Impact of Social Media on Education: A Blessing or a Curse

Dr. Maruthi G

Librarian, Government First Grade College, Shikaripura, Shivamogga Dist, Karnataka, India

Abstract: *The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has led to the emergence of social media as a significant information source. Because social media is transforming education and the world has become smaller due to technology use, we live in a global village. This article recalls, investigates the impact of social media on education. Usage and challenges of different types of social medias are discussed. The purpose of this study is to investigate the both positive and negative influences on students' thoughts and how these influenced their ability to communicate both good and bad things to others. The usage of social networking sites and related applications is becoming more and more apparent.*

Keywords: Information Technology, Social media, Education impact, Global communication, Usage, Challenges

1. Introduction

Following the early 2000s, social media gained prominence on a global scale as a means of promoting interactions between individuals and groups of people. Unlike in earlier times, when communication seemed impossible for people in different regions, it has shown several positive aspects for those far away to communicate essential details around the globe. This study looks at social media's effects on education. India has a large social and mobile audience and ranks third globally in terms of internet users. Students are being distracted from their education by social networking sites such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Whatsapp, Instagram etc. Students use email less frequently than they utilize social media. Social media offers the option to interact with friends, classmates, and individuals who share interests, despite the loss of privacy and safety. These days, a student's primary goals should be their education and future careers. On the other hand, a lot of students rely on social media for information accessibility. This implies a decreased emphasis on retaining knowledge and learning. The popularity of social networking sites among students is another finding of the study.

2. Background Study

Gupta and Rani (2013) opinioned that Social media will also influence the educational scenario, in India and the world, in a mixed way. There is a need to address the problems which may mar the utility of deployment of social media in education. Kapoor (2020) Study shown that the too much addiction to social media not only results in increased health problems, change in behavior, but social media has also emerged as a platform for spreading rumours, communal riots, hatred, terrorist activities, cyber crime etc.

The research results of Boateng and Amankwaa (2016) reveals that social media is widely used by students of higher institution. At least every student makes use of one social media. Moreover, data revealed that, participant are in support of the idea that social media contribute a significant quota to the development of their academic life.

It is argued that social media has the potential to bridge formal and informal learning through participatory digital cultures. Exemplars of sophisticated use by young people support this claim, although the majority of young people adopt the role of consumers rather than full participants (Greenhow and Lewin, 2019)

Rithika and Selvaraj (2013) argued that students are very fond of using face book, twitter, YouTube and orkut. Paying attention to their academic progress and addressing any issues will go a long way towards keeping the negative aspects of social media from influencing their studies. Mensah and NizamI (2016) study revealed that time appropriateness and health addiction has a stronger significant influence on students academic performance.

The results of the study by Trivedi et al. (2022) shows that social media sites are one of the vital technological developments of WEB 2.0. This study aims to emphasize on building an empirical model to investigate the impending determinants of users' intention to use social media sites in higher education.

The study (Akinwale and Onokala, 2022) examines both the positive and adverse impacts of social media on Nigeria's socio - cultural space. It advances how Nigeria utilized social - media platforms during the pandemic and war situation. It concludes that the negative effects which it has unleashed on Nigeria are more than its benefits, therefore, a curse rather than a blessing to Nigeria's socio - political and Economic space.
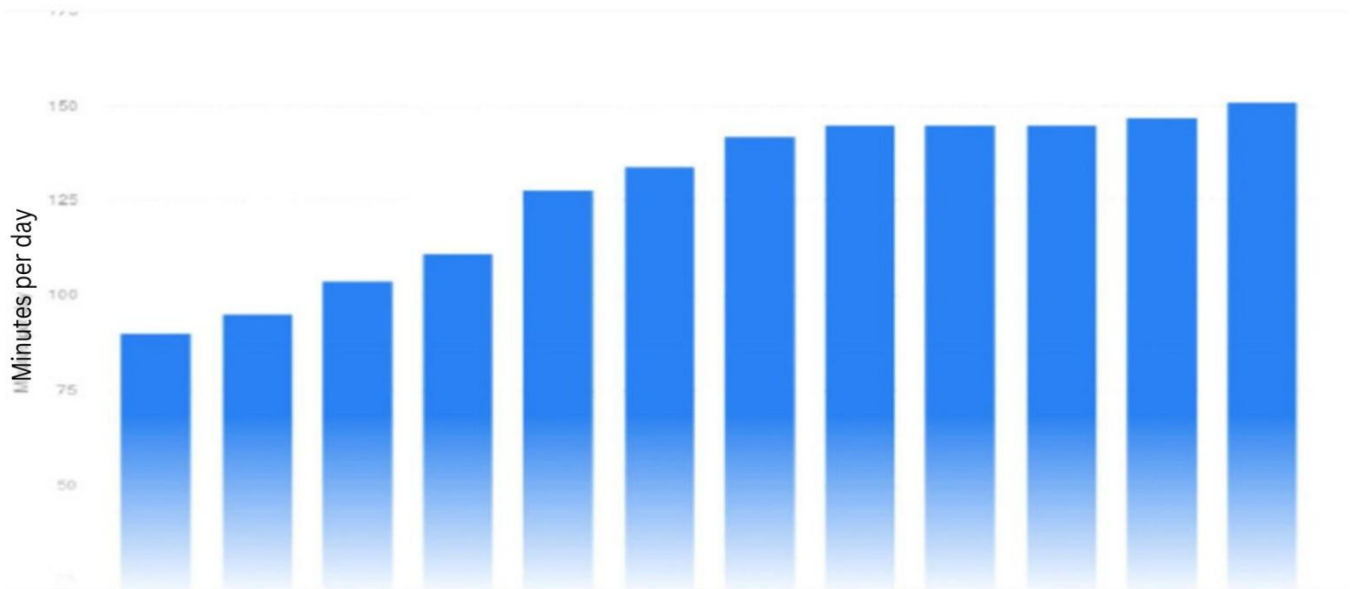
Figure 1: Daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2023 (in minutes)
Source: https: //www.statista. com/statistics/433871/daily - social - media - usage - worldwide/

Facebook: The American technology company Meta Platforms is the owner of the social media and networking site Facebook. It was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes, four other Harvard College students, and their roommates. The name of the company comes from the Facebook directories that are frequently provided to college students in the United States. Initially restricted to Harvard students, membership eventually grew to include students from other North American universities. With a few exceptions, when the age restriction is 14, Facebook has allowed users to registration as early as 13 years old (or older) since 2006. Facebook claimed to have 3 billion monthly active users as of December 2022. Facebook was the third - most - visited website globally as of October 2023, receiving 22.56% of US traffic. In the 2010s, it was the most downloaded mobile application.

X (formerly Twitter): is a social media platform that allows users to connect and share their thoughts with a large audience. Users can broadcast short posts known as tweets, which can contain text, videos, photos, or links. To access Twitter, users must have an internet connection or have a Smartphone.

Instagram: Instagram is a primarily visual platform. Unlike Facebook, which relies on both text and images. on Twitter, which is which relies on text alone, Instagram's primary aim is to enable users to share pictures or videos with their audience. Using a smartphone app, Instagram users may edit, post, and share images and short videos. In addition to adding a description, users may utilize location - based geotags and hashtags to index their postings and enable other users to search them within the app.

WhatsApp: A free cross - platform texting app is called WhatsApp. Users of Mac and Windows PCs, iPhone and Android smartphones, and other mobile devices can call and send free text, photo, audio, and video messages to anyone in the world, irrespective of the gadget used by the recipient.
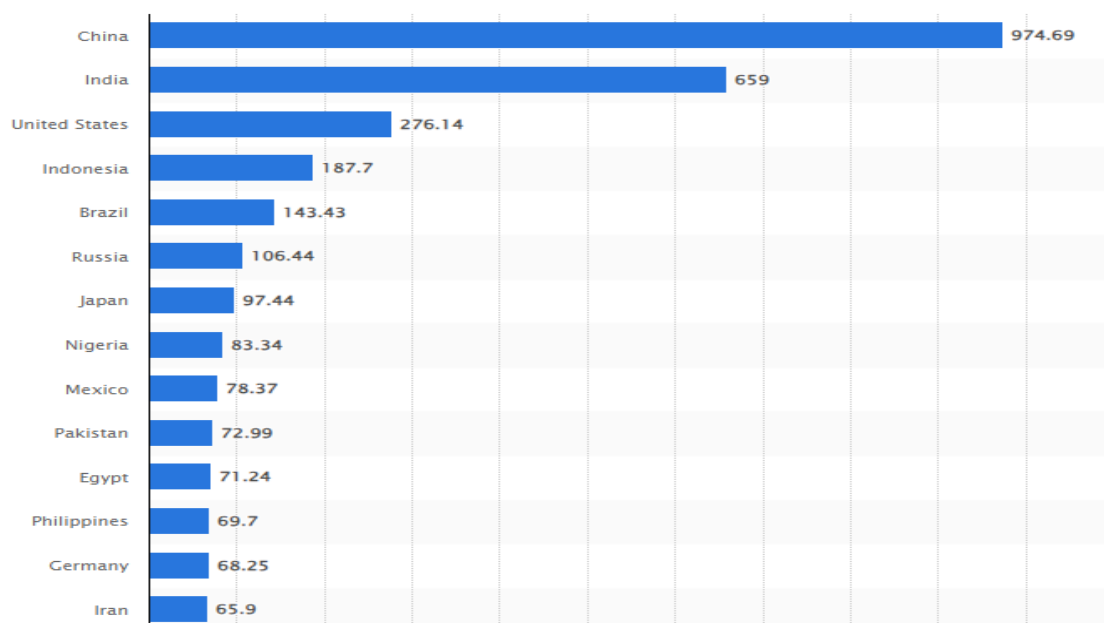
Figure 2: Number of Smartphone users by leading countries in 2022
Source: https: //www.statista. com/statistics/748053/worldwide - top - countries - smartphone - users/

Usage of social networking sites

The social networking is easy and quick in terms of accessing accessibility, reviewing, updating, and editing learning material needs anytime and anywhere. In addition, it allows for the option to select learning materials from a large quantity of courses offered online which the learner needs and it also makes easier distribution of course material Cheong (2002). Hence, via social media, individuals may plan content, have a sound idea involving information sharing, videos, pictures, correspondence, or coordination based on joint efforts, and create social connections with others (Richey and Ravishankar, 2019)

According to Andreas Kaplan and Michael Heinlein, social media is a collection of online resources and programs that are generally created on the Web 2.0 values and the technical frameworks that permit the production, distribution, and exchange of user - generated content or site - generated data. Social media gives everyone, including students, a platform to exchange ideas, thoughts, information, and conclusions; converse about the content of information; and establish connections through social networking (Penni, 2017).

Since knowledge does not reside in one person's mind, many students use social networking sites to have discussions on specific issues pertaining to topics covered in class. For example, they may join two groups that were primarily founded for assignments. People have been using social media to obtain support and information. Students claim social media has greatly benefited them because they can discuss topics and things they don't understand with their friends on platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp. They can also share ideas and assist one another in understanding relevant issues.
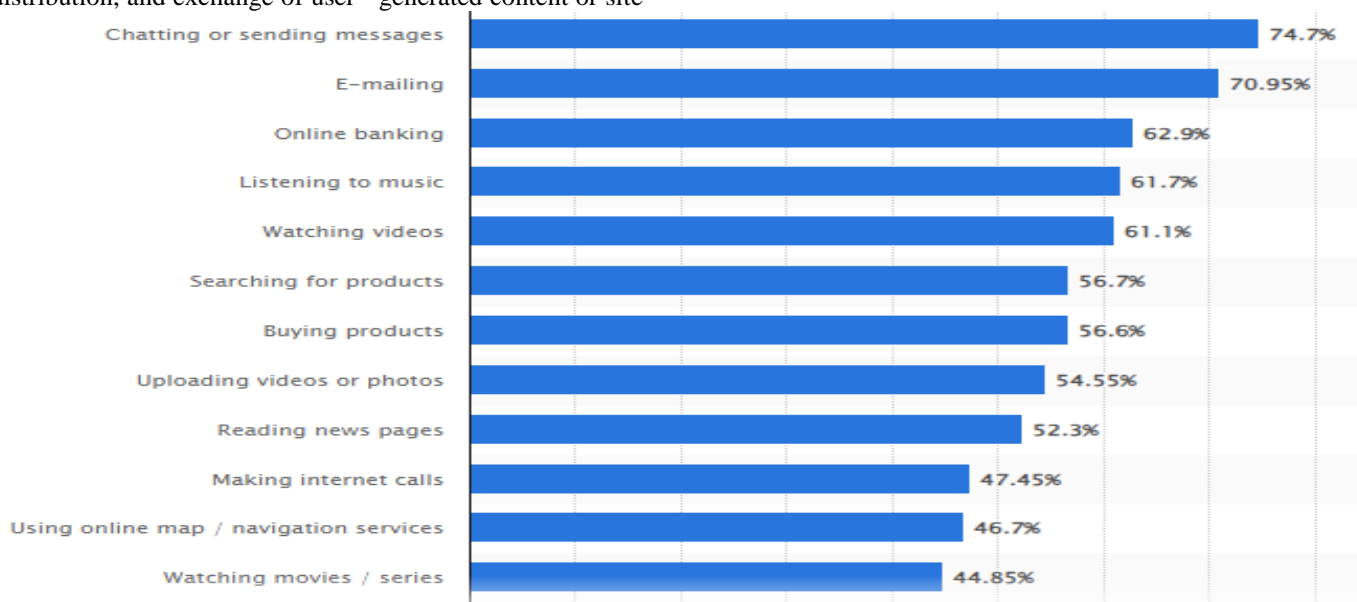

Figure 3: Leading Smartphone users activities worldwide from July 2022 to June 2023
Source: https: //www.statista. com/statistics/1337895/top - smartphone - activities/

3. Challenges of Social Media

The study, which was carried out by the website www.azureim. com, revealed how much time people spend interacting with one another online. This has an impact on people's health since prolonged usage of these social media platforms can alter how genes function in the body, impairing hormone and immune system function as well as arterial function. In addition, it affects mental health as well. Furthermore, using social networking in the classroom might make students unmotivated to learn and make spending a lot of time in front of a computer tedious. This is especially true if the scientific information is provided without the use of engaging audio and visual elements.

Colliander et al. (2017) study explored that parents are responsible for monitoring their children's use of social media, and they should be vigilant about whether their children use the internet for an appropriate amount of time. Ultimately, friends and teachers must also assist students in comprehending the negative health effects of social media and emphasize to them the potential consequences of spending excessive amounts of time on these platforms in the real world.

Studies have shown that users will express very powerful concerns about privacy of their personal information, but be less than vigilant about safeguarding it. Although a lot of the information individuals' supply on social - networking sites is elective, users are progressively more comfortable with displaying a great deal of personal information online. Therefore, one of the main concerns for users who register in these sites is privacy. How private is the information that users place on social networking? Who has access to the information and what is it used for? Whose role is it - parent, student, educator and website developer to ensure an individual understands his right to privacy and exercises it accordingly? Everyone asks himself these questions. So, the privacy is one of the obstacles that has faced the use of social networking in education (Dwyer et al.2007).

4. Conclusion

There are advantages and disadvantages to adopting social networking as an instructional resource. The biggest issues with social networking education are misinterpretation, consuming time, privacy, and genuine connections. On the other hand, the utilization of social media in education is greatly influenced by factors like repeatability, accessibility, ease of use, and adaptability. This paper also discussed some earlier research on the connection between social networking and education.

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