



Social Media Reels Trend: A Boon or Curse for the Young Adults

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ABSTRACT:

This review paper examines the phenomenon of social media reels and its impact on young adults. Reels, short video clips that can be edited with music and effects, have gained significant popularity on various social media platforms. This paper explores the potential benefits and drawbacks of the reels trend on young adults' well-being, mental health, social interactions, and overall lifestyle. By critically analyzing existing research and expert opinions, this paper aims to provide insights into the implications of social media reels and offers suggestions for promoting a healthy relationship with this digital trend. Social media has become an important part of life in today's time whether it is for entertainment or earning. Tiktok became very popular in India but when it has banned by the government many digital creators were trying different platforms then meta owned instagram took this opportunity and introduced short videos called "Reels" in 2019 after that the trend of shooting reels have increased among youngsters on facebook and instagram.

1. Usage of social media reels among people has increased:

Few apps have introduced the short videos and one of famous among them was Tik Tok. Target audience for this app was the middle and upper middle group people it was so popular across the country. It gave title to many people as artists, stars and influencers but because of some security reasons, the Indian government banned the app. Now those users of Tik Tok were looking for platform or apps and then meta introduced Instagram reels. The average time spent by adults on Instagram in India increased by 3.5% due to launch of Instagram Reels. (Saisha, 2021)

Instagram reels were used as a tools of marketing by many companies and business persons and advertising agencies. Media marketers, stars and influencers create more new trending and recreational content to attract more consumers. (Menon, 2022)

Numbers of Indian young adults on social media apps are increasing day by day. Meta-owned whatsapp, facebook, and instagram are the top apps in India. In September 2022, India reported 400 million users on whatsapp. Facebook is the second most widely used social media platform in India and reported 232 million Indians, wherever instagram had 231 million users. However, it is important to say that instagram has become more popular than facebook in terms of users and time spent. It can be justified that young adults aged 18 to 34 years were spending their time on instagram Reels. (Rathore, 2022)

1.2. Statistics of Usage of Social media Apps by People:

There are number of people using social media as shown in a recent study given by barnhart in 2022 are as following:

Demographic data and usage of Snapchat: Monthly active users were 319 million and their age group was 15 to 25 years. Number of females were 54.4% followed by 44.6% males were on snapchat. They spent more than 25 minutes per day.

- Demographics and usage of Youtube: More than 2 billion people of age between 15 to 35 years were monthly active. Females were 46% and males were 54% and they spent 30 minutes on you tube everyday
- Demographics and usage of Twitter: Number of daily active users was 211 million and their age group was 18 to 29 years. They spent 31 minutes per day on twitter in which 38.4% were females and 61.6% were males.
- Demographics and usage of instagram: Monthly active users were 2 billion and they were 25 to 34 years old. There were 48.4% females and 51.8% males and they spent 29 minutes per day.
- Demographics and usage of facebook: 2.91 billion was the number of monthly active users and their age group was 25 to 34 years old. There were 43% females and 57% males. They spent 33 minutes everyday on facebook. (Barnhart, 2022)

Audience of instagram had increased because of trending reels. India is the country with a higher percentage of google searches for instagram reels. Nine out of ten users watch videos weekly. Meta had given reports that 46.1% were females and 53.9% were males wherever 10.9% children above thirteen

were the Instagram Reels audience. Reels had become Instagram's [fastest growing feature world wide](#) popularity of reels have more than the Instagram stories. (Beveridge, 2022)

Instagram had more than [2 billion active monthly users](#) according to the latest meta reports. (Newberry, 2023)

2. Negative Impacts of Social media reels:

2.1 Reels affecting the domains of development:

- **Cognitive Domain:** Short-term memory based on the concept of conscious working memory. Short-term memory usually needs information to be continually repeated to be retrieved later and information is held for about 20-30 seconds and then starts to fade. Social media negatively affected the short term memory of the teenagers. (Nelson and Miller, 2020)

Social media can indeed have detrimental impacts on mental well-being. Numerous studies have linked the use of social media to various adverse effects, including disrupted sleep patterns, difficulty in regulating emotions, decreased academic achievement, and feelings of depression. (Hunsinger, 2022)

- **Social Domain:** Social media affects the working of our brain it can affect the natural serotonin. The addiction to social media had more increased when users involved in such activities as following certain accounts or posting regularly to stay in touch with friends and relatives. Social media is now replacing physical human interactions. Usage of social media had increased and it played a role to increase the addiction of internet statistics as well. (Geysler, 2022)
- **Physical Domain:** People who were using social media more than two hours in a day they were more likely to have poor sleep and developed poor sleep habits and more likely to gain imbalance weight. So much screen time can lead to poor posture and many problems, such as back pain, neck pain, and headache and so on. (Mukhwana, 2023)

2.2 Social media reels promoting road rule violations under lens:

Law enforcement agencies, such as the police and Motor Vehicles department, have been monitoring social media profiles that have been misused to create and promote reels showcasing dangerous driving habits and violations of traffic rules. Over the past few months, authorities have identified 110 such profiles in the state and have taken legal action against them. Police sources indicate that 28 individuals involved in driving the vehicles or facilitating the uploading of these dangerous ride videos on social media have been charged. A total of ₹1.27 lakh in fines has been collected from them. The main motivation behind these violations seems to be gaining more followers for their social media pages. Shockingly, many of these stunts and dangerous activities for the reels were performed on busy roads, putting others at risk. The Assistant Motor Vehicles Inspector involved in the checking drive highlighted that even underage riders were enticed by the social media attention garnered by these creators of such dangerous reels. (The Hindu, 2022)

The term "Instagram Influencer" is used to describe individuals who have a large number of followers on social media platforms. In a recent incident in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, a local influencer halted her car on a highway to create a reel, which was later posted on Instagram. However, this action received significant criticism from her followers. As a result, the Ghaziabad Police imposed a fine of ₹17,000 for violating road safety regulations. The influencer has amassed a following of 652,000 on the social media platform. (Livemint, 2023)

2.3 Unrealistic standards and comparison:

The impact of curated and polished reels on young adults' self-esteem and body image, leading to unhealthy comparisons.

There is a direct relationship between the frequency of social network usage and dissatisfaction with body image as well as low self-esteem. Moreover, the amount of time spent observing content on social media was identified as a significant predictor of both body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. (Ruiz, 2022)

2.4 Time-consuming and addictive nature:

The potential for excessive consumption of reels, leading to time mismanagement, procrastination, and reduced productivity.

"The difference between technology and slavery is that slaves are fully aware that they are

not free" — Nassim Nicholas Taleb

Similar to other social media platforms, Instagram Reels can trigger addictive behavior. The reception of likes and comments on our videos stimulates the release of dopamine in our brains, creating a positive sensation. This motivates us to continue using the app to replicate that pleasurable experience repeatedly. Consequently, we often find ourselves spending countless hours scrolling through videos, neglecting more productive activities without even realizing it. (Drishan, 2023)

2.5 Social Interactions and Relationships:

The potential for reels to prioritize superficial interactions over meaningful relationships, impacting the quality of social connections.

Social media facilitates the tendency to engage in unfavorable comparisons between our own relationships and those of others, including comparing our partners to other individuals. Such comparisons can significantly influence our level of commitment within the relationship, potentially leading to betrayal and even the eventual breakdown of the relationship.

Individuals who heavily rely on social media experience lower levels of satisfaction in their romantic relationships. This may be attributed to the exposure to other relationships on social media platforms, which often leads to distorted comparisons and subsequently diminishes relationship satisfaction. (Panganiban, 2022)

3. Boons of social media reels:

3.1 Instagram Reels helps in Economic Development of people:

Instagram Reels gives off the impression of entering an exclusive establishment or venue where individuals may face ridicule for their clothing, accent, and pronunciation. In 2020, the Indian Prime Minister banned the Chinese app TikTok, leaving many creators and influencers from marginalized backgrounds without digital job opportunities. These individuals, referred to as "digital refugees," sought alternative platforms to showcase their talent and skills. During this time, Instagram Reels emerged as a significant opportunity that promised fame and wide reach. From celebrities to everyday people, everyone desired to showcase their charisma on Reels in hopes of achieving success or, as famously quoted by Andy Warhol, "get their 15 minutes of fame." Over the years, the influencer market has become a crucial source of employment in the realm of social media. For many, attaining social media fame can even provide them with a means of livelihood. (Verma, 2021)

In order to incentivize and attract a larger audience of creators, Instagram introduced the Reels Play bonus program, which allows users to earn up to \$10,000 by sharing short videos known as "Reels." (Business insider, 2021)

Creators on Instagram Reels are individuals who produce short videos on the platform. The emergence of the creator economy in India has contributed to the strengthening of the overall economy by providing additional income and facilitating its circulation within the economy. This trend has allowed people to generate income not only through traditional private or public sector employment but also through their involvement in the creator economy. Participants in this economy can earn a substantial income, directly contributing to the overall economy. Additionally, the creator economy has played a role in raising the average income of individuals, and many people are now utilizing it as a part-time source of income to supplement their earnings. (Samaniya.D)

3.2 Creative outlet and self-expression:

Reels can serve as a platform for young adults to showcase their creativity and talents.

Reels enable users to create 15-second video clips accompanied by music, providing them with a fresh and innovative way to express their creativity. The introduction of this feature on Instagram has empowered millions of users by granting them access to a new skill and serving as a creative outlet for producing content in ways that were previously unavailable. While other platforms had already introduced similar fast-paced videos, Instagram's unique design stands out by rewarding a majority of uploads with hundreds to thousands of views, effectively captivating and engaging users. As of 2023, Instagram Reels have become an integral part of the platform, offering numerous advantages and benefits to its users. (Boyle, 2023)

3.3 Engagement and entertainment:

The ability of reels to captivate and entertain young adults, providing a source of enjoyment and relaxation.

3.4 Discoverability and exposure:

The potential for reels to help young adults gain visibility, build a personal brand, and connect with a larger audience.

Leveraging Instagram for business purposes can generate brand recognition, enhance sales, and cultivate and monitor audience engagement. It serves as a valuable platform to connect with potential customers in the spaces they already frequent. Additionally, it offers invaluable audience insights that can be leveraged in conjunction with various marketing strategies within your overall plan. (Freedman, 2023)

4. Balancing the Reels Trend for Young Adults

- Digital well-being and self-regulation: Strategies to maintain a healthy relationship with social media and reels, including setting boundaries, limiting screen time, and practicing mindfulness.

- Media literacy and critical thinking: The importance of developing skills to critically evaluate the content on social media, including reels, to mitigate the negative impact and filter out unrealistic portrayals.
- Promoting authentic connections: Encouraging young adults to prioritize face-to-face interactions and nurturing genuine relationships outside the digital realm.

Conclusion:

Summary of the boons and curses of social media reels on young adults. The need for a balanced approach in utilizing social media platforms and managing the impact of reels. Through a comprehensive examination of the benefits and drawbacks of social media reels, this review paper highlights the importance of responsible usage and offers recommendations for young adults to navigate the reels trend. As everything has pros and cons, above researches have shown that social media reels are helpful as well as harmful for the youngsters it depends on the amount of the usage of them and taking such precautions of laws while shooting reels and do not follow the trends blindly. As it's said that excess of everything is bad, boon can become curse if it didn't use in a better and ethical way.

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