



Gujarat National Law University

Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

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Workshop on Online Social-Surfing

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

Greetings from GNLU.

'All that is uploaded online, is done without a baritone'. Realizing the present generation's tendency to share every aspect of their lives on social media and the vulnerability that comes with it, GNLU Centre for Law and Society (GCLS) collaborated with the Centre for Social Research (CSR), Delhi to organize a fruitful interaction, or a 'dialogue' as the speaker would have it, in the form of a Social-Surfing workshop on 09th August 2017 at GNLU Campus. This workshop has been sponsored by Facebook, the Social-Surfing movement which is currently in its third phase began in 2015 and has rolled through nearly 150 institutes in India.

The objective of the workshop was to discuss the online safety mechanisms that are devised to control the information shared in the virtual spaces, and spread the word about solutions to concerns like trolling, cyber bullying, harassment, fake news, etc. The workshop witnessed the participation of a number of interested students keen to keep themselves protected in this increasingly digital world.

The speaker on the occasion was Mr. Amitabh Kumar, Head, Media and Communication, Centre for Social Research, Delhi who initially spoke about the necessity of a positive and gender sensitive online experience. Not one to be content with a dull, routine monologue, the speaker preferred to jolt the audience into action by an on-the-spot drawing contest and a tangram activity, connecting each with an important aspect of understanding social media networks.

The event started with the speaker introducing the idea of uniqueness, as starkly contrasted to the vulnerability of an individual on social media at the expense of being unique. The speaker emphasized upon the necessity of caution in voicing one's opinion across social media with sensitivity, given that opinions on social media lacks the context,



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intonation and background of an ordinary conversation, driving the idea home by equating a status update on Facebook with a person shouting out his opinion to a room full of family, friends, colleagues, employers and strangers.

A prominent feature of the workshop was a video shown during the speaker's presentation, which revealed several interesting facts about the impact of the 'social media' phenomenon on human behaviour and the society at large.

The speaker extensively discussed various aspects of security on social media ranging from password confidentiality to the prevalence of 'pranking' as opposed to hacking in the naïve Indian social media scene. The speaker encouraged students to adopt a safer approach on social media by apprising them of multiple in-built security features at their disposal.

Mr. Amitabh summed it up by saying that Facebook like most social media platforms spent the most for the security of its users, and the younger generation should avail the most of them to avoid cyber-crime scares.

For any further information, you may contact Mr. Saurabh Anand, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director- GNLU Centre for Law & Society on 09924776900 or sanand@gnlu.ac.in.