USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG YOUTH: A STUDY OF SELECTED INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN LUCKNOW CITY

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Social networking sites are not only popular for providing a platform for chatting, sharing scraps, videos, pictures etc. but also for discussing social issues. Social networking phenomenon has emerged over the past ten to fifteen years. In that time, social networking sites have grown from a niche to a mass online activity, in which tens of millions of internet users are engaged, both in their leisure time, and at work. However, there has been very little research on the socio-economic impact of these sites in the Indian context. The impact of social networking sites on the youth of India has been both positive as well as negative. Social networking is a phenomenon which has existed since society began. Internet medium is developing with the increased usage and understanding of how to use email, could shop online, and search the web for recipes or the long- lost instruction manual for a piece of equipment in the garage, etc. Now, internet is more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Myspace, and Orkut. These are some of the tools and technology associated with a recent phenomenon called social networking and is present everywhere. Present paper purports to examine use of social media among the youth perusing higher education in higher education institutions in Lucknow city.

INTRODUCTION

Youth constitute about 2/5th population of the country. Indian youth today are going through a period of uncertainty about their future leading to a sense of frustration and cynicism. Avenue for productive employment are limited and young people are getting increasingly involved in crime and other anti-social activities. It is, therefore, imperative that the agencies responsible for planning and delivering youth development programmes should address the concerns and problems of youth urgently. The forces of modernization, globalization and economic liberalization have

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created great opportunities for youth however; a large segment of youth is facing severe challenges in realizing the development potential and participation in development process. The National Youth Policy, 2014 has provided a plan of action which gives new direction and impetus to youth development programmes in the country. Present paper purports to examine the status, issues and challenges being faced by Indian youth.

Youth is commonly understood as a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. Youth and adulthood have two dimensions viz., biological and social. Planning Commission, Government of India has designated youth to the age of 15-35 years. Youth in the age group of 15-29 years comprise 27.5 per cent of the population. At present, about 34 per cent of India's gross national income is contributed by the youth, aged 15-29 years. However, there exists a huge potential to increase the contribution of youth by increasing their labour force participation and productivity. Government of India currently invests more than Rs. 90,000 crores per annum on youth development programmes. In addition, the state governments and a number of other stakeholders are also working to support youth development and to enable productive youth participation. A National Youth Policy, 2014 seeks to define the vision of the Government of India for the youth of the nation and identify the key areas in which action is required. The policy provides a holistic vision for the youth of India which is to empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations. The priority areas of national policy include creating a productive work force; developing a strong and healthy generation; instilling social values and promoting community services; facilitating participation and civic engagements; and supporting youth at risk and creating equitable opportunities for all.

In recent years, most countries in the world have been going through major economic, social and political changes that have had influence on the lives of young people. The scope of youth research in Asia is broad and varied. There is a fundamental problem about the defining themes and perspectives pertaining to different issues of

development and change in the context of culture, political system, social development and traditions (Rajendran and Paul, 2005). Youth research in Asia does not have strict boundaries, theories or themes for conducting youth studies rather it has emphasized on some of the pertinent youth issues, which have significant relevance for young people and have implications for policy, plan implementation and research. Youth values refer to believes that something is important, worthwhile, good and desirable for the youth to strive for (Ngai, 2007). Youth culture can be defined as young people's ways of living, behaviour and activities in the context of the wider cultures whereas youth sub-cultures are the specific forms of youth culture expression in terms of lifestyles and behaviours (Ngai, 2007). Youth identity is marked by developmental changes in various areas such as biological, social, psychological and cognitive development, and is affected by the changes in peer relations and friendship, family relationships and school institutions. It can also be shaped by neighbourhood characteristics, family's socio-economic status and ethnicity. The issue of identify comes into focus of the youth because they have experienced wider interaction with people, school, work and society and a changing relationship with family. The problem of unemployment for the youth in the phase of economic restructuring and global economy has been well realized by the policy makers and the development activists. Age, education, training, experience and cultural context become the determinant factors for the success of obtaining a job. In the recent years, advancement of computer technology and popularity of information technology centre among young people demonstrate increasingly influence on the youth's life and development. Helves Helve, Helena, and Holm, Gunilla (2005) have pointed out that the internet offers youth tremendous opportunities to explore new ideas, visit foreign lands, meet other young people, and participate in challenging activities.

Youth development refers to the increase of youth's capacity and adaptability in terms of a transition from an ego-centric orientation to socio-tropic orientation (Rosenberg, Ward, and Chilton, 1988). Important youth development outcomes are realization of potential, skills, social wellbeing, civic responsibility, volunteerism and transcendence (Cheung, Ngai, 2004). It is believed that youth can

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advance positive development through participation in youth programmes, volunteering, community-based services, school-based services, intervention programmes, mentoring programmes, training programmes, etc. Youth participation has become an important research theme among academics and youth researchers in recent years. Youth participation promotes youth's opportunity to be involved in youth activities, policy consultation, service planning and implementation (Ngai, 2007). Youth empowerment is an important theme in youth research. Youth empowerment may have different meanings to different people and different fields. However, the key focus should be on the position of opportunities and support for young people to learn and acquire knowledge and skills to manage their own affairs, to solve their own problems, and participate in decisions and programmes that affect them.

Social networking phenomenon has emerged over the past ten to fifteen years. In this span of time, social networking sites have grown from a niche to a mass online activity, in which tens of millions of internet users are engaged, both in their leisure time, and at work. The impact of these social networking sites on the youth of India is both positive as well as negative. Internet medium is developing with the increased usage and understanding of how to use e-mails, shopping online, and searching the web for recipes or looking out for the long-lost instruction manual for a piece of equipment in the garage etc. Now, internet is more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Myspace, and Whats App. These are some of the tools and technologies associated with a recent phenomenon called social networking and is present everywhere. Against this view point proposed study will highlight the impact of social networking sites on the interpersonal relationship among the youth pursuing higher education in India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh. The proposed study will provide theoretical framework and research inputs for understanding the dynamics of social media and its impact on interpersonal relations among the young populations.

METHODS OF STUDY

The present paper is based on a major study supported by ICSSR, New Delhi under the Post Doctoral Fellowship Scheme. The present study

is empirical in nature and is based mainly on primary data collected through field survey. The study focuses on national perspective however; the field survey is confined to the state of Uttar Pradesh. Lucknow city has been selected in the study. The selection of city is purposive. The city has higher concentration of urban population and it has been hub of educational institutions. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Central University, University of Lucknow, Amity University, Dr. Abul Kalam Technical University and   King George Medical University were selected for the survey. We have surveyed 605 students pursuing higher education in these universities. A set of interview schedules for students perusing higher education was developed. The interview schedules contained the relevant questions, research points, and scales of views related to socio –economic profile, accessibility of ICT and use of social media. The study has been conducted keeping in view of the following hypothesis:

H_1**:** Social media and social networking sites are becoming popular among youth in India.

H_2 : Accessibility and exposure of youth to social media and social networking sites has tremendously increased in recent years.

H_3: There is inequality in accessibility and uses of social networking sites among the youth belonging to different social groups and gender.

H_4**:** There has been an extreme use of social networking sites among youth pursuing higher education.

The following alternative hypotheses have illustrated and tested using the F test and chi-square test.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media plays a vital role in transforming people's life style. Social media includes social networking sites and blogs where people can easily connect with each other.   Social Networking involves the use of the internet to connect users with their friends, family and acquaintances. Social Networking websites are not necessarily about meeting new people online, although this does happen. Instead, they are primarily about connecting with friends, family and acquaintances you already have in real life. These sites allow you to share photos, videos

and information, organize event chat download music and even play games like Scrabble, Chess online. Often each of your friends, family or acquaintances will be friends with several other friends. Just like in real life, the connections between people aren't just one-on-one but a network of connections. This online social networking is very useful in spreading information, pictures and videos. Internet use has grown considerably in the last decade; the majority of young adults uses the internet daily if not more so (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Lenhart, Madden &Hitlin,2005;Sun et al.,2005). Today's college students (which consist of Generation Y or also named Millennial) are exposed to all types of technologies in many aspects of their lives (Browning, Gerlich, & Westermann, 2011). On a daily basis they use desktop computers, laptops, E-readers, tablets, and cell phones to actively engage in social networking, text messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more (Cassidy, Griffin, Manolovitz, Shen, & Turney, 2011). Online social networks (OSNs) have permeated all generations of Internet users, becoming a prominent communications tool, particularly in the student community. Thus, academic institutions and faculty are increasingly using social networking sites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to connect with current and potential students and to deliver instructional content. (Paul, Baker, Cochran, 2012). In addition, many researchers have argued that the attractiveness of the Internet could lead to excessive use. Past research has described this phenomenon as Internet addiction (Griffiths, 2000; Soule et al., 2003; Widyanto and Griffiths, 2006). On the other hand, Young (1998) argued that the Internet itself is not addictive, but highly interactive applications like online chatting can be addictive. Moreover, Balakrishnan and Shamim (2013) wrote an article called Malaysian Facebookers: Motives and addictive behaviours unravelled. In recent years an increasing number of studies have investigated the ways in which the Internet and social media facilitate acts of violence against children and adolescents (King, Walpole, & Lamon, 2007; Perren et al., 2012; Tokunaga, 2010). Social media has become recognized as a vehicle through which youth perpetuate acts of violence against their peers, such as bullying, harassment, dating aggression, and gang-related crimes. In addition, social media has also been used as a vehicle for inflicting self-harm—most notably, cyber-suicide (Cash, Thelwall, Peck, Ferrell, & Bridge, 2013; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Ruder, Hatch,

Ampanozi, Thali, & Fischer, 2011). Existing research does suggest that frequent exposure to violent activities and behaviors through social media has a detrimental psychosocial effect on children and adolescents (Marcum, Higgins, & Ricketts, 2010; Ybarra, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2007; Ybarra, West, et al., 2007). The overarching developmental task of adolescence, identity formation (Sales & Irwin, 2009), is inherently marked by adolescents' developing sexuality and interest in romantic attachments (Collins, 2003). Today's youth are avid users of social networking sites—e.g., Twitter. Electronic forms of youth violence, do, however, represent a growing public health problem in need of additional research and prevention efforts (David-Ferdon & Hertz, 2007). The first major category of social media-involved youth violence is cyber-bullying, or electronic bullying.

WhatApp, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Skype, LinkedIn, Blogs, Google Buzz and Orkut were some of the major social networking sites in which a number of respondents have opened their account. However, the proportion of respondents opening their account in social networking sites varies across the selected Universities. About 60 per cent respondents revealed that they are consuming less than two GB Internet data per day. It was found more pronouncing in State University (72.2 per cent) followed by Medical University (65 per cent). More than $2/5^{th}$ respondents revealed that they are consuming more than 2 GB data per day. It was found more pronouncing in Central, Private and Technical University. The majority of the respondents reported that they have been associated with less than 10 social networking sites. It was found more pronouncing among the respondents from State University followed by Technial and Medical University. However, a large proportion of respondents from Private University (67.1 per cent) and Central University (30.4 per cent) reported that they are associated with social networking sites of more than 10. More than $3/4^{th}$ respondents reported that they are accessing social networking accounts through smart phone. However, a significant proportion of respondents in Private University and Central University are using laptop and personal computer for getting access to social networking account. More than $2/5^{th}$ respondents reported that they are using social networking sites for more than 3 years. It was found more pronouncing among the respondents from Technical University (58.4 per cent)

followed by Medical University (50.4 per cent). Thus, about 58 per cent respondents were found using social networking sites for the period of less than 3 years. Slightly less than 2/5th respondents reported that they are spending 1-2 hours daily on social networking sites. This was found more pronouncing among the respondents from Private University followed by respondents from Technical University. However, about 47 per cent respondents revealed that they are spending on an average of more than 3 hours time daily on social networking sites. More than 2/3rd respondents reported that they have more than 40 contacts/friends on social networking sites. This was found more pronouncing among the respondents from Medical University followed by respondents from Technical University. However, a large proportion of respondents from Private University revealed that they have less than 30 contacts on social networking sites (62.3 per cent). The respondents were asked that how they use an online social networking. Search of information, keeping in touch with family and friends, making new friends, making professional and business contacts, and sharing videos and pictures were some of the major uses of online social networking. However, uses of online social networking vary across the universities.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The variables related to the use of social networking sites and the use of social media has been identified and then their scores have been added. For obtaining new variables i.e. social networking site and use of social media, the mean ± standard technique was used.

Mean		
Age of Respondent	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
Less than 20 years	5.1867	27.7327
r 20-25 years	4.3669	28.0000
R 25-30 years	4.2283	28.2381
R 30-35 years	6.0000	28.0000
Above 35 years	5.0000	28.0000
Total	4.7521	27.9319
F value	10.223**	5.583**

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The mean scores of the use of social networking sites and the use of social media have been found significantly different for all ages of respondents. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters. So, it can say that the hypothesis is accepted.

Mean		
Type of University	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
State University	4.5612	27.8449
Central University	5.3049	28.0732
Private University	5.7049	27.8361
Medical University	3.8699	28.1284
Total	4.7521	27.9319
F value	21.243**	3.648*

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance
* indicating significant at 5% level of significance

The mean scores of the use of the social networking site and the use of social media have been found significantly different for all types of universities. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters.

Mean		
Type of College/Institution	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
Engineering	4.8475	27.6780
Management	6.3043	27.6522
Commerce	4.4211	28.0000
Other	4.8595	28.0075
Medical	3.8699	28.1284
Total	4.7521	27.9319
F value	13.856**	5.370**

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The mean scores of the use of social networking sites and the use of social media have been found significantly different for all types of colleges and institutions. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters.

Mean		
Ownership of College/Institution	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
Government	4.5114	27.9587
Private	5.7049	27.8361
Total	4.7521	27.9319
	35.122**	1.756NS

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance
NS indicating the non-significance at desired level of significance

The mean score of the use of social networking sites has been found significantly different for all types of colleges and institutions. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters. In the case of the use of social media, the mean scores have been found almost same for the all types of ownership of institutions and it has been yielded no significant difference among all types of institutions. That is, it can say that all ownership institutions are using of the same level of social media.

Mean		
Affiliation of Institution/College	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
Central University	5.3049	28.0732
State University	4.4177	28.0000
Technical University	4.7500	27.6833
Private University	5.7049	27.8361
Medical University	3.8699	28.1284
Total	4.7521	27.9319
F value	16.456**	4.696**

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The mean scores of use of social networking sites and the use of social media have been found significantly different for all types of affiliation of institutions. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters.

Mean		
Ecological Background of Respondent	Social Networking Site	Use of Social Media
Rural	5.2913	27.7523
Urban	4.4034	28.0700
Semi-Urban	4.4824	27.9759
Total	4.7521	27.9319
F value	13.513**	7.572**

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The mean scores of the use of social networking sites and the use of social media have been found significantly different for all ecological background of respondents. However, the means for all categories are not very varying from the mean score for both the parameters. From the above results, it is indicating that the accessibility and exposure of youth to social media and social networking sites has tremendously increased in recent years. so that it can say that the hypothesis accepted.

Mean	
Social Category of Respondent	Level of Access
SC	21.9540
ST	18.4000
OBC	20.9130
General	24.1331
Total	22.5008
F value	12.052**

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The means scores for the level of access to social networking sites among youths belonging to different social groups have been found significant. That means accessibility of social networking sites showing inequality among the social category of respondents.

	Gender of Respondents	Mean	T test
Level of Access	Male	22.5684	0.394NS
	Female	22.3425	

NS indicating the non-significant at the desired level of significance

The means scores for the level of access to social networking sites among youths as male and female have been found no significant at the desired level of significance. That means the accessibility of social networking sites showing no inequality among the gender of the respondents. So, it can say that hypothesis for inequality in accessibility and uses of social networking sites among the youth belonging to different social groups have been accepted and in case of gender have been rejected.

The variables related to the utilization of social networking sites have been identified and then their scores have been added. For obtaining new variables i.e. utilization level of social networking sites, the mean ± standard technique used.

Type of University	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
State University	44	181	53	278
	15.8%	65.1%	19.1%	100.0%
Central University	11	69	2	82
	13.4%	84.1%	2.4%	100.0%
Private University	28	78	16	122
	23.0%	63.9%	13.1%	100.0%
Medical University	4	86	33	123
	3.3%	69.9%	26.8%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	39.866**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between types of university and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found types of university and utilization level of social networking sites.

Type of College/ Institution	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Engineering	6	88	24	118
	5.1%	74.6%	20.3%	100.0%
Management	14	32	0	46
	30.4%	69.6%	0.0%	100.0%
Commerce	3	14	2	19
	15.8%	73.7%	10.5%	100.0%
Other	60	194	45	299
	20.1%	64.9%	15.1%	100.0%
Medical	4	86	33	123
	3.3%	69.9%	26.8%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	50.528**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between types of college/ institutions and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found types of college/ institutions and utilization level of social networking sites.

Ownership of College/ Institution	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Government	59	336	88	483
	12.2%	69.6%	18.2%	100.0%
Private	28	78	16	122
	23.0%	63.9%	13.1%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	9.734**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between ownership of college/ institutions and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found in the ownership of college/institutions and the utilization level of social networking sites.

Affiliation of Institution/College	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Central University	11	69	2	82
	13.4%	84.1%	2.4%	100.0%
State University	36	89	33	158
	22.8%	56.3%	20.9%	100.0%
Technical University	8	92	20	120
	6.7%	76.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Private University	28	78	16	122
	23.0%	63.9%	13.1%	100.0%
Medical University	4	86	33	123
	3.3%	69.9%	26.8%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	57.016**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between affiliation of college/ institutions and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found affiliation of college/institutions and utilization level of social networking sites.

Ecological Background of Respondent	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Rural	43	157	30	230
	18.7%	68.3%	13.0%	100.0%
Urban	42	194	54	290
	14.5%	66.9%	18.6%	100.0%

Semi-Urban	2	63	20	85
	2.4%	74.1%	23.5%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	16.667**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between the ecological background of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found in the ecological background of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites.

Gender of Respondent	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Male	50	296	78	424
	11.8%	69.8%	18.4%	100.0%
Female	37	118	26	181
	20.4%	65.2%	14.4%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	8.194**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between the gender of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found between the gender of the respondents and utilization level of social networking sites.

Social Category of Respondent	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
SC	10	57	20	87
	11.5%	65.5%	23.0%	100.0%
ST	4	6	0	10
	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%

OBC	32	155	43	230
	13.9%	67.4%	18.7%	100.0%
General	41	196	41	278
	14.7%	70.5%	14.7%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	10.240NS			

NS indicating the non-significant at the desired level of significance

The chi-square test between the social category of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The value of chi-square has been not found significant. That is, it can say that there is no relationship has been found between the social category of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites.

Age of Respondent	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Less than 20 years	38	161	26	225
	16.9%	71.6%	11.6%	100.0%
r 20-25 years	34	173	41	248
	13.7%	69.8%	16.5%	100.0%
R 25-30 years	8	61	23	92
	8.7%	66.3%	25.0%	100.0%
R 30-35 years	7	17	12	36
	19.4%	47.2%	33.3%	100.0%
Above 35 years	0	2	2	4
	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	22.802**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

The chi-square test between the age of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites has been applied. The

value of chi-square has been found significant. That is, it can say that there is a significant relationship has been found between the age of the respondents and the utilization level of social networking sites.

Education Qualification	Utilization Level of Social Networking Sites			Total
	Low level	Moderate Level	Extreme Level	
Under graduation	34	116	20	170
	20.0%	68.2%	11.8%	100.0%
Graduation	2	45	6	53
	3.8%	84.9%	11.3%	100.0%
Post-Graduation	36	212	52	300
	12.0%	70.7%	17.3%	100.0%
Research	15	23	16	54
	27.8%	42.6%	29.6%	100.0%
Diploma	0	18	10	28
	0.0%	64.3%	35.7%	100.0%
Total	87	414	104	605
	14.4%	68.4%	17.2%	100.0%
Chi-Square Tests	41.917**			

** indicating significant at 1% level of significance

CONCLUSION

Social media is influencing every walk of life including social relations, society, politics, economics and business. The technological deterministic view presents the internet as an innovative force that has profound influence on children and youth; technology generates new patterns of expression, communication, and motivation**.** The social media like Blogs, LinkedIn, facebook, twitter, Skype, etc. are playing a very important role in consumer buying behavior, decision making process directly and indirectly. In recent trend of innovation in management and marketing social media become powerful and cost effective approach to promote products to consumer. The social media has affected every walk of life and youth are also not um – affected. Their communication, way of life and social relations have widely affected by social mead.

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