Positive and Negative Aspects of Internet Use for School

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SUMMARY

Computer-mediated communication (CMC), generally the Internet, represents nowadays an issue of interest for many social and psychological researches. One of the reasons is that it is used CMC mainly for interpersonal communication suggesting large amounts of social behavior to investigate. Another reason of Internet investigating interest contains two features, visual anonymity and limited channel communication. It is highlighted that since the rise of the Internet, people have formed relationships without having another person within a close geographic location. Furthermore, they are asking an important question: Is it safe? Should there be rules governing the Internet in respect to a formal educational setting? The qualitative research of risks and positive effects of Internet use among teens was conducted through online (8 children: 4 boys of 13, 16, 17 and 18 years old, and 4 girls of 12, 15, 16 and 17 years old) and offline (10 children: 4 boys from which 3 boys of 17, 1 of 18; 7 girls from which 3 of 13 years old, 1 of 14, 2 of 17, and 1 of 18 years old) interviews and 2 focus groups (of 12 pupils each). Positive aspects of Internet usage: easy and cheap communication with others, getting help for homework from colleagues, friends, cultural exchanges (talking with persons from other countries, cultures), getting easier information for school (encyclopedias, books), talk from home to colleagues at school, use the web cam to see the class that you are missing for, you can participate to online debates on interesting educational subjects helps you to be involved in positive actions for general benefit that can change the world for the better. Negative aspects of Internet usage: it is changing the way of communicating (negative effects on their verbal communication, and their way of writing), using Internet affects the time for school preparation and for other activities (resting, eating, talking with family etc.), failure to prepare for school, drop-out of school. Suggestions from adolescents to minimize the negative effects were also formulated and there are the main ideas: parents and teachers should learn more about Internet to became more credible sources of advises; for this, children are willing to help the adults contributing to a better, trusting relation between them, imposed conditions to access internet: from 6 to 9 years old only with permanent supervision of an adult; from 9 to 12 with supervision and advises; 14 or 15 years old to first access messenger, to prevent school failure and drop-out because of Internet dependence parents should involve children more often in direct interactions like trips, face-to-face games, sports etc., increasing the group activities/discussions with a moderator and rules where also timid children can express themselves to avoid excess of messenger communication, more involvement in projects that stimulates them otherwise (like to take care of a pet, plant, music or painting groups at school).

Keywords: school, internet, children, direct interaction.