

EMERGING DIGITAL LITERATURE IN NEW MEDIA : IMPACT ON MODERN CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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Abstract

Authors and other creative workers today are faced with the revolution of digital technology and media that slowly change and challenge the way they create, disseminate, and preserve their work. The purpose of this paper is to explore the sector of emerging digital literature in new media, nature of media shift in literature and their impact on modern times. With technological advancement and with the emergence of plethora of media platforms, literature has acquired a brand new form, today we have more writers and readers than perhaps we ever had with in the past. The changing trends in literature have set in a new era which has been hailed whole-heartedly by masses. It will not only address the various new media platforms and their role in booming literature studies but also the importance to acknowledge this moment in literature by seeking to gain perspective on electronic/ digital literature.

Keywords: *Digital Literature, New Media, Literature, Social Media Platforms*

Introduction

New media is a digital form of communication. It is a catch-all term used for various types of electronic communications that are conceivable due to innovation in computer technology. New media is comprised of social platforms, websites, online video/audio streams, online education, email, online communities, online forums, blogs, web advertisements, and much more in contrast to old media, which incorporates newspapers, magazines, books, television and other such non-interactive media. New media includes:

- Websites
- Blogs
- Email
- Social media networks
- Music and television streaming services, etc

Today, the development of digital media, which has influenced the world, has greatly influenced the development of literature as well. From Instapoetry to BookTube, contemporary literary cultures and practices are increasingly intertwined with new media platforms. Media and literature are entwined yet distinguishable, complementing each other and bringing about the same result in different ways. It has changed and transformed the traditional view of literature as a whole because of transition to the new age – Digital Age.

Methodology

The methodology of this research will be retrospective study on the basis quantity and quality of the listed social media platforms to deduce the impact on modern world. The various new media platforms studied in this paper are Twitter, YouTube, E-readers and online journals which will include different literature works which came into action through these digital platforms. This paper also seeks to assess the impact of digital literature in new media on modern world.

1. Digital Literature

Digital Literature is a genre of literature encompassing works created exclusively on and for digital devices, such as computers, tablets, and mobile phones. According to writer Simon Groth, the intention of digital literature is to “showcase innovation and creativity in storytelling for digital media and new directions in contemporary literary practice informed by technology.” The video poems on YouTube, short stories on Twitter or a hypertext story are all forms of literature, digital literature to be precise. The effect of the digital tools for learning the literature is that due to its present ubiquity it reduces inequality and promotes inclusivity. In a country like India, plagued by poverty and dearth of learning resources and access to centers of excellences in learning in a democratic fashion, digitization has become a great tool. According to a study conducted by the ICF (2015) it is indicative that digital tools and resources can help to reduce gaps in subject attainment if implemented effectively.

2. New Media catering to Digital Literature

2.1 *Twitterature*

Twitter was launched in the year of 2006, and the first Twitter novels appeared in 2008. Twitterature has been called a literary genre but is more accurately an adaptation of various genres to social media. Literary classics are retold on Twitter in tweet format, often in modern language using slang or by characters' tweeting and interacting. Twitter fiction, has been embraced by authors like David Mitchell, Jennifer Egan, and Teju Cole. In 2009, Alexander Aciman and Emmett Rensin published *Twitterature : The World's Greatest Books Retold Through Twitter*. In 2010, a group of rabbis tweeted the Exodus, with the hashtag #TweetTheExodus. In 2011, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the English game company Mudlark tweeted the story of Romeo and Juliet. *Epic retold*, by author Chindu Sreedharan, is another noteworthy work in this genre, it was an attempt to simplify the lengthy epic and make it accessible to the new generation—both in India and abroad. Similarly, *Black Box* is a science fiction short story published in May 2012 by Pulitzer Prize winning American writer Jennifer Egan. It was released as a series of tweets on The New Yorker's Twitter account.

2.2 *E-books*

An electronic book is a book made available in digital form containing a body of text and images displaying on screen of any electronic device in a manner similar to a printed book. The industry for buying and selling e-books first emerged as a mainstream business in the late 1990s. Rocket eBook and the Soft Book Reader were the earliest e-readers launched in 1998. They were the first attempts

to bring together written content from books, magazines, and newspapers on dedicated reading devices. Later in 2007 first Kindle was launched. E-readers allow you to carry hundreds of titles around with you at any one time, all safely tucked away behind an easy-to-read screen, and in a light and compact electronic format. The format in which books come to them has also evolved- the fonts can increase, screens can be backlit, the flipping and scrolling is ergonomically designed, bookmarks are in place and it even costs less than buying a physical book. E -books will not be the final nail in the coffin of printed books but rather a complementary product that should ultimately benefit the readers. The only thing that will kill print books is when people stop reading altogether.

2.3 YouTube

Today You Tube is the largest online social media website in the world. It has 122 million active users daily and 1 billion hours of content is watched across the world every day. It is an emerging platform for sharing and posting literary articles. It provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire across the globe. One social media platform that is often overlooked by authors to market and promote their books is YouTube. YouTube features a gigantic pool of audience which can become potential readers of their books. There is a whole community of authors sharing content on YouTube. This group is known as “AuthorTube”. These authors aren’t just promoting their books; however, they’re also sharing writing advice, prompts, insights, and tutorials. Some of the more popular AuthorTube channels have over 100K subscribers. YouTube is full of tremendous amount of literary content. All those people who enjoy added audio and visuals can head on over to YouTube to watch book review, fan girl/fan boy about the latest literary adaption, and study classic literature.

2.4 Online Journals and Journal Database

Online journal databases like sagepub.com, project muse and jstor.org, host a number of journals, books and primary sources in different disciplines including English Literature. These are sites are not free and they contain within them databases of scholarly journals which are accessible for users on subscription based fee or on pay per view basis. In most cases, these online journal databases can be accessed through college or university libraries that pay an annual fee in return for an account and password. The libraries successively hand over these details to their readers who in turn access the information they desire.

Apart from these online journal databases, there exist online journals on English literature. These are professional bodies that publish scholarly articles that are peer reviewed While a number of them charge fees for publishing, some are free to publish and some pay royalty to the authors which may be in the form of a one-time honorarium. The Research Journal on English Literature (rjeal.com), The International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL), The International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR) are some examples online publishers of research articles with open access. These journals come with the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) for their recognition. Researchers and Students are now able to quickly publish their articles and papers easily through such electronic media through such online journals.

Impact on Modern Contemporary World:

New media platforms have proved to be a launch pad for several writers. In today's fast-paced life when it is difficult to manage time to meet friends and relatives, the social media provides a good platform to bring forth the Shakespeare within you by driving you to outpour your creative spurt of feelings. New media is viewed as beneficial in an age where sharing thoughts and ideas are important for innovations whether in literature or business. Media makes communication convenient and effective. As a result many people use these different websites this enables the possibility of wide spread information quickly. A piece of literature can spread virally online because of social net working sites. There are many websites that have free E-books. Social Media functions are advancing as the digital age continues to grow and flourish. With the arrival of the digital age starting from the early 90s, the expansion of English Literature in terms of reading and hearing is no more confined to the libraries and class rooms. The advantage of digitization of the books of English Literature is that it helps in creating a society that is well informed and knowledgeable. It is undeniable that e-books have a democratizing effect on learning.

With digitization and access to the electronic self-publishing (or e-publishing), any one with inclination for writing can have his or her aspirations fulfilled by resorting to self-publishing. E-mails and blogs are popular methods for one to express one's thoughts and feelings in writing and the whole networked world becomes the instantaneous audience for such publications. Fiction, non-fiction, essays, poems and all manner of writing find an immediate avenue for publishing in this digital age. It is more advantageous to publish online. To go by the statistics, 2.2 million books are published each year and apart from these books in print we have on-line literature in the form of PDF, blogs, vlogs, FB, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube etc. For instance, Brenna Aubrey self-published her debut romance novel *At Any Price* on the Amazon Kindle on 9 December 2013. Similarly the contemporary popular trilogy *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E.L. James was originally published online as Twilight fan-fiction before the author decided to self-publish it as an e-book.

Conclusion

Digital literature in new media is the subsequent step in the world of literature in which people can share faster and to a broader audience, but many critics oppose to the new move. The literature of contemporary times is much faster than the literature of old times. Faster in terms of propagation and creation. It has crossed all barriers of time. Every day we see thousands of new creations which are circulated through different on- line platforms and thus it reaches the audience in a jiffy and the writers also get instant responses from their fans in the form of likes, shares and comments. New media literature has become literature of instant gratification. It goes without saying that literature, in the current times, has been engulfed by new media as it has much greater and much faster on people and its domain is way broader than literature. New media objects serve as a perfect representation not only literary values and ideas, but the digital novel provides the opportunity for scholars across disciplines to come together in the pursuit of knowledge. Therefore, the sector of literary studies should seize upon this recent advent in technology and welcome the digital literature.

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