THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS' LIFESTYLE AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

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Annotation: *Nowadays, social media is integral to every individual's life, especially for students in universities and colleges, who use social media for academic and non-academic purposes. This article explores the influence of social media on students' lifestyle and their academic performances. The role of the Internet in the lives of students is also discussed.*

Keywords: *Internet, students, social media,*

Social media has revolutionized how we stay connected with friends, consume news, and interact with people worldwide. It offers unparalleled opportunities for connectivity, enabling us to keep in touch with loved ones across the globe effortlessly. However, despite the increased ability to stay connected, social media alone does not alleviate feelings of loneliness. Its addictive nature could be attributed to the constant stream of user-generated content, providing a never-ending source of entertainment. This addictive quality tempts users to spend hours scrolling endlessly through their feeds.

One aspect to consider is the permanence of social media. Content shared online can persist indefinitely, even if it was initially intended to be seen at the moment. Carelessly posting embarrassing photos or content can have long-lasting repercussions, potentially affecting future relationships and professional opportunities.

It is crucial to strike a balance, enjoying the positive aspects of social media while remaining mindful of its potential dangers. Being aware of its addictive nature and the lasting impact of our online footprint can help us navigate this digital landscape responsibly.

The Internet is the largest computer network that offers humanity endless possibilities. In the modern world, you won't find a person who doesn't use it. It plays a specific role in the life of every user, including students. They are users who

utilize the Internet for educational purposes. However, its usage has both advantages and disadvantages, which we will discuss further.

Firstly, the Internet serves as a vast repository of knowledge. Anyone can contribute anything to it, making it possible to find almost any information. However, due to the massive amount of data, finding reliable information can be challenging. While there are trustworthy sources online, they cannot replace libraries. Many libraries also utilize Internet resources to facilitate the information search process. Consequently, students now have the opportunity to search for necessary information not only in online resources but also in libraries from the comfort of their homes.

Secondly, using social media for educational purposes is another advantage of Internet usage. Social networks have become ubiquitous, offering the ability to create groups where multiple individuals can communicate simultaneously. This simplifies communication among students. Instant messaging applications have also played a significant role by making message exchange even more convenient. Educators have also started using messaging apps and social media for educational purposes, realizing that they facilitate their work.

Now, let's consider the drawbacks of Internet usage. Firstly, the accessibility and abundance of information can lead students to stop working independently and rely solely on the Internet. They no longer think for themselves because they can easily find what they need by pressing a few keys on the keyboard. While preparing for coursework, exams, or other assignments, students input relevant topics or questions into search engines and choose the most fitting answer, which they simply copy. But under normal circumstances, finding an answer would require studying a variety of materials or at least reviewing lectures, which would improve the student's understanding of the subject.

Secondly, during exams and similar assessments, students extensively try to use mobile phones. Modern mobile phones have Internet access, making it even easier to find the required information. Such accessibility allows them to find and download works on specific topics easily. In some cases, students even submit these works to their instructors without reading them. All of this leads to a decline in the student's level of education.

Students are the future of society, therefore, the development of the society of tomorrow depends on what kind of education a student receives today. It is the duty of every parent and teacher who cares about the future of their country to teach students the correct use of social media and networks today. They should teach students to critically evaluate the information they find online, check for reliability,

and guide responsible internet usage, including topics like digital citizenship, online etiquette, and privacy, from an early age. The students should be encouraged to utilize libraries, textbooks, and other offline resources in addition to the Internet. Educators, parents, and mentors should be actively involved in guiding students' internet usage, offering support, answering questions, and providing resources that promote responsible and productive online behavior. Fostering a culture of collaboration and encouraging them to work together helps students share ideas, and learn from each other both online and offline. This can be facilitated through group projects, online forums, or educational platforms that promote interaction. In addition, engaging in hobbies, exercising, or interacting face-to-face with friends and family can help students reduce their reliance on social media for entertainment and improve their overall well-being. By implementing these solutions, students can make the most of social media and the internet while maintaining a healthy balance and being mindful of their digital presence.

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