

Chapter 1

The Impact of Social Media on Children

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the impacts of social media on children. Advantages and disadvantages of social media are always available. Positive aspects of social media include allowing children to be brought up as multicultural individuals, enabling education and training environments to design for purposes, using as the main or supplementary source of education, a great power in creating and sharing information. Its negative aspects include leading to a reduction of their academic, social, and cognitive skills in the early periods when children were exposed to the social media, causing the children to develop obesity, mostly bringing up as consumption-centered individuals, perceive the world as a screenshot, and have low critical, creative, and reflective thinking skills. Therefore, one of the most important tasks undertaken to reduce or eliminate the negative effects is to raise and educate media-literate individuals.

INTRODUCTION

Social media undoubtedly ranks first when considered how people spend their time today. People always carry small-sized technological devices, especially smart phones, that provide practical use for and solution to them. These tools have today become his organ like human being's arm, leg, feet. Human being did not know any of these tools fifteen to twenty years ago, but now these increasingly globalized tools have become an indispensable part of our lives. Some commonly used social applications are blog blogging, gaming, video and picture-sharing, iPods, iPhones, iPads, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc. Many of us have known the name of few or all of these off by heart. So to say, their names were imprinted on our memories. Well, are these applications that have come into our life changing our life too? In other words, what kind of changes are they causing in our lives? The answer of this questions undoubtedly yes. We should allow them to use these applications in a controlled manner when considered

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that they would mostly influence our children. This research focuses mainly on impacts of social media applications on the children and addresses how the likely consequences of these impacts will interpret.

Media

Media is a communication channel that provides news and information for the public. In other words, they are technical tools that provide verbal or written communication for the society (TDK, 2017). As its definition also implies, the media can be thought of as a channel of communication. Any disruption which would occur in this channel or unreasonably reporting the news during the communication process may lead to lack of communication or misuse of the news, which also brings about undesirable results on a large or small scale.

The social media plays an educational and didactical role, as well as a communication tool. When performing this role, it is very important to be known that it includes what kind of data, originates from which source, and is presented for what purpose. Biased presentations out of objective situations are highly influential in leading the individuals biasedly or in the fact that the society holds a biased opinion or belief. It can be said that this impact is strong and prominent on especially children. Cartoons, virtual games and their derivatives, to which children are exposed, have a profound impact on the development of children's world of thought. In a study by Funk, Brouwer, Curtiss, and McBroom (2009), when asked parents their beliefs about the influence of the social media exposure on their children, 99% of them expressed that popular media could have either a short-term impact of 43% or a long-term impact of 56%. Electronic media, especially television, have been criticized for their possible effect on children for a long time (Kirkorian, Wartella & Anderson, 2008). They emphasized that their cognitive development and academic success negatively affected in the early periods when children were uncontrollably exposed to the social media. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to question the contents of the social media tools where they spend time if one wants the children to have a healthy world of thought.

The social network, blog blogging, gaming, video and picture-sharing, iPods, iPhones, iPads, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, so on and so forth have become a part of today's common words. It would be hard to believe that many of these devices and networks were unavailable ten years ago (Graber & Mendoza, 2012). Social media, a type of digital media, is a system that is based on the content production and consumption of the participants and has different digital contents via links and content (Andersson, 2016). Although such a definition offers for social media, it is a growing phenomenon with various definitions since it gains popularity in the academic community as well. Its well-known definition refers to the social media used to provide social interaction since social media technology means web-based content in the digital environment through multi-way communications (Alzouebi & Isakovic, 2014). Social media is a key channel of communication in the society today and enables people worldwide to interact with each other with just the click of a mouse (Lofgren, 2014). Furthermore, smartphones and computers have so dramatically altered the manner in which people communicate around the world with ease of use that increases the amount of online interaction. Kahveci (2015) indicated that this change has also been penetrating into the educational environments.

Research on groups using social media applications and having mobile devices revealed that roughly one out of ten children by 5 age get a mobile device, such as a smartphone. Therefore, youths define as the new digital natives in the modern age (Dotterer, Hedges & Parker, 2016). Social media networks

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