

ARE MOBILES IMMOBILIZING TODAY'S YOUTH?

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND FUTURE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

Generations Z and others born after have never known life without social media. This literature review compares recent data on the effects social media is having on today's youth. Experts in the fields of education and technology are most concerned about online safety, parent's excessive social media use, and future participation in politics and civic engagement. Some research has indicated that young people are using social media for educational opportunities outside of the classroom and that having an online platform is encouraging younger generation to take an interest in current events. Although some experts have conflicting views about which effects of social media are most concerning, they unanimously agree that online safety and digital citizenship education, in the home or at school, could play a vital role in helping today's youth use social media as a tool to benefit their futures.

Key words: mental health, social media, youth, digital citizenship, cyberbullying, bullying, screen addiction, safety, dangerous trends predators, "sharenting", literature review, digital footprints

Social media and the way the world communicates continue to advance rapidly are reshaping the future for younger generations, whether they realize it or not. Educators, parents, and experts are

left with the decision to either embrace social media by teaching our youth how to use it safely, or fight what many would call a losing battle to keep mobile devices out of sight in the classroom. This literature review compares some of the more recent data on what exactly today's youth are using social media for and what kind of impact it is having on their lives. Three major topics stand out amongst the authors of the five articles cited: concerns about youth and internet safety, concern for the future implications of parent's excessive social media use, and how social media is reshaping the way young people participate in civics and education. As the tech gap begins to close, some authors are concerned that parents and children will lose important emotional connections, political participation and test scores will decrease, and children will increasingly fall victim to cyberbullying and dangerous online trends if digital citizenship and online safety education are not incorporated into the public education curriculum.

Issues

Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) and Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) address, arguably, the most concerning topic of social media: online safety. Cyberbullying, sexting, predatory grooming, privacy violations, and screen time addiction can all have a negative impact on a child's well-being and social development (Staksrud & Milosevic, 2022, p. 711). Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) added to the concerns of Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) by addressing the threat of dangerous online trends. One such trend called "Pleasing Slender Man" was a dark, online, fictitious, character who warped young minds and insisted they carry out devious acts on his behalf. Slender Man manipulated two 12-year-old girls into stabbing one of their friends 19 times to please the fictitious, online, cartoon sensation. Similar disturbing online trends have alarmed parents into heavily monitoring their children's social media accounts.

During an interview with Michael Robb (2018) published by Rafael Heller, Robb said he does not deny that there should be concern for children's online safety but has observed through survey data of his own that the news media have blown online safety concerns out of

proportion. Regarding experts' concerns about cyberbullying, Robb pointed out how the data is still unclear, "Estimates of cyberbullying vary a lot . . . For example, some reports estimate that anywhere from 7-15% of kids have been targets of cyberbullying, while other reports say that up to 40% of kids have experienced it" (Heller, 2018, p. 26).

Robb's main concern with social media has little to do with the hot button issue of online safety, and instead focuses on a much newer and less popular issue: parents' social media use. Robb claimed that parents' social media use is having a negative impact on the "language-rich, warm, supportive interactions" that are so vital to the development of young children (Heller, 2018, p. 22). Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) support Robb's concern's that parents' social media use is negatively impacting children by introducing the idea of "sharenting", where parents post on social media about their children, very often without their children's approval (p. 708). Another, lesser known, issue Robb discovered through his own survey data, was the negative impact of using multiple media platforms simultaneously (e.g., scrolling through Facebook while watching television) on young people's ability to multitask and retain information, causing them to do poorly on their schoolwork (Heller, 2018, p. 21).

In contrast to Robb's discovery of the negative effects social media can have on homework, Maher and Earl (2019) and Miller et al. (2016) presented the idea that social media is having a positive impact on the way students learn and even affords them more opportunities to participate in politics at an early age. Maher and Earl noted there has been an increase in young people using their social media platforms as a way to participate in politics (p. 865). Miller et al. (2016) have brought to light how social media is positively reshaping student-teacher relationships and expanding education opportunities by allowing for learning outside of the classroom (p. 5).

Causes

Although the authors have different opinions of what social media issues require the most attention, they all agree that a lack of

responsible adult intervention is the root cause of today's youth being exposed to online threats. Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) implied much of the risks associated with social media are caused by a lack of online safety and digital citizenship education in the public school systems. Digital citizenship is the relatively new concept that there needs to be an understood standard of behavior and language that people who use social media should abide by, just as there are certain standards of behavior people are expected to abide by in their offline communities. Gleason and Von Gillern believe educational institutions have failed to stay current with the major role social media plays in the daily lives of students and have also missed opportunities to include digital citizenship in their curriculum (Gleason & Gillern, 2018, p. 200). Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) argue it is not the responsibility of educators to teach young people how to be safe online, but rather it is the parents' job. Unfortunately, Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) have found parents are doing a poor job of protecting their children from online risks and the act of "sharenting" can have serious consequences for children, whether parents realize it or not. Specifically, parents who post pictures of their children online do not consider the potential threat of sexual predators, identity theft, or the digital footprints they may be creating when they do not have their child's consent to share those pictures on a public platform (Staksrud & Milosevic, 2022, p. 707).

Robb expands on Staksrud and Milosevic's point about "sharenting" with his discovery that parents are spending about 10 hours a day looking at a screen and almost eight of those hours are spent scrolling through social media (Heller, 2018, p. 24). Although he has been able to determine that parents and youth are spending hours upon hours on social media, he is still not completely convinced that this could be an equivalent to a screen addiction. Robb said researchers have not been able to determine a realistic way of measuring screen time addiction because social media is almost synonymous with the way people interact both online and offline (Heller, 2018, p. 21).

Consequences

All the authors recognized that parents are concerned about the risks associated with social media but Robb (2018) and Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) made it clear that parents are just as invested in screen time and social media as their children. The overall consensus of all the authors is if parents don't examine their own online habits, then children's social development, overall well-being and the future of civic engagement and political participation are all at risk of being negatively impacted by social media.

Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) emphasize that about 7% of youth surveyed said they have experienced some form of cyberbullying, and if digital citizenship is not made part of the public education curriculum many experts fear young people will continue to fall prey to online bullies and dangerous trends (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018, p. 200). One dangerous trend, the Tide Pod Challenge, encouraged kids to film themselves eating Tide detergent pods, despite knowing how toxic they are. Although eating Tide Pods does not pose as much of a risk of death like it would in toddlers and senior citizens, healthy young people who have eaten them reported serious eye problems, and stomach issues afterwards. Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) also fear that a lack of digital citizenship education and incorporation of social media into the public education curriculum will lead to a decline in young people's participation in politics.

Staksrud and Milosevic (2022) added that social media makes it difficult for young people to pick up on important social cues such as tone of voice or facial expressions. These are vitally important for young people to develop healthy social skills and a lack of these social skills is leading to "declining empathy" amongst young people (Staksrud & Milosevic, 2022, p. 711). Staksrud and Milosevic fear "smartphone addiction" will subject children to risky online behavior (Staksrud & Milosevic, 2022, p. 710).

Although Robb is skeptical about smartphone addiction, he does acknowledge that young people spend a lot of time looking at screens and determined that kids who worked on homework and used multiple

media platforms at the same time had a difficult time "remembering key details and filtering out irrelevant information" which "affected the quality of their work" (Heller, 2018, p. 21). The consequences of young people's social media use are serious, but the authors all realize that eliminating social media simply isn't an option, but rather education is key in preventing risky online behavior.

Solutions

All five authors, unanimously, recognized the benefits of social media, but they also agreed there is a need to educate today's youth about online safety practices. Maher and Earl (2019) and Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) both agreed that embracing social media into the core curriculum of the public education system would provide students with the necessary skills of how to avoid risky online behaviors, increase online and offline civic participation, and enhance the learning process. Instead of contributing to the overall decline of political participation, social media has given young people a platform to express their own political views and has increased youth participation in offline civic engagement as well (Maher & Earl, 2019, p. 865). Robb has dedicated his entire life to keeping kids safe online. Through his nonprofit organization, Common Sense Media, Robb conducts his own research and shares information about children's media to help kids "thrive in the digital age" (Heller, 2018, p. 20). His goal is to give parents and educators accurate information about social media, so they know what to be aware of and to take the news media with a grain of salt.

According to Miller et al. (2016) young people around the world have already begun to use social media as a solution to enhance their education. Young people who live in rural areas are using social media to connect with students and teachers as a way to further their education outside of the classroom. (Miller et al., 2016, p.73). Gleason and Von Gillern (2018) recognized Miller et al.'s point that social media is enhancing children's education and expanded upon it further by suggesting digital citizenship curricula be introduced into the classroom (Gleason & Von Gillern, 2018, p. 200).

Conclusion

One fact is clear: social media is not going anywhere. This global phenomenon has changed the way the entire world communicates, educates, and receives and shares information. There are undoubtedly serious risks that parents and children put themselves in when they use social media, but experts recognize how the benefits of social media heavily outweigh those risks. There are certain standards citizens are expected to uphold in the offline community that children naturally learn by example. As social media becomes more prevalent in our society, the authors believe it is imperative that adults practice exemplary digital citizenship so children can develop those skills in online communities as well. ■

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A FEMINIST AND QUEER THEORY TAKE ON THE LEGITIMIZATION OF HATSHEPSUT AS KING

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ABSTRACT

This paper considers a Western white male bias of ancient Egyptian custom and culture, and more specifically King Hatshepsut, Pharaoh and Co-regent of Eighteenth Dynasty ancient Egypt. Western anthropologists have routinely and incorrectly labeled Hatshepsut as queer because of her masculinized political character. These accusations are rooted in a traditional Western belief in a male-female gender binary system, and these beliefs have been applied to a culture that does not recognize the same understanding of gender, sex, and sexuality. Further, I discuss the myriad ways in which Hatshepsut legitimized her rule, including her political manipulation of masculinity, her proclamation of ancestral and divine lineage, the artistic commissions of herself and of Thutmose III - her co-regent, stepson, and nephew, and her strength as a military leader.

Key words: Pharaoh, ancient Egypt, king, anthropology, bias, western beliefs

Throughout modern history, and specifically from the conception of American anthropology, the way that the human experience has been studied, understood, and transcribed has been through a male European American ethnocentric point of view which was colored by cultural, racial, and gender bias. The problem with many American representations of history is that it has not been considered through a neutral lens, and has, instead, been subjected to the projection of