**GP Model Essay - Social Media**

**‘The cost of quitting social media is too high.’ Discuss.**

**1.Requirements of the question**

**The requirement of this essay focuses on the debate whether it is costly to to quit the use of social media as the cost outweighs the benefit or otherwise. Given this focus, the source of information required to study this question would depend on the understanding of the costs and benefits in using social media.**

**2. Structure of discussion**

**For this question which is focusing on the discussion, it is possible to turn into a DYA structure which consists of the introduction, opposing view, rebuttal, three supporting views, and conclusion.**

**3. Category of discussion**

**The areas of discussion for this question can include the economic, social, political and individual perspectives.**

With millions of people on social media, there has been heated discussion surrounding the value of using social media in our modern society with much praise and criticisms being generated at the same time. Is the cost of quitting social media too high? To answer this, we make the analysis by weighing the outcome in terms of the positive and negative effects of social media. Some support the view that the cost of quitting social media is too high due to the large number of benefits that our society needs to forgo. On the other hand, others believe that the negative effects of social media are too consequential for individuals to continue using social media. In light of these two polarising perspectives, this essay supports the stand that the cost of quitting social media is too high.

Not quitting social media may be a cost too high for society as it makes individuals vulnerable to cultural subversion, contributing to the loss of cultural and social identity. Social media is very convenient and individuals can access different forms of information from around the world. As such, individuals may be subtly influenced by foreign media content and prefer foreign values and ideals. New modern values like liberal LGBTQ attitudes brought about by the Pink Dot movement have reshaped conservative perceptions of Singaporeans and the society has become more liberal. For example more than 20 per cent of those polled between August 2018 and January 2019 said sexual relations between adults of the same sex were not wrong at all or not wrong most of the time, up from about 10 per cent of those polled in 2013. The increasingly open attitudes reflect the social impact of such liberal values that could subvert a traditionally conservative society built upon the nuclear family structure.

However, this view is limited as it merely makes social media a scapegoat for the loss of social values. There are other factors which play a critical role in making individuals vulnerable to social development, thus quitting social media to prevent cultural erosion should not be a justified reason in compromising the benefits that social media will bring to society. The fundamental reason why individuals are vulnerable to changes in social values and behaviours is due to their shaky moral foundations. The weak moral will of such individuals allow foriegn cultures to dominate their mode of thinking and alter their beliefs. Despite the greater acceptance of gay rights, though, society continues to be largely conservative, the researchers said, citing people's views on gambling and infidelity. In 2013, about 13 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 felt infidelity was not wrong, and by 2018, among the same cohort, now aged 25 to 29, about 12 per cent felt the same way. Therefore, with the strong moral compass of society, values are not easily eroded and not quitting social media may be a cost too high.

Quitting social media is a cost too high for society as it is an important tool for individuals to expand their social circle and enhance social relationships thus giving individuals a more meaningful and socially interactive life. Social media allows for long distance and instant communication with individuals around the globe which allows the users to connect to a greater world. . As such, there is great potential for an individual to increase their friends list and forge new bonds and this will allow like-minded individuals to join a common platform to be more socially engaged. Such social interactions and relationships enriches their quality of and satisfaction for life. According to the Pew study, 31% of teens say that social media use has a "mostly positive" impact on their lives as they have social connectivity and a sense of belonging. Without social media, individuals are isolated and confined, depriving them of human interaction which is essential to make lives more interesting and meaningful.

Quitting social media is a huge risk as social media is a platform that individuals can take advantage of to run a business, thus creating valuable profit channels for individuals in society. Social media has been an important avenue for businesses to attract customers via advertisement and sales. The convenience of social media allows businesses to reach a greater market size and earn more profit revenue. Many China e-commerce sites have now integrated their social media sites like Meituan and Pinduoduo with other types of services like gaming, live streaming and social communication into one single platform to forge a community for their sales. For example, 73% of online marketers agree that their efforts in implementing a social media marketing strategy for their business has been effective with 2 million businesses using Facebook advertising to promote their products and services. Therefore, social media has become a crucial platform for economic and business gains.

The cost of quitting social media is also considered too high as social media plays an important role in promoting democratic development to facilitate political democratization through equal access to information and the ability to voice out their opinions that can easily reach the masses. Social media is sustained by online users and serves as an effective platform to bypass government control to spread crucial messages. It is viewed as the fifth estate that is capable of stabilising democracy and free speech, thereby ensuring little interference of governments in the prior age of the printing press. Political campaigns in the future can no longer ignore the significance of social platforms as we see how the 2020 USA Presidential Election is run by Donald Trump. Furthermore, other political activities like the Arab Spring in 2011, social media such as Twitter and Facebook played a crucial role to garner mass support among the masses to overthrow authoritarian governments. Thereby the cost of quitting social media is too high due to its political democratisation role.

In retrospect, we can observe that social media has many positive impacts on society from a social, economic and political perspective. Giving up all these benefits just to negate the detriments is poor calculation is unwise and unsound. Instead, we should embrace it while we cautiously understand and avoid adversity. Thus, the cost of quitting social media is too high on society as social media has proven itself to be a useful platform for a multitude of uses.