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The Synergy of Social Media Usage and Holistic Development

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Introduction

The evolving educational landscape is inculcating the integration of technology with the traditional learning methods. The concept of holistic development focuses on maintaining a balance while incorporating the digital transformation into the traditional classroom system through the usage of social media platforms. This aims on checking if the social, intellectual and emotional development of the learners are maintained during this digital transformation. The usage of social media has an impact on various factors on the development of the learners. One of them is social self-esteem and this paper delves into the effects of social media usage on the social self esteem of students and how they contribute to the holistic development of students, the benefits and risks associated and the strategies to overcome these risks.

Holistic Education in Digital Era

Holistic education emphasises on the development of the students in all aspects rather than on the academic concept alone. It is a philosophical approach which makes the individual focus on his whole development and thereby focusing even on the meaning and purpose of his life. The emphasis is also on the creativity and critical thinking apart from the academic development. In order to make the holistic development complete the social media also plays a vital role as it contributes to the wholesome development of the learners.

Social Media in Education

Social media plays a vital role in education in this digital era. It helps the learners to collaborate and connect with their other peers and experts in their area of study. Social media is a warehouse of all kinds of educational and non-educational content. Responsibility lies on the students to decide on what kind of content they need to access. When the learners choose the correct contents from the social media platforms, they are able to focus on their learning process and in turn it also paves way for their holistic development.

Social Self-Esteem in Education

Motivation is an important factor which contributes to the holistic development of students. This is achieved when the students have social self-esteem. This gives confidence to the students which helps them to concentrate and learn more about themselves and their surroundings and in turn focus on their studies. It is the responsibility of the educators and educational institutions to encourage students to help them enhance their social self-esteem by creating a positive learning environment. Cooperative learning, a method of motivating students to work in small groups for their studies, also helps the students to increase their social self-esteem.

Role of Technology in Education

Technology plays a vital role in education from the onset of the educational landscape Education 4.0. With the inception of technology students have got better understanding of the concepts and the approaches through smart classes have improved the performance of the students. E-learning tools help students to access contents from all parts of the world. It not only helps students to access the study materials but also to collaborate with peers and experts worldwide. This helps them to understand the global trends in their field of study and know more about how to enhance their learning experience.

Digital Tools in Classroom

Technology has made the learning experience more efficient as the course contents are accessible and more engaging for the students. The common digital tools used in the classroom settings are Google Meet, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. All these help the students and educators to connect with each other apart from the traditional classroom environment. Assessments are made easy with the use of these digital tools and immediate feedback is also made possible with these digital tools.

Social Media – An Educational Tool

Social media which has a wide variety of resources has provided a great helping hand to the learners. The usage of social media platforms has increased their learning experience and created a sense of community development with their peers and experts worldwide. The common social media platforms used to improve their connectivity are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In and Snapchat. Learners also make use of the non-educational content which helps them to improve their creativity which helps them towards their holistic development apart from educational development.

Social Media and Social Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is considered to be an important factor for peer attachment, to maintain a good psychological well-being. Social media has a direct effect on the social self-esteem of the learners. It is hence important to understand the relationship between social media usage and social self-esteem. Social media has brought an impact on the social self esteem and the factors contributing to these are discussed below.

Perfection Pressure on Social Media

Social media platforms are now becoming accessible for people to portray their talents and achievements. This has brought a pressure on the present-day learners. They are forced to focus on their own achievements to balance with their peers and prove themselves. This instils a competitive spirit in the learners and are encouraged to move on towards their goal. This increases their sense

of self and helps them focus more. On the contrary, it also puts a pressure on the learners to keep them in pace with their peers which can put down their social self-esteem.

External Validation

Social media has features like likes and comments which act as the validation system and a drive for the learners. Students are driven towards expecting these kinds of validations which make them to utilize the social media more for their holistic development. After the onset of social media, students have started to rely on validations, which has also been introduced in education in the concept of gamification. All these focussed on increasing the self-esteem of the learners by rewarding them whenever they achieved something in their course of study. Though the concept of validation enhances the social self-esteem of the learners, it can also become a burden when the learners find it difficult to maintain pace with the other fellow students.

Benefits and Risks of Social Media and Social Self-Esteem in Holistic Education

Social media is said to have a direct impact on the mental health of learners. The impact can be both positive and negative depending on how the social media is being used. Some students find social media as a way to improve their social self-esteem while few feel pressured to compete with the fellow learners and few others face cyber bullying. The benefits and risks of social media and social self-esteem in holistic education are discussed here.

Benefits of Social Media in Education

Social media platforms provide a wide range of digital tools for learning, communication and collaboration and they focus on the students' intellectual, social and emotional development.

Collaboration and Communication

Social media platforms related to education help learners to communicate and collaborate efficient both within and outside the classroom environment. This helps the students to participate in discussions and learn beyond the textbook. The feature of instant feedback encourages students to analyse their performance and focus on improving their efficiency.

Access to Resources

Social media is a hub of resources with a wide range of educational resources such as video and audio lectures, articles, blogs, webinars which enables students to learn more apart from the traditional classroom practices. This helps students to increase their understanding of the contents and they are more encouraged towards self-learning,

Global Networking

The current educational landscape requires students to be updated about the global trends and challenges related to their field of study. This is made possible by the use of social media platforms. Students connect with peers and experts with the help of social media applications through discussion groups, webinars and conferences. They also understand the cultures worldwide and get to know about all the possible outcomes of their course of study.

Self-Expression

Social media serves as a major platform to enable them to express their vies and think more creatively. This is done through blogs, vlogs, reels, podcasts etc. It is seen that there is freedom of expressing one's thoughts as they feel in the social media platform. This gives them a confidence

to share their views even in the real-world situations. Thus, it leads to the holistic development of the individual.

Benefits of Social-Self Esteem in Education

Social self esteem is how an individual feels about his own self-worth and how confident he feels in a social situation. It deals with social acceptance, social competence, social comparison and how much fear of rejection one has in the society. The various benefits of social self-esteem are discussed here.

Motivation and Engagement

When a student has positive self-esteem he feels motivated and connected with his surroundings. He develops a sense of belongingness to the place he belongs. This sense of belongingness helps him to be motivated and engage himself in academic and extra curricular activities. He is also able to volunteer himself into participating in group discussions, projects and other activities involving team work. It also prepares the learners to face the outside world once they complete the learning process.

Peer Relationships

A student who has good self-esteem has the ability to develop social relationships efficiently. This is because he will be confident and will make himself comfortable in his surroundings. This inturn enhances the emotional well-being of the learner and along with that, it also contributes to the academic success of the learners which together leads to the holistic development.

Emotional Resilience

Emotional resilience is the individual’s ability to get back to a normal situation after going through some challenging, stressful situations. A learner will need immense mental and emotional strength to face these kinds of tough times and maintain a healthy well-being. A learner with a high social self-esteem will be able to overpass all the hurdles in his social life with the quality of emotional resilience.

Social Responsibility and Empathy

Students with higher self-esteem are expected to have a greater sense of social responsibility and empathy. They will be able to put themselves in social situations and understand their peers and people around them, thereby volunteering to help and contribute to the community they are living in. A person who has more empathy and social responsibility will succeed in his academics thereby moving towards holistic development.

Risks of Social Media in Education

The usage of social media has a lot of advantages and contributes to the development of the students. But it also has a lot of risks involved which can be addressed with utmost care. The risks involved are discussed here.

Social Comparison

With the increase in the number of social media platforms, students get more motivated by comparing their performance with their peers. But it becomes risky when this comparison becomes unhealthy or when the student is an emotionally weak person. It leads to feeling insecure and leads to self-depreciation which will also impact the student emotionally. The students should be educated about healthy comparison and healthy competitions to overcome these risks.

Cyberbullying

The inception of social media platforms has led to an increase in cyber bullying. Social media platforms have a lot of anonymity which is the reason for this. People have the liberty to communicate and comment on others without revealing their identity. This leads to the public humiliation of individuals and the damages caused by this are worse than that caused due to the traditional bullying. The percentage of escaping from an abuse caused due to cyberbullying is more than that caused due to the traditional bullying. Students have to be educated on the privacy setting they need to use and how and what information they can share on the online social media platforms.

Addiction and Distraction

Social media has the power to attract students and make them get addicted to it. Students forget their academic responsibilities because of this addiction towards social media and end up scrolling through these platforms for longer periods of time. The same digital gadgets have both the educational and non-educational content. So it is easy for the students to get distracted towards the non-educational content while they are studying.

Risks of Social-Self Esteem in Education

Social self-esteem has a positive impact on the emotional and academic growth of the students but there are risks related to the social self-esteem when they depend more on the society to evaluate their self-worth.

Reliance on External Validation

A student with low self-esteem will have less self-worth when he doesn't seek for validation from his fellow students. It is necessary for a learner to understand how he is getting along with his society and his surrounding which is possible through external validation. But when a student starts relying more on external validation there are chances that his self-worth will fluctuate based on how his peers validate him. Thus it is important for a student to be self-motivated independent of external validation from his surroundings.

Social Exclusion

Students who have very low or very high self esteem face the problems of social exclusion in his community. A student with low self-esteem might struggle to make friends and get along with people even for his basic relationships. On the other hand, a student with high self-esteem may develop a sense of aloofness which may make him deserted from his peers. Both low and high self-esteem are risky and will disrupt the holistic development of the students.

Stereotype Reinforcement

Self-esteem deals with the social comparison of the students with his peers and the community he is living in. A student may stereotype his fellow students when he has a high or a low self-esteem. Both are dangerous and it is important to educate the students regarding the concept of inclusion in the classroom as well as in the society.

Strategies to Balance Man and Media

Social media usage and social self-esteem go hand in hand and they both have benefits and risk associated with them. Balancing social media usage with social self esteem is important as it has a direct influence on their self-worth and emotional well-being. This can be done by setting

time limits for social media usage, curate the settings for social media feeds, be mindful of what is shared or viewed on the social media platforms, develop offline social interactions, be careful of what validation one can look for on the social media platforms, focus on personal growth etc. Students should be educated on the digital well-being and to develop healthy habits online.

Conclusion

Holistic education focuses on the social, emotional and intellectual dimensions of the life of students. This can be achieved by balancing the benefits due to the digital transformation and the way students recognize their self-worth. By doing this, it is possible to create a society which can successfully blend digital tools with human interactions. It is the role of educators, policy makers and technology developers to work in one accord to bring about a holistic educational experience. The paper focussed on the effects of social media usage on the social self-esteem of students and how they contribute to the holistic development of students, the benefits and risks associated and the strategies to overcome these risks.

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