

Dismantling Society and Networked Individualism: Understanding Social Interactions of Adolescents in Modern Sri Lanka

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Abstract

“Self”, which is considered to be the core of individual’s social behaviour has been divided into two complementary parts, i.e. online and offline, thereby increasing new patterns of social interactions, due to the prevalence of Social Network Services (SNS). The dividing line between online sphere and offline sphere of the self, continues to dissolve, as online activities become predominantly intertwined with almost every aspect of the social interactions. More than any other age group, adolescents are mainly subjected to the effects made by SNSs in modern societies. The study strive to understand how adolescents perceive their self and construct self-understanding within a networked society. It also studies the effects of that new self-conceptualization on modern day society, Sri Lanka. Grounded Theory was used as the methodology, and 8 cases were studied preceding a focus group discussion. Collected data, thus were analysed using codifying and concept categorization approach. Analysis reveals that, many unmet needs and inclinations of the offline life are strived to be satisfied with in the online life. Also, the skills needed for the offline existence of life have been decreased, due to the lack of awareness about the strategies necessary to perpetuate in the offline life. On the other hand, substantial portion of the monthly budget of an individual has subjected to be spent in order to maintain the online life. Though these effects seem to be quite negative on the society, there are some positive aspects as well. The online life is more accompanied with community activities and more politically engaged. Therefore, newly organized communities become strengthened in getting social support for many activities.

Key Words: Adolescents, Networked Individualism, self, SNSs

I. INTRODUCTION

Early sociologists mainly considered about apparent aspects (positivism) of any social phenomenon, and social facts became prominent as opposed to individual meanings given to a particular social phenomenon. However, social psychologists who represent symbolic interactionism held a different position in which both empirical evidences and individual meanings around social action are given equal importance(Dillon, 2014). When identifying the social action, therefore, the structure where the action is taken place must be taken into consideration with the meaning given by the initiator of that action. Any social action would not be possible to be identified only with one-dimension i.e. structural interpretation or meaning interpretation. Some notable

sociologist who represented the symbolic interactionism, therefore, introduced the concept of “Self” as a social and psychological construction which has been previously identified as a complete psychological construction.

Post modernization, a large number of social institutions has been transformed into new forms with several changes, partly because of the different involvement patterns by various age groups in social institutions. Adolescents who pass through the transformational stage in their biological lives, often involve in social interactions showing a specific pattern of behaviour as opposed to other age groups. As the modern society is organized in accordance with Internet and computer technology, adolescents’ behaviour in relation to social interactions has been enormously changed.

Furthermore, the concept of “Self”, which is considered to be the core of individual’s social behaviour is philosophically divided into two complementary parts, i.e. online and offline, thereby crystallizing new patterns of social interactions, since the prevalence of Social Network Services (SNS). Social Network Service is a major construction stimulated by innovations of the Internet technology, and more than any other epoch of the human history modern generation is more often exposed to the social network services, hence their behaviour in the modern society has become quite complex. The self which is exposed to the social network services, therefore, represents multifaceted nature integrating two complementary parts such as Online sphere and Offline sphere. The dividing line between online sphere and offline sphere of the self, on the other hand, continues to dissolve, as online activities become predominantly intertwined with almost every aspect of the social interactions. More than any other age group, adolescents are mainly subjected to the effects made by SNSs in modern societies.

This study, therefore, strives to understand how adolescents perceive their self and construct self-knowledge within a networked society. It also studies the effects of that new self-conceptualization on modern day society, Sri Lanka. Grounded Theory was used as the methodology, and 8 cases were studied preceding a focus group discussion. Collected data, thus were analysed using codifying and concept categorization approach.

The analysis reveals that many unmet needs and interests of the offline life are strived to be satisfied along with the online self. Also, the skills needed for the offline existence of life have been decreased, due to lack of awareness about the strategies necessary to perpetuate in the offline life. A substantial portion of the monthly budget of an individual is subjected to be spent in online life. Though these effects seem to be quite negative on the society, there are some positive aspects as well. Online life has more associated with community activities and more politically engaged. Therefore, newly organized communities became strengthened in getting social support for many activities. However, it is evident that more than any other circumstances, networked individualism make the necessary case for studying the current situation in depth.

II. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Adolescents are often inspired to embrace the social network services, as they are provided with new and thriving experiences. They are more actively engaged in SNSs compared to other age groups. Even though this is a trend in which the societies experienced, the necessary researches and studies are relatively little in number. Sometimes, the older theories related to structuralism or structural functionalism is not really possible to be used

in terms of understanding the above behavioural patterns. Newly constructed theories, on the other hand, has not been used quite extensively so as to understand Sri Lankan situation. Therefore, this research strives to understand how adolescents perceive their self-identity and construct self-knowledge within a networked society. Even though the social behaviour is determined by the collective consciousness, individual's self has a substantial role to be played, since the self of an individual is constructed responding to the societal interpretations. Because of the self's predominance in social behaviour, effects of the mode of thought (self-construction) on the code of conduct (Social behaviour) will also be studied in the research.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

As SNSs become more prevalent, social behaviour of the people has changed dramatically adopting new facets necessary to continue within a networked society in which unprecedented global norms and values are accommodated. Therefore, previous arguments of the social behaviour of people have been challenged by many sociological theorists, since its inadequacy to understand the individual in a networked society. As Bauman (2000) specified, there are no solid structures around the social beings on which they can rely and invest, resulting liquid fear in a modern society where every institution is networked using virtual relationships. There are no solid structures and relevant functions in networked societies, as the institutions are constantly changed and adopting new faces so as to respond to dramatic changes due to global trends. Until recently, the people exposed to solid structures, and their behaviour in line with structural functions appeared to be constant.

The intriguing achievement of the people in modern society is the "Liberty" which means "to set free from some kind of fetters that obstruct or thwart the movements; to start feeling free to move or act" (Bauman, 2000, 22p). Liberty as coined by Bauman, a situation where the people enjoy their freedom to act. A society in which the freedom of people is admired allows the adolescents to act free, particularly to access the Internet without any hindrances. This makes it clear that the selves of adolescents might be subjected to change due to the interactions with Internet services.

As a result of the above-mentioned change, people's lives of this society have divided into two, as online part and offline part. The online part is associated with how people are engaged with SNSs, whereas the offline part is related with how they behave in everyday lives as opposed to online activities. As Bauman (2000) and Castells (2004) noted, the dividing line between these two parts is continued to be dissolved. Therefore, understanding the real nature of the self would not be an easy task.

The sense of being lived or so called the "self" is the core of social interactions of an individual, though sometimes it has maladjustments due to the imbalance of perceived self and ideal self (Rogers, 1980). Perceived self is the acquired identity of a person and which is real, on the contrary, the ideal self is not real but it is the one which is ought to be achieved by a person in terms of his or her expectations. Probably, as the SNSs prevail, ideal self has associated with the online part and perceived self has accompanied with the offline part of the life. Much of the unreal identities and ideal expectations are achieved or satisfied using online activities which help the person to balance the ideal self and perceived self. SNS, therefore, is not just a simple platform in which the persons are attended since it makes complex forms of social actions in a networked society (Castells, 2004).

Adolescents are often inspired to embrace social network services, as they are provided with new and thriving experiences. Adolescents are claimed to be explorers than any other age group, hence they are more involved in online activities, as an efficient mean to be followed. They are more actively engaged in SNSs compared to other age groups (Boyd, 2015). Tufekci, furthermore, argues that dividing line between adolescents' offline life and online life has continued to be liquefied or dissolved, as online activities become more and more intertwined with almost every aspect of everyday life (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). The more involvement with the online activities, the more those activities become constant in everyday life.

As researched by Hampton et. al. (2011), digital technology plays a considerable role in people's social world. The social world is a place where people interact with each other. The social world is not only a structure in which the people's agency is not required but a place where individuals' agency in line with structural principles is needed. "Habitus" or how people perceive their identity and self, Bourdieu (1990) argues that, a considerable determinant in which the social world's arrangement is constructed. Post modernization, many of the individuals perceive their identity and self accordingly with principles of the networked society. "Habitus" is defined as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organized practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu, 1990). He argues that habitus allow individuals to find new solutions/roles to new situations/statuses based on their social situation and experiences. Adolescents, therefore, strive to transform their habitus to adopt new roles to new statuses, in that, the principles prevailed in the modern society are noticeably redefined upon how people are accessed the social network sites.

Hampton et. al (2011) specified that the number of those using social network sites has nearly doubled since 2008 and the population of SNS users have gotten older. Furthermore, Facebook users are more trusting than others and, SNS users have closer relationships as opposed to offline relationships, therefore, they get more social support than other people. Nevertheless, SNS users are more politically engaged when compared to non-SNS users. The distinguishing factor they found was that a large number of SNS users were aged between 18 to 22 years. As with the use of most social media, SNS users are disproportionately female. Moreover, nearly twice as many men as women use LinkedIn a prominent SNS, whereas all other SNS platforms have significantly more female users than male users. The tendencies of using SNS differ by several determinants, including but not limited to age, gender, ethnicity. However, age can be considered as a prominent element which affects the use of SNSs.

Recently some sociologists and social scientists argue that networks may provide a better metaphor to understand social forms of organization and learning (Ryberg & Larsen, 2008). Learning which is a major social activity has long been identified and interpreted without the influence of modern Networked Social Structure, however, networked individualism as reconceptualised in-line with pedagogy, Ryberg and Larsen (2008) argue that education is also associated with networked social identities. Though some argues that the modern networked social sphere is a place where many of the people are deceived, and the real identity is camouflaged or disguised, the construction of a 'sincerity', Ryberg and Larsen (2008) emphasised that " how the identity of

young people is neither fragmented nor characterized by ‘role playing’, but rather how most of the young people strive to construct themselves with an identity that appears as sincere and real as possible” (2008, p. 6).

Networked society is not just a structure but a process which is constantly changing, and responds to the bubbling concerns of a particular space and time. Online life of the adolescents is recently not limited only to some internet platforms such as Facebook, Instagrametc, but highly responsive mobile apps (mobile friendly applications) provide necessary and interesting facilities to the adolescents to keep up their circadian social interactions. Feminists like Frizzo-Barker and Chow-White (2012) write that internet-based new applications commonly known as ‘apps’, can be viewed as simultaneously empowering and constraining for women’s experiences and identities due to their potential to foster ‘always on’ forms of sociability in both public and private spheres. Argument of public sphere(Habermas, 1987), nowadays cannot be discussed only with social and political perspectives, on the contrary it must be reinterpreted with norms of networked individualism. As noted by Frizzo-Barker and Chow-White (2012), people and artefacts, undoubtedly, co-evolve, and today, technology can facilitate and restrain gender power relations. Artefacts or non-human actors may be a critical part of activities of human actors, though it is not quite clear and apparent (Latour, 2005).

Actor-network theory, as described by Latour (2005), is a theoretical argument to interpret a society where everything in the social and natural world exists in constantly shifting networks of relationships. It posits that nothing exists outside those relationships. This argument is important when identifying hidden patterns of social interactions of adolescents in which human and non-human actors are interrelated.

In terms of contextualizing the concept of ‘Networked Individualism’_ a term coined by Bauman (2000)_ to Singapore community, Chua (2013) says that people are now free to decide which network members to activate and for what tasks. The terms prevailed in a networked community, represent an unprecedented patterns of social interactions. For example, now people including adolescents have an option that which member of the online community to be selected, and the selection also can be specified in terms of the tasks. This is not true of offline community. He, furthermore, argues that “while networked individualism is a modern trend, categories such as gender, ethnicity and class, do, in addition to personal autonomy, structure how people match role relationships to tasks” (602p).Wang, Chua, and Stefanone (2015), similarly demonstrate that “strong and weak ties are both important to the personal well-being of college students in Singapore; and different communication channels are associated with different kinds of social ties. Mobile and social media play a critical role in these social ties” (1p).

Based on a survey of participants in Egypt’s Tahrir Square protests, a social movement in which the society has driven to an unprecedeted transform, Tufekci et. al (2012) demonstrates that social media, and Facebook, in particular, provided new sources of information the regime could not easily control and were crucial in shaping how citizens made individual decisions about participating in protests, the logistics of protest, and the likelihood of success. General people, on the other hand, learned about the protests primarily through interpersonal communication using SNSs (Turfekci& Wilson, 2012). This makes it clear that political engagement as an advanced pattern of social interactions is also subjected to the effects of SNSs. More than any other instigator, therefore, SNSs play an important role in stimulating adolescents’ social interactions.

In terms of collective consciousness, the main element of a society which differentiate ‘society’ from ‘individual constellation’, is imposed on individual behaviour and transformed it into a social action (Durkheim, 1982). Even though the social behaviour is determined by the collective consciousness, individual’s self has a substantial role to be played, since the self of an individual is constructed responding to the interpretations made through social relationships (Cooley, 1998). Post modernization, with the introduction of Internet services, collective consciousness has adopted new facets to entwine with emanating unprecedented situations. Emerging online-self appears to be a single concept, however, it is also an element which is organized in accordance with the collective consciousness (Castells, 2004), since the liberty, independence or freedom of any kind is granted to a person, provided that the person is going along with the socially accepted regulations or norms (Bauman, 2000). Norms of a networked society are considerably different, and sometimes those may violate offline norms of a society as well. Individuals’ agency of the social structure, therefore, is quite significant, as self-regulated norms and socially imposed norms are conflicting each other to be stabilized constantly.

Because of the self’s predominance in social behaviour, effects of the mode of thought (self-construction) on the code of conduct (Social behaviour) in a networked society is an important area to be researched. Apart from some anthropological studies and policy researches, the studies around social behaviour of adolescents in a networked society are less in number, in terms of the present situation in Sri Lanka. This study, therefore, will be strived to understand how Sri Lankan adolescents perceive their self-identity and construct self-knowledge within a networked society.

IV. METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

Grounded theory was employed as the methodology and 8 cases were studied since this is a qualitative study. The grounded theory holds constructivist epistemological consideration (Byrant, 2007) and involves understanding human experiences referring to an actor’s perspective. First, a focus group discussion was conducted using a purposive sample and then being directed by the informants, 8 cases were studied. Each one of the participants is 19 years old and freshmen to university studies. An unstructured questionnaire was constructed using the experiences obtained at the focus group discussion and interviewed the other 8 informants subsequently. Some of the categories (theoretical units/information) drawn from the first stage had been theoretically analyzed, once four of the cases were studied. Therefore, it was highly considered about the emerging categories in the second stage of the study. From the beginning of the study, the analysis was started using codifying and concept categorization method.

Disposition or the habitus of the university students is considerably different from the outside adolescents owing to the different environments in which they are exposed. This informed the research that emerging patterns of data would be limited to a particular area.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Liquidation and interests’ satisfaction

More than any other circumstance, networked society makes the necessary platform for adolescents to achieve unmet interests in the offline life within the online life. The needs and interests hold different positions; probably needs are associated with the real self and interests with perceived self. Since the perceived self is hard to be achieved in most cases, the online self is adopted as the platform in which those unmet needs are achieved, at least virtually, giving a self-satisfaction. Despite being satisfied, this will make an imbalance between offline life and online life.

Furthermore, networked society is a direct result of globalization process where market relations are predominantly operated. Much of the interests emanating from developed countries are distributed or diffused to developing countries like Sri Lanka, hence, much of the adolescents tend to absorb those interests in spite of the low level of achievement capacity. Because of the low level of achievement capacity, most of them are incapacitated so as to achieve expected interests. Interests are some expectations including, but not limited to material benefits. It is comprised of both material interests as well as non-material expectations. In terms of material expectations such as wearing an expensive dress, hardly to be achieved in offline life due to lack of different types of means. On the other hand, non-material expectations, such as expression of ideas to others, are often impossible to be acquired in a society in which institutions and functions are solidified.

Solidification is a process where social institutions and functions are rigidly and solidly organized and there are no sudden changes, whereas liquidation is a process in which most of the institutions and relevant functions are lightly organized and subjected to sudden changes. Networked society, a creation of the globalization, is a place where liquidation is entertained regularly. Institutions and human agency, therefore, are changed suddenly and no solid structures, in order to accommodate emerging structures. High expectations and low level of achievement capacity is one of the most important characteristics of a networked society, particularly with adolescents. However, psychological satisfaction associated with material gains and non-material gains is an important aspect of a networked society, since that is achievable at least virtually through online activities. Therefore, most of the adolescents are engaged in making online communities to make a better platform for sharing their ideas and achieving unmet psychological satisfaction in their offline lives.

“I have a Facebook account. Mostly I prefer to use an attractive name in the FB instead of my real name. I also uploaded an image.... but with some modifications through Photoshop. Sometimes, there are some mobile camera applications which modify our image attractively. If I upload that kind of image, definitely I would attract many members to my page”

Adolescents would not be able to hide their identity in the offline life since it is often visible and hardly to be falsified. Offline society is more solidified and structural functions are perfectly organized, hence, there is a self-survival mechanism of the society which is hardly breakable. In the online life, on the other hand, identity can be concealed as well as fabricated. Identity, a distinguishing feature of a person's personality representing his or her world view is an important aspect which is associated with the interests, determines how the person achieves those expectations. Much of the unmet expectations, therefore, are achieved through online activities, with the intention of solely psychological satisfaction, but not includes any material gain.

Identity, alongside the self-actualization, is more important when adolescents are dealing with social institutions. Identity is also divided into two parts, such as online and offline. The offline identity is more prominent and visible to the community in real life and hardly to be forged. On the contrary, the online identity can be different than that of the offline identity, since it is the representation of the ideal self. Therefore, it is easy to forge the online identity, as it is not quite visible to the online community, also it is not an important requirement in many cases.

2. Offline and online self-polarization

In terms of expectations, achievable ones are linked with offline self, whereas unachievable interests are linked on online self. As far as the expectations are achievable in the real life, they represent a high level of self-esteem and related to the offline self. If the expectations are hardly to be achieved in the real life, they are associated with the online self, and initiate a struggle to achieve a high level of self-esteem. This process seems to be sustainable, even though it makes an imbalance between offline self and online self. Despite being satisfied in the online life, unmet needs are crystallized in the offline life, hence it faces constant struggles to be balanced with online life. The online self, on the one hand, drives towards psychological satisfaction associated with non-real gains, on the other hand, the offline self moves towards real gains, thereby forming an ‘offline and online self polarization’, a process where the gap between online self and offline self is widened.

Offline and online self polarization is a socially instigated process, and a critical situation in which the adolescents, particularly in the developing world, are entangled when they strive to survive in the real social world. This makes an unstable or chaotic situation when adolescents as a particular social group in transition, make their personality structures in-line with the modern social norms.

3. Physical existence and Virtual existence

Social beings, including adolescents live in the real world (offline life) at least for the purpose of physical existence. Biological existence is the foundation structure of human beings, and many social structures are based on biological or physical principles. Social structure and cultural principles are quite symmetrically driven with physical principles, as its ultimate goal is to survive. In a real world, however, the people including adolescents would be able to make fantasies as opposed to physical existence and are related with psychological satisfaction. Imaginary existence or fantasies in the real life is not a new thing to be revealed, but virtual existence is one of the spectacular pillars in a networked society. Virtual life of a person probably is related to the online life and is quite different from making fantasies. In a networked society, making fantasies have become a virtually real activity when compared to earliest times.

The physical existence, here understood as a fact which relates to the offline self, whereas the virtual existence is as a part of online self. The virtual existence is possible when the human agency in social activities is placed in a community where each and every member is granted the same authority and power. Recently, adolescents

make online communities in which partnership for common interest is attended, that in return makes necessary arrangements to act and react in a virtual place, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram. By way of using such SNSs, every participant would be able to engage in any virtual activity like posting current situation, uploading images, like the others, share the other's posts etc. Lexical resources, therefore, are newly generated and generalized within the online communities and which are unique to those spheres. For example, *posting, sharing, liking, messaging, uploading, texting* are some of the terms in online-life-vocabulary and the meanings are contextual.

Nevertheless, the online life is used as a place to share details about the offline life among virtually connected members, which is an intriguing situation. Since it makes a community which is more similar to a real community, particularly the adolescents, strive to share their real life situations through online platforms, and that makes their online life more prominent, provided that the online self is symmetrically organized as the offline or real self.

“I like to share some events of my life through FB and some of the photographs probably are shared through Instagram. So, I can hear what others say... Anytime, when an important event happens, I post it on the FB. Not only that, when I am sad, I will post it even.”

The problem, however, is risen when the online self is asymmetrically arranged as opposed to the offline self. In a real life situation, members of a community are interrelated by way of trust and faith, which accommodates the members to act with conscience. The members of a virtual community, whereas, is not arranged by way of trust and faith, but through common interests. The common interests of a real community are also based on faith and trust, however, the common interests of a virtual community are not based on *trust and faith*, but based on the *likeness* in which *mere preference* of the members are accumulated. Without trust and faith, the online self might be organized asymmetrically from the offline self, means that the online self is placed far from the offline self. For instance, some of the students who follow humanities are pretended to be the students following engineering subjects in the relevant faculties, in order to be privileged, at least in the virtual community, as scientific subjects are more privileged than humanities in Sri Lanka. This makes it clear that interests or unmet expectations related to the perceived self (here online self) are placed quite far from the real self (here offline self), thereby making a substantial imbalance between the real self and the perceived self.

Even though the connected members are equally granted some activities within the online world to be triggered, the faith which is the gluing factor has been missing. Everyone would be able to make comments, post details about situations, share some ideas, in spite of having a faith which is missing. As the dividing line between online life and offline life dissolves, the faith continues to be dissolved. Furthermore, this is why fabricated life situations and non-real facts are possible to be shared among connected members through online platforms such as SNSs. This is not a chaotic situation, as far as the adolescents manage their online and offline life separately, however, this is not a skill which could be expected from adolescents as they are in a transitional stage both in psychologically and biologically. The online life and related habitus, therefore, subdue and dominate the offline life, which makes the adolescents more vulnerable to unexpected circumstances.

4. Preconditions for a risk society

The offline world is comprised of spontaneous risks, so the adolescents cannot avoid meeting strangers and catastrophes. In dealing with those situations, adolescents have to develop some skills, though the online self does not permit the person to do so, due to unreal and virtual practices. The online life, as opposed to the offline life, is a sphere in which the entrants of strangers are not allowed. Many adolescents create comfort zones through online platforms where they can refuse to face the strangers. Most of the SNSs are used, not in order to learn and understand different people with different habitus (mode of thought) so as to deal with them in unexpected situations. But strangers (those who are not matched with the concerned person) removed off to create a comfort zone where no strangers are present. Therefore, adolescents forget the skills which are absolutely necessary in the offline life and this will result in unexpected social problems in the present society.

Exposing to unexpected situations and strangers is an inescapable aspect of the offline life, consequently the people including adolescents must acquire some skills to deal with them, otherwise, the human existence will be threatened. However, the skills needed in dealing with unexpected situations are disentitled from adolescents, once they are completely got adjusted to the online life. In a real life situation, a small number of adolescents who expose to online activities gradually lose the relevant skills need for the survival, on the contrary a large proportion of people including adolescents still continue to stick to traditional norms and learn skills which are considerably needed in dealing with unexpected situations and persons within the offline life. This makes a polarized relationship between two categories of persons above mentioned, which makes the aforementioned group (adolescents who are adjusted with online life) more vulnerable. They do not aware of the offline life situations much, however, the online life is highly valued. They, therefore probably, would strive to use online strategies in dealing with offline incidents, though the strategies used are not really matched with the situation.

“I just think that I can get on with the people more friendlier through the FB, but in real life, it is really impossible. When I find my life partner, probably I would prefer to choose one among the FB community members or through FB. It is the current trend... so why shouldn’t I try...?”.

In terms of marriage, for example, one of the solid structures in the offline life is organized in accordance with rigid principles, particularly in Sri Lanka. As opposed to developed or modern countries, many of the developing societies are placed in between traditionality and modernity, hence they continue to practice both traditional practices as well as modern practices. Moreover, in Sri Lanka, a large number of adolescents got used to online life and they are strived to practice modern norms thereby adopting liquid strategies upon solid structures. On the contrary, some of the solid structures and functions are still thrived and supported by a considerable proportion of the people of the country. Liquid strategies adopted by adolescents, therefore, will be struggled with solid structures making an unstable situation in the society. As the online strategies are adopted by the adolescents in dealing with these solid structures, so there will be mismatching situations between liquid strategies and solid structures and will result in a risk society.

5. Economics of the online life

A substantial portion of the monthly budget of an adolescent is devoted to themaintenance of the online life. A networked society where online life is predominated is a direct result of globalization in which the economic liberation is admired. Always, therefore, maintenance of the online life is required a considerable amount of money. The online life requires some advanced technologies and related equipment, for example in order to be a part of an online community, it is required to have a computer or a smart phone, internet connection and a relevant knowledge base. These all the resources are hardly to be consumed without spending money. Furthermore, both material resources and non-material resources are required so as to maintain a stable online life, however, non-material resources including the relevant knowledge is more important. As it is argued, the spending on the online life would not be a matter, if the person is employed. For adolescents, particularly in Sri Lanka, expenses for an online life would be a great matter of concern, since they are not employed or earners.

Though they are not earners, money earned through the offline activities in many cases, by parents is spent on the adolescents' online life, which is not productive at many times.

6. Virtual community emergence

Real life community organizations are dismantling, as the online communities are strengthening and absorbing more and more adolescents due to its attractiveness and other sophisticated features. However, online communities are not always real but represent a real common-interest shared by a virtual community, thereby giving the opportunity to adolescents a preferable platform for discussing and enjoying their interests. These communities are more socially and politically engaged.

"I am a sociology student, and we have a common group. If I have a problem regarding the subject, I will post it on the wall. Then anybody can respond to it. Sometimes, teachers also comment to the problems.... There are some situations where the classes are spontaneously canceled or put off. At that time the FB and WhatsApp groups are more important in order to distribute the message quickly".

Conventional social capital, a strengthening force of a community is important, as the bond and the trust among members are crystallized. It is a capital which can be invested in human relationships and the members of the community would be able to receive some benefits. However, anew way of social capital relies on SNSs activities, and the participating members are getting more benefits (Such as education support, information sharing etc.) compared to those who do not participate in SNSs. SNSs provide efficient and more effective ways of communicating with group members, and the communication is more advanced. Despite some bogus information, SNS is a great platform to be used so as to create tight social bonds. Virtual Community is a direct result of this bonding capital in which the sameness of the members is strengthened. On the other hand, conventional definitions of social capital must be redefined as the online communities are getting more and more prevalence in the modern networked society.

7. Abnormality and alienation

The practice which is obtained by individuals through online life is not always compliant with the offline norms. Normal structure in the online life can be an abnormal structure in the offline life, so the adolescents quite often get used to the online life and became alienated from the normal life structure in the offline life. Norms, a set of socially constructed principles which govern human behaviour are signified in accordance with what people think as normal. The offline life and the social structure are organized based on norms. Moreover, the relativity is one of the most important characteristics of a norm. A set of principles which are believed to be normal in a particular social context may be considered as abnormal in another social context. This is quite true with offline life as well as online life.

“Though I like to post events on the FB wall, my mom and brother do not like it. Sometimes they blame me on that. They say that we do not need to share each and every event in our lives through social media.”

Much of the norms which are entertained in the online life, quite often different from the offline life. As the offline life continues to use traditional and existing norms, newly introduced online life-norms will be in a struggle to be aligned with the solid structures, and this makes an imbalance between online norms and offline norms. As a result, adolescents who got used to the online norms have become alienated from the offline life, as they could not align with offline structures. Though the online norms are not considered abnormal within the online sphere, they are most probably considered abnormal in the offline sphere.

VI. CONCLUSION

Prevalence of the usage of SNSs among adolescents as a result of network-technology-sophistications has been a prominent fact influencing their social interactions in the modern day. There are many advantages of using SNSs, though there are some harmful effects on the everyday life. A person's life world cannot be identified only by the offline part, but the online part must be taken into consideration, as it plays a vital role constructing the self which is a core force of mutual human interactions within the society.

As the network technology expands its coverage over a society, both material culture and non-material culture continue to change rapidly. Consequently, solid structures of a society have been changed, and become liquidated. The online self which is associated with the online life often adopts liquid norms so as to align with liquid structures, whereas solid structures of a society are dismantled. Adolescents' behaviour in particular, thus is changed as to align with liquid structures. In some way, however, solid structures continue to thrive, thence there will be a constant struggle between solid structures in which offline self is associated and liquid structures where online self-associates.

Within a transitional period of a society, some mismatching structures may emerge, where pre conditions for a risk society appear. Struggle among online norms and offline norms, also considered to be an intriguing reason for a risk society. Furthermore, maintenance of the online life is not for free but it highly concerns about economic aspect as well. As a result of globalization, recently conventional community organizing has been overwhelmed by virtual community organizing. This seems to be a structural change, however, it closely associates with human habitus which is the way in which people, particularly adolescents, think and work in dealing with social situations.

In conclusion, it is argued that the conventional social structure has been dismantling, as the networked individualism predominates over solid structures. The existence of the solid structures of a society has been challenged, owing to the prevalence of networked individualism, an intriguing consequence of globalization process. Therefore, a question is emanated as to what extent the classical sociological theories can be used understanding the above phenomenon.

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