Social networking sites – Boon or Bane?

Background :-

- Facebook, Twitter are the examples of social networking sites (SNS).
- Social networking was started on the internet in the form of generalized online communities to group the people having same interests and to share their ideas.
- The first recognizable social networking site is SixDegrees.com which was launched in 1997.
- Now, there are lots of social networking sites for specific interests.
- As of 2016, 45% of the world’s internet users are on social networking sites.
- Facebook, launched in 2004, has become the largest social networking site in the world as of now.

Positive Side :-

- We can keep in touch with friends in today’s busy world.
- We can improve ourselves by sharing our ideas, information and knowledge with those, who have same interests, even if they are so many miles away from us.
- Teachers and profressors are making groups on SNS to extend classroom discussion, to post assignments, tests & quizzes and to assist students with homework.
- Many companies are developing interactive communities that connect individuals to share business needs & experiences.
- Students are connecting with employers via LinkedIn kind of SNS for job opportunities and internships.
- We can find our friends easily, if we lost contact.
- Generally social networking sites have a positive atmosphere. For example, Facebook doesn’t send notification, if someone is removed as a friend. So there is a least chance for the person to know that.

Negative side:-

- People are increasingly comparing their lives with others that are projecting their life as perfect. This decreases happiness levels and also can lead to self-esteem issues.
- Privacy is a big drawback of SNS. Some people are using other person’s personal information for malicious intentions.
- Addiction is another big drawback of SNS.
- Lot of SNS users are preferring online conversation rather than face-to-face. It’ll effect communication skills, relationships and even mental health.
- There is a high risk for children and teenagers from cyber stalking.
- Gossips and rumors spread soon.
• Spending in front of computer for long hours creates many health problems.

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**Present situation of social networking sites :-**

• Messaging and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) apps such as hike, whatsapp & Skype are taking over social networking sites.
• More and more people are diverting to niche based social networking sites, because people want to connect with others of the specific interest.

**Conclusion:-**

Social networking sites are a boon. It depends on how we use them, whether to improve ourselves or to degrade. But children and teenagers must be guided by their guardians because they can easily be manipulated and affected by cyber threats.

We should not disclose too much personal information because it's risky. Life will be great, if we spend less time on social networking sites and more time in the real world.

**Afterwords :-** What are your thoughts on this topic? Feel free to express your opinion in the comment section below.

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