The Role of Social Media in the Rapid Fame of Internet Celebrities

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Abstract

Social media refers to Internet-based platforms for young individuals to connect with each other and learn public interaction, helping introverts develop their socializing and communicating skills. It has provided a stage for businesses to promote their products and individuals to publicize their works without any expenses or struggle. Those who've succeeded in showcasing their talents have become internet celebrities who have millions of followers who watch their every move and judge and criticize them, while most of them idolize their lifestyle.

This research paper addresses the side effects of immense and rapid fame that comes to these internet celebrities and the struggle and troubles they go through to achieve their fame and wealth, which causes them mental problems and depression.
Keywords: Social media, depression, publicity, invasion of privacy, Instagram, social networking.

Introduction

The internet has become an essential part of our lives and everyday activities. We highly depend on the internet to perform our everyday duties, which include office work, communication, education, academic assignments, navigating, gaining basic knowledge about a topic, looking for quick solutions for a problem, and socializing.

Social media refers to an online platform for individuals to connect with each other and build a network of relationships between people from around the globe. In the past decade, social media platforms have changed dramatically and dominated our lives and routine activities. It has changed the way people express themselves and share their opinions, thoughts, and updates about their daily encounters and feelings.

In 2017, about 2.34 billion people in the United States used social media and had online social profiles on different websites, which makes up 81% of the population. The growth rate of social media users from a year earlier was 3% and is expected to increase by the end of 2020. Hence, this shows the significance of social media in our lives and its influence on our perception of various subjects (Boyd,

Danah. 2007).

Websites like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are becoming official profiles of individuals to present themselves. It has become a major platform to share your opinions and thoughts while at the same time a place to connect with your family, friends, and strangers from around the world. It has increased interaction between people and improved the quality and convenience of communication.

Other more recent social media websites gaining popularity among young adults are Instagram and Snapchat, which have billions of users who spend hours on these social networking platforms. Children, young adults, and teenagers from around the world spend most of their time on these websites to share their personal information, very specific information about their daily activities, and provide pictures that can be seen by their friends and a billion other strangers if they have their profiles open to the public.

Discussion

With its increasing popularity, social media is dominating our routine lifestyle and influencing our mindset and perception of certain topics. Individuals spend hours scrolling down their newsfeeds, texting and connecting with new people while being involved in internet feuds and commenting wars.

Business on Social Media

Social media is the perfect platform for businesses to promote their brand, whether that is a small-scale new business, a niche, or a mass market. It helps businesses to reach their target audience through different networks and internet filters. They are able to reach the audience that already is looking for them or similar products.

Many businesses are only based on social media and earn thousands of dollars through their Facebook and Instagram pages. Others gain popularity through Instagram and promote various businesses on their profiles; that is how they become ‘Instagram celebrities’ or social media celebrities with millions of followers.

The internet and social media have changed the business industry, both for companies who want to promote their businesses and for consumers who see their advertisements and get suggested relevant material. Firms and individuals find it much easier to reach their target audience and convey their message.

Social Media Celebrities

Among all these social media platforms, Instagram and Snapchat are the recent market leaders that

have introduced a new wave of followers and fan following. People have gained immense fame overnight due to the viral culture of the internet and the unlimited sharing of ideas and trendy material.

Recently, it has become a trend for young people to share their healthy and wealthy lives on Instagram. Instagram is a platform that offers people the chance to live in the spotlight. People post pictures of the perfect body, fine views on their trips, and delicious food. Some people share their stories of how to conquer an illness and how their lives change after their bodies are transformed. It motivates plenty of people and collects an audience as well.

Instagram gives opportunities to ordinary people to attract millions of relevant followers that were impossible to reach before. However, these famous Instagram celebrities are depicted as perfect human beings with attractive looks, perfect bodies, and a dream job or career, which makes their lives stress-free. They live a glamorous celebrity life with their designer clothes and luxurious materials. But, it is not always true that these celebrities are happy in their lives and live the way they show they do.

We have found that people might pretend they have these perfect lives. In addition, famous people on Instagram also suffer from the expectations of followers and their vanity, in accordance with the revealing stories of Instagram celebrities. These followers provide the motivation to show yourself to the audience every morning when you open your eyes, even though you might not want to do it anymore. People's social media double life leaves them depressed and anxious.

Time Management

One of the reasons that Instagram celebrities find it difficult to manage their social media and stress over the overwhelming response from their followers is that they find it difficult to manage their social media celebrity status with their personal life. It takes up most of their personal space, dominates their everyday activities, and influences their lifestyle and preferences.
Bloggers and social media celebrities spend hours managing their profiles, promotions, and followers and keeping their fans up to date on their routines. In order to achieve the status that these celebrities have achieved, they are required to keep track of their followers and how they manage every post and the likes and comments on them. The task may sound very simple to a majority of people who have to do a real job to earn half of the amount social media celebrities are earning (Giles, David C. 2002).

The process is not limited to gaining followers but also maintaining them through constant engagement. Instagram celebrities reveal that to be a successful influencer on Instagram, one is required to have a good sense of humour, an opinion on every matter, and a unique selling point to present to the audience, which can be personality traits, personal style, and a culture that the majority of people do not have access to.

Insta-famous people have to provide their audience with new and fresh content every day, leaving their personal information at risk to the general public. These platforms provide talented individuals with good opportunities to be recognized by agencies and brands that hire them as ambassadors to promote their businesses.

It becomes very hectic and difficult for these celebrities to manage their personal lives with real-life responsibilities such as academics for college students, office work for employees, and family responsibilities while saving some personal time for themselves.

This hectic life can cause depression and anxiety, which lead to negative and violent behaviours, which can be easily shown in their social media activity and noticed by the millions of followers they have.

Larissa May, a fashion blogger, reported that it takes her about 17 hours a day to manage her blog and social media at the same time while catering to her academic responsibilities and performing the duties of a college student. Living a double life becomes very stressful and exhausting for young individuals who try to make money and become famous through platforms like Instagram.

Security Threats

Another reason for social media bloggers to be depressed and worried is the constant threat to their lives and property. Instagram celebrities share their everyday activities on social media, where millions of followers see their posts, and all these people are strangers who include overly obsessed fans who will do anything to reach them, jealous people who want to cause them harm, and others who fantasize about their lifestyle and, in the hope of something similar, might attempt a robbery.

There is always the risk of sharing too much personal information, which can be a threat to the security of these celebrities. They often avoid sharing their location on social media, and when they do, there is a risk of a crowd of fans and media reporters following them everywhere, which can cause a threat to them and their privacy.

Differentiating between the public profile and your personal life is a very difficult situation for most internet celebrities. Even though they are addicted to sharing all kinds of information about themselves on social media to attract an audience that is highly interested in their activities, celebrities are always afraid of being robbed, harassed, or harmed physically.

It becomes easier for hackers to hack their personal accounts and public social media profiles since they know a lot about their personality traits and the kinds of passwords set by them. Moreover, hackers make a constant effort to gain access to their personal information, which can include videos and pictures that are inappropriate for the general public, causing an invasion of their privacy (Fairchild, Charles. 2007).

The most threatening part about social media sharing is the risk of robberies. Since people often share their location, knowingly or unknowingly, with their pictures and posts, this attracts robbers to loot the properties of these Insta-famous celebrities who are known to be rich and have a luxurious lifestyle with expensive products in their closets and everywhere in their house.

An example of such attempts to hurt celebrities is the Paris robbery at Kim Kardashian's house, which left her emotionally devastated and mentally disturbed due to the attack. She described the situation in her interviews and in her reality TV show. She is said to be more careful now, but the incident has scarred her emotionally.

Criticism and Judgement

Imagine being seen by the general public at all times and being judged at all times. Social media celebrities keep their followers updated on their every move in order to keep them engaged. At the same time, they have to give a statement on every issue and be a part of it, sharing their opinions and points of view.

Opinions and points of view can be disagreed upon by many others, and this can lead to a feud in comments. If they share a wrong statement or fail to make their point, they are criticized for their words and judged for how they see the world around them. They are a constant target of bullying by millions of strangers who bring them down for several reasons.

Some Instagram celebrities that belong to minority races or have a different background are targets of racial slurs, verbal harassment, and abuse in the comments, while at the same time, their inbox is full of such messages.

Furthermore, these celebrities might be living the perfect life with their perfect, beautiful faces and ideal bodies, but they are also shamed for certain features or their body types. They are brought down by jealous crowds for all kinds of reasons. Strangers who see their profiles criticize them and make fun of their looks, statements, and personal styles.

Since they are ordinary people, there is a high chance they are imperfect like the rest of the public. But, due to their reputation and idolization, they are hated for different reasons by some people who might also try to bring them down (Khamis, S., Ang, L., & Welling, R. 2017).

Such negativity and discouraging comments can lead to serious mental sickness, self-esteem issues, and depression. Their continuous effort to look better and appear as perfect people can be tiring and exhausting, as they have to pretend to be someone they're not.

Invasion of Privacy

Although internet celebrities try to not mix their social media life with their personal lives to avoid an invasion of their personal space and privacy and to secure a few moments for themselves, there is always a threat to their personal life.

While they are trying to be a part of the news at all times, be recognized by the general public, and provide good content to their audience, Insta-Celebs often sacrifice the importance of their privacy and let strangers be aware of everything that happens in their lives, whether that is a breakup, an injury, a family disagreement or even the tiniest of issues that they face in their everyday lives (Dijck, José van. 2008).

Their lives are invaded by the social circles and the networks they have created. On one side of the story, these Insta-famous individuals are glad about the attention they receive, which gains them further followers and leads to more and bigger contracts and ambassadorships from brands. On the other side, their privacy is invaded by strangers from around the globe who judge them, interfere in their lives, and make comments openly about them.

This can scar these individuals for life due to the negativity shown by people full of hatred and jealousy. This causes them to doubt themselves and constantly deal with the hurtful words used against them, which can be emotionally scarring and mentally disturbing to accept.

Personal space, close friends, and family are the most important parts of every human's life in order to live a mentally healthy life and be happy with what they have. However, celebrities who live off Instagram likes and comments have little to no time for themselves, which can be torture for them.

They also hate the way they present themselves when the designer clothes they wear, the makeup they use, the cars they drive, or the restaurants they visit are sponsored, and people are aware of these traits of Instagram celebs.

According to an Instagram model who gained immense fame for her beautiful pictures and perfect body, the world of social media is far from reality, and internet models take hundreds of pictures with various photo-shopping methods to achieve the ideal look that will attract their audience and give them the opportunity to be famous and recognized by brands and agencies.

Conclusion

Since the internet has come into our lives and dominates our activities and duties, social media has also gained immense popularity among the younger generation. It has become a medium of communication; official emailing is a decade-old strategy to connect with people. The world of social media has become the market leader, while recent apps and social networking platforms such as

Instagram and Snapchat have become the most used apps for children, teenagers, and young adults.

Most businesses use it as a place to promote their brands and target their potential audience. It has provided ease for billions of people and provided a stage for millions of small-scale firms and niche markets.

Individuals have used the platform to gain popularity with millions of followers, score ambassadorships from firms, and earn money through advertisements on their social profiles that are seen by thousands of people every day.

These so-called online celebrities have cluttered private lives in sharp contrast to their public appearance. A heavy workload includes being well-dressed, modifying pictures, and publishing pictures that consume too much time and energy, leading to a lot of pressure on the body and a series of problems. At the same time, in order to ensure the number of followers, an excessive workload makes people unable to distinguish between virtual life and reality.

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