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Theme:

- Social media platforms gave voice to common people and empowered many. But there is also a negative side to it. Due to several posts in social media, these days people are rigidly divided into 2 groups with completely opposing views for many issues such as politics, communities, social issues etc. Because of this, many are of the opinion that social media platforms are fueling polarization and extremism in society.

Yes - Social media is polarising society:

- Social media doesn't contain just original content. It contains several types of content such as paid news, influences trying to promote things for money, fake news, hate speeches, politically motivated posts etc. People get affected by what they watch, see and listen to in their daily lives and hence social media is influencing common people to form opinions on several issues. These days we are frequently witnessing content in social media that is evoking strong emotions in public.
- Unlike before, now people are more rigidly divided into 2 groups that are completely opposite in their views. Social media posts tend to amplify the differences between those groups.
- Even though social media platforms contain posts on diverse views, in general, they show personalised content to their users. In personalised content, most of the posts contain viewpoints similar to theirs. So, this is making people be even more opinionated and rigid in their beliefs.
- Some people are just doing whatever their group/community does or think they do because for them membership in the community is important. So, they are sharing posts that they think their community believes in.
- Some people are sharing content and making it viral without thinking about the consequences. And viral posts are making it to headlines in traditional media such as newspapers and influencing the opinions of even those who do not follow social media content.

No - social media is not polarising society:

- Social media platforms gave the opportunity to the public to listen to the other side and also the opportunity to have a healthy discussion. In fact, several people read diverse views through social media content and are forming their opinions through thorough analyzation. This is helping many to have a moderate point of views.
- It depends on people rather than social media content. People who think well do not fall into the trap of hate speeches and politically motivated posts.

How to prevent polarization in society:

- Social media platforms should take responsibility and should take steps to prevent extreme views from displaying in suggested content. They should minimise its impact and need to take steps to show the content of diverse views in personalized news feeds.
- People also should take responsibility for what they share. Creating awareness and empowering people is also the need of the hour. Movies on how fake news, politically motivated content affects society also works in creating awareness in public.

Conclusion:

social media websites have the responsibility to promote a healthy atmosphere. They should show diverse views. And people also have a responsibility to be open-minded in posting content online and also when replying to others' point of view. We need to create awareness in the public that not all social media posts are from common people and there are different types of content such as fake news, paid news, hate speeches and politically motivated posts etc. We all should work to minimise this negative consequence of social media platforms while utilizing them to our advantage.

Your Turn...

Do you think social media is polarising society? Do you also get affected by the posts that create hate among communities? Express your opinions through the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

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