UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA IN LEARNING: BOON OR BANE?
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Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, are some of the well-known social media that consume our time most and catch the attention of everyone. Through this, we can easily get the latest and hottest issues that we have in and out of our country. We have learn and been updated in so many things around us because of this social media. Many schools are now utilizing social media too as their means of imparting and disseminating information and knowledge. From having synchronous and asynchronous discussion to submitting requirements such as documents and presentations through Facebook, Yahoo and Gmail accounts, Students are posting their output like slogan, poster, poems, and etc. to inform the viewers and their friends on certain social media. It is evident that education is also upgrading and enable to join in the flow of rivers of digital era. Technological advancement like computers and laptops with a combination of internet access, creates a large impact in the educative process. It is the pinnacle of the 21st century education which is very essential for both teachers and learners to make a meaningful teaching and learning process. These two stakeholders of education are expected to have a social media account and be knowledgeable on how to use it well.

For some education scholars, social media has both positive and negative effects on students learning. The social media have numerous positive impacts. Firstly, it enhances learning and education. Students, with the help of the internet now have access to all form of information. No matter how old the information is, the internet serves as search lights to them. Some information that cannot be found in the libraries and research centers are now available online. The use of search engines such as Google and Google Scholar has helped many students in their educational life. Secondly, social media can bring the world to the classroom and enables students to communicate across the world. It breaks down time, distance and accessibility barriers and brings many opportunities for learning to happen anywhere and anytime. It also fosters two-way communication and collaboration, which is really the essence of any learning experience. With the use of social media, everyone now has a valuable voice to add to the conversation. Lastly, lecturers now prefer assignments and projects to be submitted to their emails. Lecture notes, handouts and reading materials are made available by the teachers online and downloaded by the students. This reduces cost of making photocopies and the risk of misplacing them.

On the other hand, some scholars see it has a negative impact on both student and learning. Firstly, students today have begun to rely on the accessibility of information that is available on the social media platforms specifically as well as the web in general in order to get answers. This means that there is a reduced focus on learning as well as on retaining information. Secondly, students are attempting to multi-task. They are trying to check various social media sites while they study. This leads to reduced academic performance. Besides, their ability to concentrate on their task at hand gets significantly reduced due to the distraction that is brought by all these social media sites. The other negative effect on students is that they are spending too much time on social sites, and much lesser time on socializing in person. In fact, there is a lack of body signals besides other nonverbal cues, including tone and inflection in case of social networking sites. Thus, they cannot be considered as an adequate replacement for any face-to-face communication. Not only this, students who are spending a great deal of time on these social networking sites are not able to communicate in person in an effective manner. These social media sites have become so popular in such a short time because the information gets published in a fast way. This has actually created a lax attitude for using proper spelling as well as grammar. In fact, the students are unable to write effectively without the aid of the spell check feature of a computer. Lastly, not all social media sites are credible source of reliable information but most of students are not aware on it and they are easily copy and paste all information that they got form the internet without checking or verifying it.
Knowing the positive and negative sides of social media in education is very essential. Through this, teachers are encouraged to utilize social media to their classroom but considering other factors that can contribute to its ineffectiveness like improper and over use of social media. It is recommended that the teachers should have a strong control on how to manage and monitor students learning from using internet. It is also recommended to inform the parents about the positive and negative impact of social media to the lives of their children. Their outmost support and effort can also contribute for the effective utilization of social media through monitoring and giving advice to their children.

References: