Advantages And Disadvantages Of Social Networking In Education

Introduction

It is the 21st century; people around the world have been developing in all fields of life. Technology is the main source to everything, through it people achieved many several ways to live easily. When we say technology, we mean every single detail in our lives. Technology is divided into many parts including the internet. The internet is used worldwide for many purposes and one of the main purposes is communication, but communication on social media turned to be a good one for education.

Social media is not limited to only posting pictures and communicating with each other, because it has gained credibility and authenticity over the years as being a source of information and a platform for organizations to interact with audiences. (Dlamini, The Role of Social Media in Education, 2019) Initializing social media in education makes the education convenient, this is by providing the students with the ability to get more useful information, in addition to connect with learning groups and other educational systems. (unknown, The Role of Social Media in Education, 2018) Social media networks are several, such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are used as platforms when it comes to educational needs, but teachers must use the proper social media plan and strategy in order to apply it correctly. (Hopkins, 2020)

I. Advantages of Social Media in Education

Social media and network tools provide students and institutions with multiple chances to improve their learning methods. Through this connection, students can benefit from online videos that explain millions of educational topics, in addition to online tutorials and resources. (Dlamini, The Role of Social Media in Education, 2019)

Communication and Collaboration

Social media means a better communication between the individuals. Any student can connect with any of his friends, colleagues or teacher via Kids Messenger, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Twitter and more using his/her smartphones, tablets, laptops or any technological instrument that may allow them to interact with others. This way makes it easier for all students to communicate in anytime without waiting a specific day to meet physically with each other. Social media is not only for chat communication; it is also advantageable in a way that the students and teachers can share documents, PDFs, homework, and even exams. (Willbold, 2019)

Finding Concrete Information Online

Information is not restricted to only library and books, information can also be found online on various websites and social media networks that can be so beneficial for the students. Depending on what subjects students are learning, they can search the social media via the

news feed button and find the answers to whatever questions they want. When entering a specific website, students can find relevant tabs and thus more information and answers. For example, sites such as Tumblr and Pinterest can inspire children to make projects for school; they can find pictures and videos with steps to make their projects. (Willbold, 2019) YouTube is the perfect source for videos due the wide range of explaining lessons, it helps students to understand and prepare for their schools or universities. (unknown, Advantages & Drawbacks of Social Media in Education, 2020)

Social media is the new Google for students, it is considered to be the new library for them. It will contain the latest data of every institution in addition to its curriculum and material. (unknown, Advantages & Drawbacks of Social Media in Education, 2020)

Paternal Involvement

As it is known, schools make weekly or monthly meetings for parents to let them stay in touch with them and the teachers in order to inform them about their children's status in school. These meetings are also important to inform them about any new edits when it comes to the curriculum and schools' activities and projects. For this reason, social media is easier for both, the school and parents. Parents can open the schools' website in anytime and check out the news, parents can be updated on school-related activities, projects, and events that are happening via Twitter or Facebook. The school can keep in touch with parents via Skype meetings. These communications between the parents and the schools leave a positive impact on both due to the regular communication and the combination of the formal and informal connection. This way of using the social media make parents up to date with their children's' record and improvement in school. (Willbold, 2019)

Improved Literacy, Communication, and Reading Skills

Reading and writing in class are somehow boring for students due to the lack of activities that the teacher may or, may not include in class. For this reason, social media is more fun to read and write on. Students prefer topics that are interested in, they search the social media and find what they like, consequently they will be motivated to read and analyze especially if these pieces include eye-catching animations in what they are reading. Animations and colors are tools of motivation, thus students read and learn more. This is also implied on online messages, comments, news, articles, and books which provide an endless list of information to read and thus putting extra efforts towards their learning. (Willbold, 2019)

These activities make students develop stronger reading habits resulting in a drastic improvement in their writing abilities.

Distance Learning Opportunities

Regularly, students attend classes to get their education, but in the same time some students cannot attend these classes due to several conditions they may be facing. So, by using the distance learning opportunities and just as its name suggests, students will have more opportunities to learn by only sitting in their houses in front of their screens. (Willbold, 2019)

II. Disadvantages of Social Media in Education

There are several disadvantages in using social media for education such as the following;

It can be an interruption

Using social media in the classroom could be one of the major causes for distraction. While using the social media for studying, students can be attracted to things other than their lesson, consequently these students will be distracted from their major goal of using social media. This will affect their learning process.

Cyber bullying

Social media is a great way to connect and communicate, on the other side, it can be a weapon for students to bully or abuse their peers or even their teachers. In this way, students and teachers will lose their motivation to study, in addition to losing self-confidence.

Posting Unsuitable content on Social Media

Several schools use social media in their learning process but other schools do not. This is because social media includes content for all ages in several topics which can be harmful. These posts can abuse the student in a way or another and can be an adultery content which is disastrous for young students. Schools cannot control their students when using the social media nor can they control the content of the social media, one site can lead to the other reaching harmful websites, and this is especially because some websites are titled educational but the content is not.

Lack of head-on Communication

Students spend time with their teachers streaming online which is considered a safe platform for them to express themselves, but this is not enough to build their personality. Valuable real-life skills are missing when using this way of teaching-learning process. Personal relationships and social life need these students to engage more and this is by real meetings and interactions between themselves and their teachers. This leads to more effects, students will prefer to interact with people only on social media and consequently they will lose the ability to socialize with others. Students will start avoiding face-to-face communication. (unknown, Advantages & Drawbacks of Social Media in Education, 2020)

Students’ Writing Skills May Decline

Nowadays, you can find the autocorrect icon on all technological advices, in addition to many software’s and programs that can correct your writings and essays such as Grammarly. So, while writing any piece, students will not be aware of their grammatical and sentence structure mistakes. (unknown, Advantages & Drawbacks of Social Media in Education, 2020)

III. How Social Media is Reshaping Today’s Educational System

Ever since social networks and social media entered our lives, everything changed regarding our way of thinking, communicating and meeting people. Social media changed the educational

system. (Wade, 2018)

Empowering Effects

Social media has the ability to empower all individuals in the learning-teaching process; it empowers teachers, students and parents. Statistics show that 96% of the students that have access to the internet are using at least one social network. (Wade, 2018)

The interesting part of using these social networks shows that some of the students are using these platforms in order to spread positivity and useful activities. These include several beneficial ideas for all students such as introducing the way to win a student-loan or how to collaborate on international projects. (Wade, 2018) Students use the social media to improve overall educational experiences. (Zilles, 2019)

Teachers are using the Social Media to re-think the Teaching Process

Social media is changing the education system because of its various ways, thus putting somehow an end to the ordinary lectures and sessions in classes. Taking a good example can be Facebook in which it serves the teacher to live stream, this lead to the communication between the teacher and the student. And thanks to the online courses, a student in Japan can listen and see a teacher in Paris.

When it comes to homework assignments, teachers can be creative. For example, in “George University’s Center for Social Impact Communication”, a biology teacher encouraged students to talk about certain topics only via hashtags.

A Stronger Community through Social Media

The benefits of social media are not only restricted on teacher-student relationship. Principles and administrators of schools can benefit also of such platform, this is by posting content which is related to the school in order to inform all individuals, especially parents about any updates in the school. Moreover, they can make online meetings with parents (Wade, 2018)

Some teachers also create private groups on several platform networks to keep in touch with parents instead of waiting “the face-to-face” meetings when possible. (Zilles, 2019)

Conclusion

Technology conquered our world in several ways. Social networking is considered to be the most known technological platform on earth; it is a way of interaction and communication. Luckily, students have the opportunity to benefit from it for their educational systems. But, as anything in the world “Social Networking” is a sword with two sides in which it has the advantageous side and the disadvantageous side. From one side it benefits the students through helping them to learn more, but on the other side it may harm also.

Benefits of social networking are obvious; a healthy relationship with parents and teachers make it easier to understand students. Thus, recognizing students’ problems in a better way and solving them for a better learning strategy.