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Social Media " A Blessing Or A Menance" – A Study

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ABSTRACT

Social media has been responsible for rapidly changing the way people communicate. The emergent of social media is significantly influencing people from all walks of life including the academic life of students. Institutions and academicians are liberally using social media technologies hoping to excite critical thinking skills, collaboration, and knowledge construction. Today social media has been accepted by higher institution making it a platform where students connect with their instructors, fellow students and other higher authorities across the board. Thus it is called for the study to explore and examine how social media has impacted students' academic life. The study implored a Quantitative approach in assessing these impacts. Students must use available online platforms effectively, being conscious of social media positives and negatives. They should be cautious of not getting carried away while learning. Social media platforms available include Facebook, Whatsapp, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and much more.

KEY WORDS: Social media, knowledge construction, critical thinking skills, Facebook, Whatsapp

INTRODUCTION

Today Social Media has taken a firm place in people's lives. Hardly we find someone not connected and updated of happenings. Information spreads like wild fire on the so called communication platform namely Social Media. Internet made the world look small, Social Media has made it smaller.. Being on Social Media has now become an addiction, a way of life, an aspiration and an asset to many.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the explosive growth of social media users for everyday communication, the extensive use of the platform has penetrated into teaching stream too. This has emphasised the need to assess its impact on the standard of education.

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was purported to assess the impact of social media on academic life of students. To be specific, this study aims at exploring usage of social media by students in higher education and its impact on their academic life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mensah &Nizam concluded in their study that social media platforms has a significant impact on students' academic performance in Malaysia tertiary institutions. Nevertheless, among the six variables used in their study, time appropriateness, health and addiction has significant influence on students' academic performance. This is because time management plays an essential role in determining the success and failure of an individual. Thus students who lack time management can easily fall prey to the negative impact of social media. Health hazards owing to excessive exposure to radiation and addiction to Social media leads to time mismanagement and skipping routines.

According to Douglas Thomas and John Seely Browns (2011) description of a technology enhanced new culture of Learning that says, learning is based around principles of collective exploration, play and innovation rather than individualized instruction, it could be argued that social media supports the aspect of knowledge consumption and construction that are very different to the epistemological principle of formal education and individual instruction as well as sounding with currently fashionable constructivist and socio cultural learning theories. These ideas are reflected most explicitly in the notion of connectivism the idea that learning in a social media age now rests upon the ability to access and use distributed information on a "just in time basis". Simply put, learning can be seen as an individual ability to connect to specialized information nodes and sources as and when required. Thus knowledge ability would demand nurturing and maintenance of these connections.

Study in Kogi State University found out that the exposure of the students to social media has effect on their academic performance. Evident show that social media have negative influence on the academic performance of students. Spending more time on Social Media distracts students to various unwanted aspects, affecting academic performance.

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METHODOLOGY:

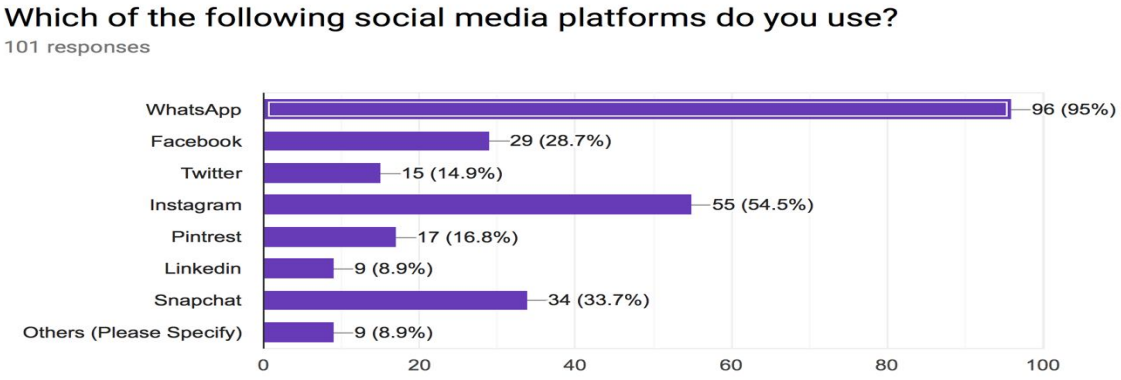
Research design: To support the study, information relevant to the study were obtained from both primary and secondary data. Primary data were acquired from the 105 respondents. On other hand, secondary data were obtained from previous studies, literatures, books, documents, and electronic materials related to the current study.

Population: Sample was extracted from population consisting of Under-graduate, Post-graduate students and Research Scholarsat Chennai colleges.

Sample and sampling procedure: 105 Respondents participated in the study. The researcher has usedsimple random sampling technique in selecting the participants. Structured questionnaire method was used to collect the data from the respondents. Gender participation are both Male and Female.

FINDINGS

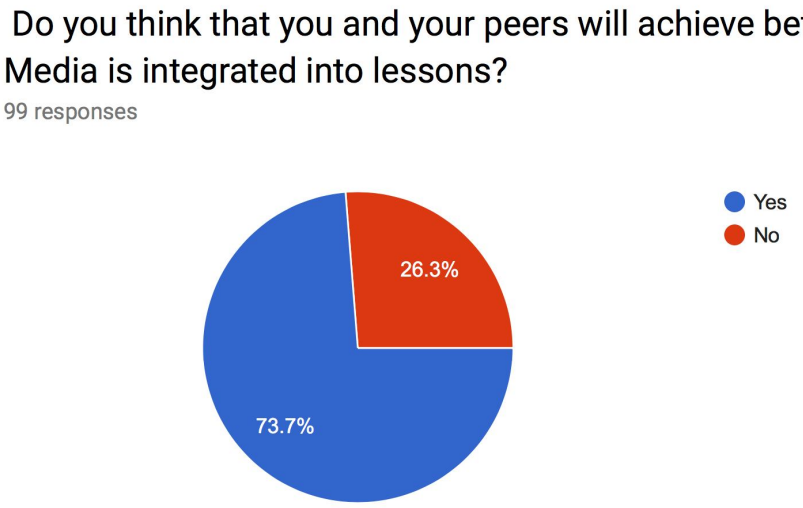
- Search for friends, classmates and communication
- The time spent on informal organizations enables most respondents to compose their own particular relaxation time, and in addition get ready for exams.
- 80.2% of the respondents admit that social media should be used as a tool for education by teachers.
- 95% of the students admit that they use Whatsapp for interacting with peer members and fellow students.
- 40% of the students spend more than 5 hours per day on social media.
- 48.3% of the students admit that social media disturbs their concentration in studies.
- 73.7% of the students agree to the view that social media will have a positive impact on both teacher and the learner.



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Almost half of those surveyed admit that using the social media helped them in their personal lives and communicating with friends, organizing leisure and in search of interest groups, some argue that social networks did not affect their way of life in any way, and only a few acknowledged that social networks had influenced on their free time. Summing up, it should be noted that social networks, becoming an integral part of the students' full life, took up most of their free time. Having superseded the methods for correspondence, they replaced the understudies' leisure activities and verbal correspondence. The informal organization, and not the course book and the instructor, moved toward becoming for them the main colleague in anticipation of exams.



Undoubtedly, in social networks, there are also things useful for the development of the student - a lot of educational groups on Facebook and educational videos from YouTube. In addition, communication with peers through social networks can help a student socialize, find new friends, discuss with them issues related to studies. In addition, in social networks, a child can relax for a while and get distracted from the everyday college routine.

Positives of Social Media

1. Keeps in Touch
2. Helps in Mass Communication at Minimal Cost
3. Helps Healthy Following
4. Helps Build Ideologies

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5. Quick Response Time reduces tension

Negatives of Social Media

1. No personal meets so no emotional moments
2. Kisses, Sweets, Beats and more are in Emojis
3. Waste of Time if not used judiciously
4. Exposure to Fake and unwanted messages

CONCLUSION

The blooming of Social Media is a blessing in itself. Though it has its demerits, the merits win over them. It can be part of a routine with time allocated to it. Using Social Media to ones advantage is in our hands. Using it judiciously for betterment in life is the need of the hour.



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