HOW SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECTS STUDENT LEARNING – THE PROS AND CONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

Social media plays a significant role in modern education, offering both opportunities and challenges. This study investigates its impact through a literature review and a survey of 300 students from Nizami Pedagogical University, Tashkent State Economic University, and Tashkent Medical Academy. The findings show that 85% of students use social media for academics, with YouTube and Telegram being the most popular platforms. Students reported benefits such as access to resources, improved communication, and collaboration. However, challenges included distractions (55%), misinformation (40%), and psychological effects like stress and anxiety (30%).

The study concludes that social media can be a valuable educational tool if used effectively. Students need to develop time management and critical thinking skills, while educators should integrate social media responsibly into learning. Future research should focus on strategies to balance social media use with academic success.

Key words

Social media, education, student learning, digital literacy, academic performance, online learning, social media distractions

Introduction

In our rapidly changing world, social media is becoming more and more popular among society as a way of communicating and getting information, keeping people aware of all the world. According to Jayakumar R and Tamilselvan (2018) social media (SM) has become a part and parcel of our everyday life that it is very difficult to completely refrain from it. Social media has a significant role in many fields, such as education. As Rault, V., & Patil, P. (2016) said, with faculty using a variety of software tools and free web applications to enhance learning, communication, and engagement, the use of social media is on the rise in higher education classrooms. Platforms like Instagram, Telegram and YouTube offer various resources, including video lessons, numerous articles and e-books and new

teaching and learning methods for both students and teachers in acquiring new knowledge.

However, it also has some drawbacks that can negatively affect students' learning processes, like misunderstanding, artificial information, or a way of wasting time.

The question of the effect of social media on the educational system is being widely debated among researchers and scientists for many times. As Kwanana 2018 stated, " Education is one zone in which people, in general, have conflicting viewpoints about social networks. Some people are supportive of their advantages in the classroom while others criticize them as a futile diversion to both teachers and students. " This article examines the positive and negative effects of social media in education by reviewing existing literature and research studies.

Methodology

For analyzing the influence of social media on education, this study combined a literature review and a student survey conducted at three universities in Uzbekistan:

1.   Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami
2.   Tashkent State Economic University
3.   Tashkent Medical Academy

The survey consisted of 100 students from each university, for a total of 300 responders. The survey form included 5 multiple-choice and some short-answer questions. These questions were about students' usage of social media platforms, their positive sides, their challenges, and their effect on academic performance. For example such short-answer questions including "How social media affects in your learning process? , What are the negative and positive sides of social media? , Have you ever used any type of social media platforms for learning something? , Usually how much time do you spend on social media platforms? For which purposes?"

Additionally, relevant academic sources, such as journal articles, research reports, and case studies from Google Scholar, were reviewed. The literature provided context for the survey results, enabling the analysis of trends and comparison with prior research. The findings were categorized into two main sections: the advantages and disadvantages of social media in education.

Results

The results of the methodology are considered very important. These results are expected, and are very related to each other. In obtaining these results, each student's (all 300 students from each three universities) response was studied sufficiently during the survey process. The related literature was also studied sufficiently. The results were compared with each other, and a clear conclusion was

reached. The consequence of survey which was conducted to better understand the relationship between social media and use and academic performance and aimed to examine how students use social media for educational purposes and its impact on their studies is as expected. The key findings of the survey are as follows:

1.Proportion of students who use social media for educational aim

Most of responders, I mean 85% of students reported using social media for academic purposes, such as watching educational videos, participating in online discussions, and accessing study materials. Ten among all, more than half of them, 60% of students preferred YouTube for learning, while 25% used Telegram channels, and 15% relied on Instagram pages and Facebook pages. Here is the proportion of which media platforms of each university uses for educational purposes:

Universities	Telegram channel users	Instagram channels users	You tube channel users
Tashkent Medical Academy	28%	12%	60%
Tashkent State Economic University	35%	10%	55%
Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami	45%	10%	45%

2.Positive effects of social media and negative effects of social media

When it comes to positive effects of social media 78% of students agreed that social media enhanced their learning experience by providing additional resources and explanations beyond textbooks. They informed that they could find necessary information related to their subjects through social media platforms or networks easily and fast. In terms of communication, 70% of students believed that social media facilitated better collaboration with classmates and teachers. Also, in terms of finding information 65% of respondents found social media useful for staying updated on academic news, deadlines, and online lectures.

According to the findings of survey there are also plenty drawbacks of using social media. First and foremost, 55% of students admitted that social media was a significant distraction during study hours. They agreed that they have been mostly distracted from their homework or assignments because of social media platforms such as Instagram or You tube which are full of attractive and interesting videos. Furthermore, 40% of students encountered misleading or false information related

to their studies. Also, a little proportion of responders, 30% of students reported feeling pressured by social media comparisons, leading to stress and anxiety. They agreed that they have had a headache or some sleeping sickness related to stress when they were immersed on social media.

Comparison with literature

The survey results align with previous research that highlights both the benefits and challenges of social media in education. Studies suggest that social media enhances engagement, promotes collaborative learning, and improves digital literacy (Al-Rahmi & Zeki, 2017). However, like the survey findings, other research also warns about distractions, misinformation, and mental health concerns (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Keles et al.., 2020).

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Discussion

The findings from both the survey and existing literature indicate that social media is a double-edged sword in education. On the positive side, it enhances communication, provides access to educational materials, and encourages student engagement. As Mushtaq, A. J., & Benraghda, A. (2018) stated, "Educators and students can use social media as informational and communicational tools to ease and improve learning process." The survey revealed that most students use social media for learning, particularly through YouTube and Telegram channels, which offer valuable resources that complement traditional classroom learning.

However, the challenges of social media cannot be overlooked. Many students admitted that social media distracts them from studying, reducing focus and productivity. Additionally, misinformation is a significant issue, as some students struggle to verify the credibility of online sources. As Siddiqui, S., & Singh, T. (2016) mentioned, in some situations, a lot of incorrect information was posted, which could mislead students. Furthermore, a portion of students reported experiencing stress and anxiety due to social media comparisons.

To maximize the benefits of social media in education, students should develop time management skills and learn to identify reliable sources. According to Talaue, G. M., AlSaad, A., AlRushaidan, N., AlHugail, A., & AlFahhad, S. (2018), social media has both positive and negative effects on student achievement, so it is important to handle adolescents' use of social networks with great responsibility.

Teachers and educational institutions can also play a role by integrating social media into structured learning environments while guiding students on responsible usage. Future research could explore effective strategies for balancing social media use and academic success.

Conclusion.

Social media is a powerful tool in education, offering numerous advantages such as improved communication, interactive learning, and increased student engagement. As Kolhar, M., Kazi, R. N. A., & Alameen, A. (2021) stated, social networking sites are essential in education, providing students with various opportunities to enhance learning and access the latest information through learning groups and educational systems. However, it also presents challenges, including distractions, misinformation, and mental health risks. According to Chen, M., & Xiao, X. (2022), social media enables idea-sharing but may not fully support students emotionally, and its benefits can be short-lived. The survey results show that most students recognize the educational benefits of social media but also struggle with its negative effects.

Responsible use of social media can help students harness its educational potential while mitigating its drawbacks. Educators, parents, and students must collaborate to create a balanced approach that maximizes the positive aspects of social media in education. By developing digital literacy and time management skills, students can make the most of social media without compromising their academic performance.

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