

Highlighting The Impact Of Internet Mediated Communication: Sharing/ Forwarding On Social Media By The Common Masses

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Abstract

In this era of the digital world all kinds of things keep popping up on social media these days, some of them are good too, but most of the things are irrelevant and not worth sharing or forwarding. Still, many people do share/forward them, they end up doing so out of some inspiration, curiosity or habit. But the root cause of this is something else. In fact, many researchers have found in their research that humans being social animals are very eager to share their thoughts, feelings etc. with other people. This is the reason why after seeing an article or video, they want more people to see or read it and feel the same as what they themselves have felt by watching or reading it.

They did not know when this mental illness gripped them. And this is not just a matter of one or two people, millions or maybe even more people are suffering from this. Yes, forwarding / sharing on social media is also a type of psychosis. It sounds strange, but whenever a person suffering from this sees or reads any content, then their mind is mechanically directed to forward and share those things with others.

The aim and objectives of this research paper are:

1. To inspect, survey and take positive and negative feedback from the masses regarding the issues related to the bombarding of information that they encounter on different social media platforms.
2. How do common masses deal with the problem of sharing and forwarding, and do they really know the correct means of tackling and filtering positive things out from the sea of information which is filled with plenty of useless and negative things.

Keywords: Digital world, Sharing and Forwarding, Psychosis, Filtration, Mental health, Positive news, Sea of information, Bombarding.

Introduction:

No doubt, this fast moving digital world of the internet has made our life so easy and comfortable. With the help of the internet we can find, search and see anything by just moving our fingertips on the keys or even by just speaking the related query on the mic of search engine bars. Now the internet has become part of our comfortable lifestyle, from exercising different government policies or work to privately owned businesses and from items of groceries to gasing of vehicles everything and everyone is directly or indirectly dependent on the internet. The concept of record rooms and archives is fading in this new digital age, everything is on the internet today to be easily found. But what if technology becomes trouble. One of the articles published by Pew Research Centre under the headline "Tech causes more problems than it solves" states the opinion of different experts. Such as Yaakov J. stein (chief technology officer of RAD Data communication based in Israel) says "The problem with AI and machine learning

is not the sci-fi scenario of AI taking over the world and not needing inferior humans. The problem is that we are becoming more and more dependent on machines and hence more susceptible to bugs and system failures. This is hardly a new phenomenon – once a major part of schooling was devoted to, e.g., penmanship and mental arithmetic, which have been superseded by technical means. But with the tremendous growth in the amount of information, education is more focused on how to retrieve required information rather than remembering things, resulting not only in less actual storage but less depth of knowledge and the lack of ability to make connections between disparate bits of information, which is the basis of creativity."

It was also mentioned in the same that Numerous experts described misinformation and fake news as a serious issue in digital spaces. They expressed concern over how users will sort through fact and fiction in the coming decade.

A research leader for a U.S. federal agency wrote, "At this point in time, I don't know how we will reduce the spread of misinformation (unknowing/individual-level) and disinformation (nefarious/group-level), but I hope that we can."

Jaron Lanier is considered one of the fathers of virtual reality and a veteran of silicon valley. He argues that social media and its algorithms are harming our health in his book 'Ten arguments for deleting your social media accounts right now'. Lanier contends that sites like facebook and twitter are dopamine farms that are reprogramming how you think and feel. He says " They are also causing political instability and are changing the global economy for the worse."

Somehow the root cause of this lies in the pages of our history. The manipulation of thoughts, ideas and emotion is not new that we are facing in the era of internet mediated communication. Actually it was started during the course of world war 1. It was the time when most of the

countries were indirectly or directly under monarchy. The subaltern class of society were forced not only mentally but emotionally and economically to serve the higher and privileged class of the society. The poor had to join the army and become a machinery to feed themselves and their family. To heed the minds of common people authorities depicted soldiers as very attractive gentlemen and most disciplined people found on the planet earth. It was portrayed that women fall for the soldiers because they are the most attractive and suitable catch for a woman and those qualities and features cannot be found in any other common man.

In the research paper titled 'Rethinking the Bullet Theory in the Digital Age' by Chinenye Nwabueze, Nigeria.

published in International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications (IJMJC) Volume 4, Issue 2, year 2018 states that ' In world war 2 Adolf Hitler used the media to spread Nazi propaganda in Germany, creating a unified force bent on conquering Europe. To the common observer, people truly seemed powerless to resist the messages that came from the media. For the first time, messages were crafted with the target audience in mind to achieve specific responses.

It was also added that "The “bullet theory” or "hypodermic needle theory" implied mass media had a direct, immediate and powerful effect on its audiences. The theory suggests that the mass media could influence a very large group of people directly and uniformly by shooting or injecting them with appropriate messages designed to trigger a desired response."

Arguments : Recorded response and feedback.

The first question arises : How can we tackle the unwanted bombarding of information on social media platforms? One of my friend and colleague Maitri (age 26) says while using whatsapp she identifies, blocks and mutes all those specific groups and people who push unnecessary messages and information in bulk, to tackle the bombardment of information. She adds that she opens those groups once or twice in a week to seek relevant data and information and she deletes unwanted and unnecessary things to avoid headache and unwanted mental stress.

The second question was asked to one of my known persons named Dheeraj Vishwakarma(age 27). The question was: What are the methods you apply to counter unwanted shared forwarded contents? In reply to this he said that "The best option to counter the unwanted shared forwarded content is to not touch it, or click on it. Neglecting and avoiding is the best solution to counter these things. He also added that there are lots of deceptive ways to attract people by the targeted contents in written format and through audio-visual media, but we should be wise enough to get the needful things. And the consumer must be avid but mentally attentive towards their choices of choosing the right contents." Dhiraj Vishwakarma also referred to Napoleon Hill's book *_Think and Grow Rich_* where the author has said: "There is no such reality as something for nothing."

So, apropos of the quoted line, he contended that nothing comes easy. By extension, something worth having is undoubtedly worth being earned. And we must be rigorously sceptical about the websites that put forward a number of fake advertisements which promise to give the consumers lots of benefits and, then, after manipulating the consumers, renege on the promises previously made.

The third question was: How do you filter positive things out from the sea of information? It was asked to Arun kumar shrivastava (age 63). He stated that people filter the content based on their own interest. One can find and filter the content which matches their personal interest and subject they like most. He also added that he himself filters content by his interests such as he likes to surf the internet and watch videos on spirituality, health and ayurveda.

The fourth question was asked from Vishal kumar (age 31), the question was: How to ignore and avoid provoking or explicit content on the internet? In reply he said that 'It's just a kind of virtual world, it is somehow indirectly related to our real world but it's not the real world where we all exist. Earlier, it was mostly used by educated people, now it is being used by people of all ages. Children are especially motivated to surf the internet or to play different kinds of virtual games where they live and feel the life of different gaming characters which fascinates them. While surfing, negative things attract the most, and when we talk about the internet it is sea within sea. So, sometimes people becomes the victim of depravity of sexual desire and they go incognito and surf different sites to see explicit contents or pornography to virtually satisfy themselves. He also added that when the search is content centred and result oriented then there's less chance to get attracted by diverse contents. Especially for children and minors, features like parental lock etc. could also be used to stop them from watching contents which are not watchable.

Conclusion

Every problem comes with some solution, in the case of technology and the internet it could not be considered a problem if used wisely by the common masses for communication and positive gains. No technology is made to harm or affect us, rather it is to provide us with a better and

more comfortable life. We all know the sequences of consuming negative and positive content. So, as an audience and a consumer we must notice and monitor our time that we spend on different social media platforms. We must become attentive towards sharing forward contents, if someone is attentive and knowledgeable to stop the chain of forwarding any content on any social media platforms then it'll gradually stop. People are becoming aware and now many among us can easily point out and separate deep fake and pirated videos out from the genuine contents. However, Many social media platforms have come forward to tackle these things by adding updates like filling reports on non-genuine and fake contents. Giant social media platform Meta and twitter has appointed grievance officers in india and other countries to hear the problems and difficulties of authority as well as common mass

At last I would like to end my paper by mentioning what Shashi tharoor has mentioned a few years ago on his twitter handle. It was believed that he has coined a new term which is "webaqaof" And he also defined the word as "one who believes every claim or allegation on the internet & social media must be true".

So, it is now clear that whether it's sharing and forwarding, bombardment of information or filtering genuine content out from the clouds, the foremost thing that is needed for all is their own will and intellect that can help to avoid, recheck, counter and avoid the fake contents and it'll also help to break the chain.

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