

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENT COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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Abstract: Social media has transformed student communication, influencing language use, interaction styles, and engagement. This paper examines how social platforms impact students' cognitive, social, and emotional communication skills. It highlights the advantages and challenges of social media in education, comparing digital and traditional communication methods. Understanding these effects can help educators optimize social media use to enhance communication skills.

Keywords: social media, communication skills, digital interaction, student engagement, education, social networking.

Social media has reshaped how students communicate, shifting from traditional face-to-face interactions to digital messaging. While these platforms facilitate connectivity and global networking, they also influence students' ability to develop formal writing and verbal communication skills. Social media encourages concise, fast-paced communication through short texts, captions, and emojis, fostering creativity and quick thinking. However, this reliance on brevity can limit students' ability to construct well-developed arguments and weaken their formal writing skills. Multimodal literacy, which integrates images, videos, and text, enhances engagement but may not offer the depth of linguistic development found in structured classroom discussions. Beyond cognitive effects, social media significantly impacts social interactions. Platforms like WhatsApp, Discord, and Zoom enable students to communicate across borders, collaborate on projects, and engage in discussions. They foster global cultural awareness and provide exposure to different communication styles. However, online conversations lack non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice, leading to potential misinterpretations. Unlike traditional classroom discussions, digital conversations reduce opportunities for students to practice essential interpersonal skills like eye contact and verbal articulation. Emotional engagement is another critical factor in student communication. Social media motivates students by providing instant feedback through likes, shares, and comments, fostering participation and confidence.

Conclusion

Social media has significantly influenced student communication skills, offering both opportunities and challenges. While digital platforms enhance creativity, global interaction, and accessibility, they also contribute to informal language use and reduced practice of face-to-face communication. Educators must integrate traditional communication methods with social media innovations to ensure students develop strong linguistic and interpersonal skills. A balanced approach will help students effectively navigate both academic and professional communication environments.

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