 1.096.

8.2 The factors influencing youth for career empowerment

From the **Table-3**, it is observed that employment was the most important factor and it consisted of 5 variables. Next was education, with 7 variables. The third factor was socio-cultural, with 4 variables. The fourth factor was entrepreneurship, with 7 variables.

8.3 Determining the association between the Factors and Career Opportunity & Development

The **Table-4** shows the association between the various factors and career opportunity & development. To test the association, Chi-square test was applied. It was observed from the chi-square tests that for the association between factors of education and socio-cultural and career opportunity & development of the respondents, the p-value was 0.000, which was lesser than 0.01. Hence **NH-1: There is no**

association between education and career opportunity & development, was rejected. In other words, there was association between the factors of education and socio-cultural and career opportunity & development. The factors of employment and entrepreneurship recorded p-values of 0.004 and 0.001 respectively and they were lesser than 0.01. Hence **NH-2: There is no association between socio-cultural and career opportunity & development**, was rejected. In other words, there was association between socio-cultural and career opportunity & development of the respondents.

8.4 Determining the association between the Social Media Access and Career Opportunity & Development of Respondents

Table-5 explains the influence of social media in empowering Indian youth, towards career opportunity & development. It is observed that the evaluated value of .000 was less than 0.01, and hence the **NH-3: There is no significant mean difference among the social media access and career**, was rejected. In other words, there was notable mean difference between Face book, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram and empowering youth on career opportunity & development.

9. Findings of the Study

The current study revealed that majority of respondents relied on WhatsApp for exploring their career opportunity, compared with users who employed LinkedIn for their career opportunity. YouTube contributed very little for the Indian youth, towards their career opportunity exploration. Since the age group taken for the current study was above 18 years, majority of respondents reported that they depended on social media for employment rather than for

education. Out of the four factors, based on which the data were analysed, employment recorded the highest influence on the Indian youth, followed by socio-cultural activities. The relationship between the factors of education and entrepreneurship and career development towards using social media, reported positive association, which implied that social media played a vital role in empowering the Indian youth towards their career development. Further, development and socio-culture of the region reported positive relationship. Socio-culture influenced the Indian youth, to identify himself/herself as an entrepreneur or employee. In this regard, social media helped the youth to recognize them and develop their career opportunity.

10. Suggestions

The study on the social media empowerment of Indian youth towards career development, suggests that the Indian youths have not yet fully utilized the social media for their career development. Indian youth have to positively optimize the usage of career networking social web portals like LinkedIn more for their career growth. It is also suggested that the Indian youth have to spend more time in developing social network, which would enhance their career development rather than spending time on entertainment social networking and unproductive information sharing.

11. Conclusion

The current study was initiated to find the influence of social media in empowering Indian youth towards career opportunity and career development. The major factors identified were education, employment, socio-cultural and entrepreneurship, for the usage of social media in career development. The main outcome of the study was that the study found correlation between Indian youth and usage of social media

towards their career opportunities and identified the factors which influenced the social media use, towards their career development. Further, the factor of employment recorded the highest impact in empowering Indian youth, towards career opportunity and development, followed by education, socio-cultural and entrepreneurship.

12. Limitations of the study

The current study was restricted to only youth and their career development with the help of social media. But social media usage in career development is also widely used by other age groups as well. The study was conducted only in India and confined to major cities.

13. Scope for Further Research

The study had considered a small proportion of the Indian population. The study can be widened, based on the gender, geographical location or state wise. Further study on these lines can reveal a wide scenario about the impact of social media, in empowering the career and development of the youth. The analysis can also be extended to other economies as well.

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Table-1: Results of Frequency of Youth using Social Media

S. No	Name of Social media	No of respondents	% respondents	S. No	Name of Social media	No of respondents	% respondents
1	Face book	106	19	4	YouTube	62	11
2	Twitter	98	17.5	5	LinkedIn	103	18.4
3	WhatsApp	115	20.5	6	Instagram	76	13.6
					Total	560	100

Source : Primary Data computed using SPSS Software

Table-2: Results of Descriptive Statistics showing the Efficiency of Factors for the Career and Development

S.No		Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Education	2.16	0.911
2	Employment	2.37	1.096
3	Entrepreneurship	1.73	0.644
4	Socio-cultural	2.09	0.941

Source: Primary Data computed using SPSS Software

Table-3: The Results of Various Factors Influencing Youth for Career Empowerment

Factors	Variables	Factor loading
Education	Reference of latest books, journals	0.515
	Learning latest technology changes	0.713
	Sharing and gathering knowledge	0.713
	Upgrade employability skills	0.602
	Sharing information about internship and industry project	0.765
	Enable to equip for placement	0.753
	Gathering information about industry expectation and in upgrading self	0.580
Employment	Enable to understand and share peer group views and enterprise	0.746
	Chances to update and upgrade myself in changing environment	0.602
	Career growth facilities	0.599
	Changes to upgrade in industry and environment changes	0.881
	Chances to analyse new vacancies across the globe	0.625
Entrepreneurship	Sharing and gathering startup policy and procedure	0.597
	Business opportunities in sector and area level	0.641
	Financial schemes assistance, sharing information to startups	0.692
	Sharing startup experiences and motivating youth empowerment	0.776
	Gathering marketing opportunities	0.599
	Sharing innovation adopted in business	0.731
	Sharing customer profile and personal touch	0.825
Socio-cultural	Enable to understand social changes to equip self	0.819
	Understanding our own cultural values to adopt in the society	0.774
	Sharing cross-cultural values	0.628
	Unethical practice, social services and economic values	0.639

Source : Primary Data computed using SPSS Software

Table-4 : Results of Chi-square Test showing the Association between Various Factors and Career Opportunity & Development

S No	Factors	Chi-Square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
1	Education	33.145	0.000*
2	Employment	43.315	0.004*
3	Entrepreneurship	21.211	0.001*
4	Socio-cultural	13.514	0.000*

Source: Primary Data computed using SPSS Software

Table-5: The Results of Significant Mean Difference among the Social Media Access and Career Opportunity and Development

Social Media		S of squares	F	Sig.
1.	Face book	649.764	1.855	0.000
2.	LinkedIn	388.517	0.902	0.002
3	WhatsApp	212.739	0.528	0.000
4.	Twitter	1570.186	0.809	0.004
5.	YouTube	4697.968	2.031	0.001
6.	Instagram	7064.636	3.370	0.000

Source: Primary Data computed using SPSS Software