

Social Media in Education: Advantages and Disadvantages

Dr. Ibakordor Tiewsoh

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Jaintia Eastern College, Khliehriat

Abstract

Social media is used by various educational institutions to teach and reach the learners as well as conduct online tests and exams. This enable students to learn beyond the classroom. Social media helps education by improving learning skills, providing online courses, encouraging creativity, sharing up-to-date information, building connections, letting people create content, and allowing students to learn at their own pace. Social media has some demerits, such as causing distraction, addiction, less time spent on social relationships, lower ability to retain information, reduced comprehension, and less discipline. It can also increase stress, depression, and mental health problems for students. However, social networking has also contributed constructively in education by helping students and the educational process as a whole.

Keywords: Education, Social Media

Introduction

Social platform have become an important part of teaching and learning process in the 21st century, particularly after the recent pandemic. Schools, colleges and training or coaching centers now widely use social media to take classes and even conduct tests and exams online. This approach supports and facilitate students to learn beyond the classroom. Today, students can bring devices like laptops, smartphones, and iPods to help with their studies, which help students to update with digital changes. According to Undiyaundeye, any platform or website that allows people to interact is considered a social media site, whereas, Raut and Patil, emphasized that this is based on understanding how people connect and interact. This build strong relationships among people worldwide and also increases students' knowledge and understanding in education.

Meaning and Definition of Social Media

Social media refers to different forms of interactive online platforms which let users create, share, and manage content, either alone or in groups (Davis, 2016). Desai (2017) described social media as “social platform which allows different groups of people to communicate, create, sharing or exchanging information and ideas in societies and virtual platforms”. Whereas, Boyd and Ellison (2008) defined it as “platforms which provides users to develop profiles and showcase the connections with different people” (Wolf, Sims, and Yang, 2018). These platforms encourage user engagement and participation (Manning, 2014).

Based on these definitions, social platform refers to the use of online tools which help users to interact and connect with each other.

Key Characteristics of Social Media

1. Social media allows people to express and explore their identities (Manning, 2014). It provides individuals a platform to share their ideas, views, and experiences, helping them to reflect and develop in areas that they are interested.
2. Social media creates an engaging experience by bringing together rich content, shared knowledge and interactive communication particularly for businesses (Chou, 2014).
3. Social media connects people from different places be it near or far. It allows them to share and exchange information in one platform (Hu, & Lin, 2013).
4. It lets people share knowledge quickly and easily to any places of the world, thereby helping users connect and spread ideas more efficiently and effectively. (Chou, 2014).
5. It is generally referred as online communities where people connect each other through various common platforms, chats, link sharing, and other interactive characteristics.
6. It is a common forum where people use to discuss various issues and receive or give feedback.
7. It is normally open and free, and anyone can access it without acquiring essential skills or training (Hu, & Lin, 2013).
8. People use social media platforms on a daily basis to log in their accounts and interact with others. Social media has had a big impact on many areas, especially by making it easier to find useful and reliable information. In education, it offers both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of Social Networking in Education

Raut and Patil (2016) point out that adults and teachers are no longer the only sources of knowledge. Social platforms now help people learn from each other and stay connected and motivated online. These platforms have changed how students experience education. Below are some key advantages of using social platforms in education.

1. **Abilities to learn:** Raut and Patil (2016) suggest integrating social platform into education allows students to create and manage their own learning processes at their own pace. Social platform facilitate discussion and sharing information, monitoring student performance, hold live lectures, and provide feedback. When this is used in education, learners become more interested and eager to participate. Zgheib and Dabbagh (2020) found that more faculty members are implementing social platforms to enhance student progress and development. Desai (2017) reported that 47% of teachers believe using social media platforms can enhance students' learning experiences.
2. **E-learning opportunities:** Social media help students discover online classes and other opportunities available on digital platforms. By participating in these, students can develop their personalities. Integrating social media into e-learning has changed how distance education is viewed in higher education (Mnkandla & Minnaar, 2017). Dafoulas and Shokri argued working with online social networks can also improve students' learning experiences in several ways.
3. **Creating creativity:** Social media has helped students discover their hidden talents and learn to express themselves independently. It encourages students to think more deeply about their thoughts and feelings, which shapes their personalities. Vilarinho-Pereira, Koehler, and Fleith (2021) stated that using appropriate teaching methods on social media is important for building and promoting students' creativity. Gulzar, Ahmad, Hassan, and Rasheed (2022) also found that the social media content students use daily is often linked to their creativity and academic interests.

4. **Updating information:** Social media makes it easier and convenient for students and teachers to find the latest information instantly, no matter where they are. Many use social media to post updates, learning experiences, research, and news about academic events (Ugur & Turan, 2019).
5. **Improves connectivism:** Social media supports connectivism by encouraging students to bring together different ideas, theories, and information. It helps them see a wide range of knowledge and opinions, which can deepen their thinking. This also gives students more chances to develop their skills and focus on their interests and strengths.
6. **Self-paced learning:** According Meena (2013), self-pace learning means that educational websites let students' access course content whenever and wherever they want, making it convenient for each learner.
7. **Generating of content:** Many social media platforms allow people to develop content, share opinions, information, and support one another (Fenny, Pardamean, & Darudiato, 2013). These platforms help students share their work and ideas, which can help them develop their skills. Social media is a type of website where people can share expertise, knowledge, and information with others who have similar interests and passions (Dimla, Eusebio & Mendoza, 2021).

Disadvantages of Social Media in Education

Incorporating social media in education may also have some downsides that harm students' well-being. The negative impacts of social media on students are discussed below:

1. **Creation of distraction:** When students use social media, they are often distracted by unnecessary information and updates instead of focusing on their studies. This distraction can lower their overall performance. Raut and Patil (2016) also found that distractions from YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter greatly reduce students' ability to concentrate on their tasks.
2. **Poor academic performance among students:** When students use social media without restrictions, their academic performance often suffers. Kolhar, Kazi, and Alameen (2021) found that just 1% of students used social media for academic purposes, while 99% used it for other reasons. This shows that social media may get in the way of effective learning.
3. **Addiction:** When students spend too much time online, they miss out on schoolwork and other things they like to do. The research conducted by Hou, Xiong, Jiang, Song, and Wang in 2019 revealed that students who addicted to social media often have worse mental health and lower grades.
4. **Less time in social relationship:** Raut and Patil (2016) found that when students spend more time on social media, they spend less time socializing in person. According to Undiyaundeye (2014), spending many hours online weakens students' physical interactions and bonds with friends and family. This can negatively impact students' social development.
5. **Decreasing the ability to retain information:** Easier access to information on social media has reduced people's ability to remember important details and lessened their motivation to research and update information on their own (Raut & Patil, 2016).
6. **Lower comprehension levels:** Using shortcut spellings and emojis on social media has reduced students' comprehension (Yılmazsoy, Kahraman, & Köse, 2020). Students often ignore correct spelling and grammar rules. This familiarity with incorrect language may also affect how they speak (Dimla, Eusebio, Mendoza, 2021).
7. **Less Discipline:** Nyongesa, Kiprop, and Chumba (2019) found that all respondents believed social media increased indiscipline in schools. According to Yılmazsoy, Kahraman, and Kose (2020),

students indulging much of their time on social media become less disciplined in their academic work and often neglect their homework. This behavior can harm students' moral values and character, encourage cheating and dishonesty, and lead to laziness, all of which negatively affect their physical and mental health.

Spending too much time on social media can make students feel dissatisfied, isolated, or inadequate. These feelings can affect their mood and may cause stress, depression, or other mental health problems. When social media use is not controlled, it can increase these issues and sometimes lead to misbehavior or other negative incidents (Nyongesa, Kiprop, & Chumba, 2019).

Discussion

Social media can help and hinder teaching and learning. It lets students and teachers connect with people around the world, opening up new ways to learn outside the classroom. Describing social media as a double-edged sword has helped teachers, parents, and others see both its benefits for education and the challenges that need close attention, especially when it is used in teaching and learning. Social media in education can help students find learning materials and useful resources, and it also supports better interaction with teachers and instructors (Fenny, Pardamean, & Darudiato, 2013). It gives students and teachers many chances to learn and develop together. However, if students use social media mainly for social or emotional reasons, it can have negative effects that spill over into their school life and may influence other students as well (Nyongesa, Kiprop & Chumba, 2019).

Measures to prevent negative impact of social media:

1. Teachers and parents should regularly check in on their students and children to make sure they are developing in a positive way.
2. Teachers and families should pay attention to students' mental health, social skills, and physical activity levels (Kolhar, Kazi, Alameen, 2021). By doing this, they can help prevent students from overusing social media and experiencing its negative effects.
3. Schools and communities should regularly organize activities to sensitize students on the harmful effect of social media.
4. Spending time in hobbies or practical activities cultivate students ability to control the use of social media.
5. Parents should be aware of the things done by their children in social media site. This could help to rationalize student to effectively use social media.
6. The best measures to prevent the negative effect of social media is self-control. This will help one to manage time effectively in such a way that other physical activities, academic activities and other requirements of the family and society are meet.

Conclusion

In conclusion, social media plays a key part in education by helping students access more knowledge and information. It also helps teachers and parents connect and communicate quickly, which supports students' wellbeing. Still, social media has its downsides and can sometimes affect students in negative ways. If we keep both the benefits and challenges in mind, we can find better ways to help students learn.

References

1. Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230
2. Chou, C. (2014). Social Media Characteristics, Customer Relationship and Brand Equity. *Journal of Applied Business and Economics*, 16(1), 128-139. Retrieved from www.na-businesspress.com/JABE/ChouC_Web16_1_.pdf
3. Dafoulas, G. A. & Shokri, A. (2014). Delivery of e-learning through social learning networks. *International Conference e-Learning*, 222-229. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED557301.pdf>
4. Desai, S. S. (2017). Impact of social media on Education: A review. *Golden Research Thoughts*, 6-10. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358850252>
5. Dimla, M. S., Eusebio, M. C., Mendoza, A. C. (2021). Social network exposure and students' vocabulary proficiency of second language: basis for reading enrichment method. *An International Journal of Art & Higher Education A Refereed Research Journal*, 10(2), 97-108. doi:10.46360/cosmos.ahe.520212018
6. Fenny, Pardamean, B. & Darudiato, S. (2013). Evaluation of Learning Features in Social Media. *Proceedings of the 2013 International Conference on Computer Science and Information Technology*, 110-114. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263276147>
7. Hu, H. & Lin, D. (2013). Feature Analysis of the Social Media. *International Workshop on Computer Science in Sports*, 186-190. Retrieved from <https://www.atlantis-press.com/article/9007.pdf>
8. Hou, Y., Xiong, D., Jiang, T., Song, L., & Wang, Q. (2019). Social media addiction: Its impact, mediation, and intervention. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 13(1). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-1-4>
9. Gulzar, M. A., Ahmad, M., Hassan, M. & Rasheed, M. I. (2022). How social media use is related to student engagement and creativity: investigating through the lens of intrinsic motivation. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 41(11), 2283-2293. DOI: 10.1080/0144929X.2021.1917660
10. Kolhar, M., Kazi, R. N. A., Alameen, A. (2021). Effect of social media use on learning, social interactions, and sleep duration among university students. *Saudi Journal of Biological Sciences*, 28, 2216 - 2222. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sjbs.2021.01.010>
11. Manning, J. (2014.) Social media, definition and classes of. In K. Harvey (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of social media and politics* (pp. 1158-1162). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
12. Meena, V. K. (2013). Role of Social Media in Education. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 1(3), 857-860. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353958127_Role_of_Social_Media_in_Education/citation/download
13. Mnkandla, E. & Minnaar, A. (2017). The Use of Social Media in E-Learning: A Metasynthesis. *IRRODL*. DOI: 10.19173/irrodl.v18i5.3014.
14. Nyongesa, S. C., Kiprop, C., & Chumba, S. (2019). Influence of social media on students' discipline in secondary schools in Kenya. *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(9), 41-63. Retrieved from <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Influence-of-Social-Media-on-Students%E2%80%99Discipline-in-Secondary-Schools-in-Kenya.pdf>
15. Raut, V & Patil, P (2016). Use of Social Media in Education: Positive and Negative impact on the students. *International Journal on Recent and Innovation Trends in Computing and Communication*,

- 4(1), 281-285. Retrieved from https://ijritcc.org/download/conferences/ICRRTET_2016/ICRRTET_Track/1455261816_12-02-2016.pdf
16. Uğur, N. G. & Turan, A. H. (2019). Social media in education: a distraction or motivation? *The Online Journal of Quality in Higher Education*, 6(1), 21-31. Retrieved from <https://www.tojqih.net/journals/tojqih/articles/v06i01/v06i01-03.pdf>
17. Vilarinho-Pereira, D. R., Koehler, A.A. & Fleith, D. S., (2021). Understanding the Use of Social Media to Foster Student Creativity: A Systematic Literature Review. *Creativity*, 8(1), 124-147. DOI: 10.2478/ctra-2021-0009
18. Wolf, M., Sims, J. & Yang, H. (2018). Social Media? What Social Media? *UK Academy for Information Systems Conference Proceedings*. Retrieved from <https://aisel.aisnet.org/ukais2018/3>
19. Yılmazsoy, B., Kahraman, M. & Köse, U. (2020). Negative Aspects of Using Social Networks in Education: A Brief Review on WhatsApp Example. *Journal of Educational Technology & Online Learning*, 3(1), 69-90. Doi: 10.31681/jetol.662746
20. Zgheib, G. E. & Dabbagh, N. (2020). Social Media Learning Activities (SMLA): Implications for Design. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1249284.pdf>