The Impact of Social Networking Websites on the Education of Youth

Sunitha Kuppuswamy, Anna University Chennai, Chennai, India

P. B. Shankar Narayan, Pondicherry University, Puducherry, India

ABSTRACT

Social networking websites like Orkut, Facebook, Myspace and Youtube are becoming more and more popular and has become part of daily life for an increasing number of people. Because of their features, young people are attracted to social networking sites. In this paper, the authors explore the impact of social networking sites on the education of youth. The study argues that these social networking websites distract students from their studies, but these websites can be useful for education based on sound pedagogical principles and proper supervision by the teachers. Moreover, the research concludes that social networking websites have both positive as well as negative impact on the education of youth, depending on one's interest to use it in a positive manner for his or her education and vice versa.

Keywords: Education, Social Networking, Social Networking in Education, Social Networking Websites, Students

INTRODUCTION

Internet medium is developing with the increased usage and understanding of how to use email, could shop online, and search the web for recipes or the long- lost instruction manual for a piece of equipment in the garage, etc. Now, internet is more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Myspace, and Orkut. These are some of the tools and technology associated with a recent phenomenon called social networking and is present everywhere.

Social networking has become part of the daily life experiences for an increasing number of people. The rapid adoption of social network sites by teenagers in the United States and in many other countries around the world raises some important questions. Why do teenagers flock to these sites? What are they expressing on them? How do these sites fit into their lives? What are they learning from their participation? Are these online activities like face-to-face friendships, or are they different, or complementary? (Danah Boyd, 2007). Penuel and Riel define social networking as "a set of people and the relationships between them". That definition is found today in the social networking services

that promote the development of online communities of people. Social networking such as Facebook, Orkut, Myspace, Flickr and Youtube are sites where users apply for membership and maintain their personal profile information in a centrally organized database. Each network member controls access to their profile by accepting or declining requests from other network members to be "friends". By expanding and developing their network of friends, social networking members are able to maintain online relationships for work, study, special- interests or leisure- related purposes.

Social networking services utilize the participation technology and software tools to facilitate communication and interaction between members. Social software communication tools include blogs, wikis, instant messaging, chat rooms, message boards and social bookmarking. Members use these tools to share online ideas, documents, photos, videos, and favorite websites actually almost anything. As more people participate in social networking, the question becomes is it merely a social activity or are they involved in learning and development?

And social networking websites is very popular among the youth so that they contribute the majority percentage of the users of these sites. So, the researcher wanted to study the impact of these social networking sites on their education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jeff Cain (2008), in the research paper "Online Social Networking Issues Within Academia and Pharmacy Education" has discussed that Facebook is a tool that aids students in developing their identities and finding their "fit" within a college community. Helping students connect, establish a network and stay in contact with old and new friends is the centre of attraction and significant benefits of Facebook. Making connections on campus which help them feel that they belong may be an important factor in student retention. These capabilities along with the many facets of communicating with their friends make social networking sites very appealing. Although extremely popular, especially among younger generations, social networking sites are not without their issues. Controversy surrounds the use of these sites, specifically in terms of privacy, addiction, safety, responsibility and attitudes toward revealing personal information to the world. Most of the press concerning these sites has been negative in focus. Newspapers and magazines related to higher education are replete with cases of college students who experienced negative repercussions from questionable activities that were made public online.9,15-26 The list of incidences are long and revolve around a myriad of issues related to photos, posts, and/or personal profiles.

Social networking sites such as Facebook provide individuals with a way of maintaining and strengthening social ties, which can be beneficial in both social and academic settings. These same sites, however, also pose a danger to students' privacy, safety, health and professional reputations if proper precautions are not taken. Colleges and schools of pharmacy would be advised to consider how these issues might affect their students. At a minimum, schools should take appropriate steps to educate students about these matters. Research is needed on professional students' usage and attitudes toward online social networking sites. Monitoring and usage of these sites by institutions venture into legal grey areas concerning the Fourth Amendment, the right to privacy, and duty of care, and should be approached with caution. Discussion is warranted on how, if at all, material found on student social networking sites should be used in colleges of pharmacy admissions decisions and/or matters of a disciplinary nature. Further research is needed on how best to address the issues surrounding online social networking.

Ana M. Martinez Aleman, Katherine Lynk Wartman and M. Aleman Ana (2009) in their book *Online Social Networking on Campus* said that teenager's online social needs are similar to those of college students. High school students want to stay up to date with their friend's status; they plan activities online; they are "social

11 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/article/impact-social-networking-websites-education/43067

Related Content

Becoming a Blogger: A Social Knowledge Experiment
Stefania Mariano (2011). *Social Knowledge: Using Social Media to Know What You Know (pp. 164-178).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/becoming-blogger-social-knowledge-experiment/50756

Social Identity in Facebook Community Life
Shaoke Zhang, Hao Jiangand John M. Carroll (2012). *Technical, Social, and Legal Issues in Virtual Communities: Emerging Environments (pp. 101-114).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/social-identity-facebook-community-life/67233

The Benefits of Social Media Platforms for Medical Practitioners: Building a Global Medical Network
Arpita Nayak, Atmika Patnaik, Ipseeta Satpathy, Sukanta Kumar Baraland B. C. M. Patnaik (2024). *Analyzing Current Digital Healthcare Trends Using Social Networks (pp. 252-269).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-benefits-of-social-media-platforms-for-medical-practitioners/343868

Deleveraging Creative Capital: A Decade of YouTube Campaigning
Robert John Klotz (2019). *International Journal of E-Politics (pp. 1-11).*
www.irma-international.org/article/deleveraging-creative-capital/241303

Exploring Factors Associated With Digital and Conventional Political Participation in the Caribbean
Emmanuel Aduguand Pearson A. Broome (2018). *International Journal of E-Politics (pp. 35-52).*
www.irma-international.org/article/exploring-factors-associated-with-digital-and-conventional-political-participation-in-the-caribbean/219259