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## Role and Impact of Social Media on Literature

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**DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.10891929**

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### **Abstract:**

*Literature is one of society's broad and significant elements because it shows how people interact and socialize. The objective of literature is education and entertainment through songs, poems, stories, and drama. However, a challenge that limits production and access to literary content is media. Traditionally, media used to convey literature material, such as books, television, radio, and theatres were limited to people who could afford or access venues. Consequently, the spread of literary content was limited to specific areas. However, media and information technology advancement has created a paradigm shift in the production and dissemination of literary content. In the current global scenario, the Internet is increasingly becoming a central informational medium that is transforming the way we learn, teach, and communicate. Social media offers a public platform that allows an exchange of thoughts and ideas through posts, tweets, and comments, albeit with word or character count restrictions. Social Media is an agency by which something is conveyed or transferred. This research paper discusses the impact of social media and positive and negative effects of social media on literature.*

**Keywords:** *Literature, Social Media, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Positive Effects, Negative Effects, etc.*

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### **Introduction:**

Media plays an important role in Literature, Language and Society. There are social media sites for almost everything from books to movies to connect with other people. These Websites often viewed as beneficial in an age where sharing thoughts and ideas are important for innovations in Literature. There are many social Media sites. A piece of Literature can spread virally online because of social networking sites. There

are many Websites that have free E-books. Social Media functions are advancing as the digital age continues to grow and flourish. With Social Media the concept of literature is rapidly changing and transforming traditional view of Literature.

Literature that arises from the process of communication in social network has their focus on the interaction and communication between author and audience where by direct and indirect communication taken into account. Direct

communication can be classified as interaction between audience and author. Indirect communication can be classified as the silent signs of reader's presence such as likes, shares, followers, links etc. Both types of interactions are able to influence how the story is being told, the tone of the author and the comments following texts can be a part of literary text itself. The distinguished feature in social media fiction is the absence of mediator between author and audience.

“Media is literature in a hurry.”

– Mathew Arnold

What Mathew Arnold said about media holds true even today but with literature things have undergone a tremendous change. Today it has become a part of media and extended its limits in different dimensions. But to quote Francesca Baker's words, “Literature itself is media, a tool for messaging, communication and art.” Therefore, we don't need any other media for literature but the lightning fast speed of social media and the influence it has on the mass has relegated literature to a secondary position. Today literature itself is in a hurry; hurry of getting accomplished and then published, and for that matter social media has proved to be a boon. The advancement in technology has radically reframed and is continuously reframing the relationship between media and literature thereby foregrounding the necessity of new literary practices. To go by the statistics, 2.2 million books are published each year and apart from these books in print we have on-line literature in the form of PDF,

blogs, vlogs, FB, Instagram, Twitter, and You Tube etc.

### **Role of Social Media on Literature:**

Technology is advancing at a high pace and literature is changing with it. With the advent of social media, quick digital interactions appear to be the future of social communication. Because reader's emotional, temporal, and spatial relationship with books is changing rapidly (Sesek&Pusnik, 2014), the production and consumption of literature is also evolving to shorter and more frequent communications (Strain-Moritz, 2016). Short-short digital stories are now considered a new literary genre with different aliases such as flash fiction, mini-fiction, minute stories, sudden fiction, hint fiction, mobile phone fiction, and twitter fiction (Barnard, 2016). The trend of sharing thoughts in miniature form is growing in demand partly because of the diminishing attention spans of the readers. The authors aim to attract whatever amount of attention they can garner from readers with mite-sized attention span (Rudin, 2011).

Social media has succeeded in popularizing reading through online groups and hashtags, such as Instagram's “Bookstagram” and TikTok's “BookTok.” In these communities, people share content about books and reading, ranging from book reviews and recommendations to pictures and videos meant to aestheticize reading by making it seem like a beautiful and cultured thing that only a select few will appreciate and enjoy.

Due to this, more young people have come to declare themselves as readers and purchase books that are commonly promoted on these platforms. The influence of online platforms has led to a growth of the publishing industry through the increase of book sales, and certain books have gained rampant success because of attention on social media. Popular titles include “*The Song of Achilles*” by Madeline Miller, “*A Court of Thorns and Roses*” by Sarah J. Maas, and “*Fourth Wing*” by Rebecca Yarrows.

Among the most prominent features of web 2.0, we have Twitter, a social networking and micro blogging site which allows its user to express him in the limit of 140 words which was later extended to 280 words. The posts or tweets (as it is called) are dished out among the users through mails, messages or web. Though it was started as a medium of communication, today the users have stretched its limits and they are using it to write novels. Thus it has become a good and acceptable platform for literature. The first published book entirely composed on Twitter was John Roderick (musician)’s *Electric Aphorisms* which he composed in individual tweets between December 2008 and May 2009.

Like Twitter, Facebook is also a social media platform with 2.6 billion active users every month. It was founded in 2004 with an idea of connecting the students of Harvard University. Later on it was extended to other colleges including Ivy League. But today it can be used by anybody who claims to be above 13. There

are hundreds of groups on FB for each and every type of people. As far as writing and literature is concerned, there are groups for all kinds of literature.

Instagram, another such social networking app, allows the users to share their stories. It was launched in October 2010 and today it has more than 1 billion active users. The authors keep their fans updated about their work from jotting down their ideas, to the publication of their work. Some famous writers such as Paulo Coelho have followers up to 2.3 million.

Today You Tube is the largest online Social Media Website in the world. The site exceeds two billion views a day. This is a good platform for sharing and posting literary articles. It provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire across the globe.

### **Review of Literature:**

According to Parry (2010), Social media has become a way to commercialize literature as millions of books are becoming e-books through new tools like Google’s digital library. Parry (2010) questioned that due to digitization of literature and other subjects of humanities, these new tools are ‘taking humans out of humanities.’

Some scholars like, Moretti and Jockers stated that scholars should step back from scrutinizing individual texts to probe systems by counting, mapping and, graphing novels as there are 20,000 to 30,000 novels written by 19th century writers like, Dickens and Austen and majority of these works have never been

studied. Google books have been built to create more content to sell ads against. It was built with a perception that people would read one book at a time. Thus, it is noticed that social media and internet has affected learning and reading habits of individuals and have deeply impacted methodologies of research pertaining to linguistics and Humanities.

According to Erin (2014), Social media has given us opportunity to achieve recognition and stand out from the crowd. For instance, Nicholas Belardes wrote an imaginary love story titled “*Small Places*” by writing over 900 tweets which was covered by some of the top blogs and media sites including, Mashable, Reuters, and the UK Guardian. Erin (2014) has also mentioned negative impacts of this collaboration between social media and literature. For instance, she mentioned that love for books and libraries will die.

#### **Positive Impacts of Social Media on Literature:**

- Many authors like Goldstein Love have commented that social media has helped many writers to gain recognition and social media can help in reviving literature because most people use it as a tool of exchanging information and communicating with each other.
- Sites like Amazon are opening platforms for writers to self-publish their works and receive royalty according to sales. Thus, social media has opened new

opportunities for emerging and established authors.

- The publication houses use social media to promote a writer’s book and receive reviews. There are Facebook pages which are used by these authors to promote their works and gain recognition.

#### **Negative Impacts of Social Media on Literature:**

- As mentioned by Jacobs (2014), social media has led to minimalizing narratives of literature. A lot of people use abbreviations and incorrect language to creatively express them. Also, people have tendency to not read a poet’s text or composition in depth and still hit the like button.
- As James (2014) has rightly mentioned that social media leaves no space for deep analysis or understanding of literature because people are too busy in checking out pictures, GIFs, and messaging each other.
- Literature is based on self-reflexivity and social media does not give enough space for literary reflection or self-reflection as mentioned by James (2014).

#### **Conclusion:**

Most of the writings on social media are a sudden reaction to something that they have seen or read or heard and writing comes as a tool of catharsis.

Moreover, the stimulus given by social media is as strong as anything as there are no restrictions of space, time, form, meter or anything.

Digitization of literature has helped many writers to gain readership worldwide. Literature should be accessible and social media can help writers to gain hands on experience as social media can help writers to connect with established writers who can guide young writers and discuss about varied literary styles of narrating stories. Internet has connected the world irrespective of time and space. Technology has influenced how we write, think, and communicate with others. The popularity of quick social interactions on social media has transformed our communication patterns.

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