

Amanda Wang

Professor Jessica Kovalick

ENC 1102

January 31, 2022

Research Proposal

Research Proposal Question:

How has social media influenced generation-Z?

Overview

Generation Z is the first generation to grow up surrounded by social media. The first form of social media began on May 24, 1844. People would communicate to each other using the telegram and a series of patterns to convey their message to one another. In the 80's and 90's, the internet's growth and popularity introduced the world to an array of online communication services such as CompuServe, America Online, and Prodigy (Ngak). Users would communicate through emails, bulletin board messagings, and real-time online chatting. Blogs were also very popular in the early 2000's where individuals would post thoughts, ideas, opinions, on a personalized website. Although these websites were popular and had users, it was not enough for these sites to keep their popularity. However in 2004, a student from Harvard launched the well-known app, Facebook, which changed the entirety of social media. Facebook was made initially for Harvard students to connect with each other; however, due to Facebook's popularity it was shared to the whole world. By the end of the first year of Facebook's launch, the site had accumulated around one million users ("Facebook Launches"). Also around this time, a popular multinational technology company, Apple, released their first smartphone in June of 2007. Although there have been forms of social media in the past such as Six Degrees, MySpace, and

Friendster, they were all platforms meant to perform on computers. Little did anyone know that this new device can change and impact the future (Ingram). Now in the present day, around 72.3% of Americans engage in some sort of social media (Ngak). Since Facebook, there have been other social media sites that gained the popularity of the world such as Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and even dating social media sites such as Tinder, Hinge, and Bumble. Instead of having to meet “the one” through experiences, dating social media platforms give individuals the opportunity to match with their potential lover online. All these platforms make it easy for individuals from all over the world to communicate with one another.

Objective

The goal of this research paper is to analyze how social media affects gen-z’s childhood and even presently. My motivation for this research paper is driven by my personal experience of growing up surrounded with new forms of technology and communication. I would like to research viewpoints of individuals and to find similarities and differences between my own viewpoint. Throughout my childhood, I turned into a kid playing outside into a kid being glued to a device. Now, I regret not spending my time wisely as a kid and not embracing my childhood. My younger brother is twelve years old, and he is doing the same thing I did; thus, I would like to research how social media has affected our communication skills and mental health, and how it benefits or harms society. As Wardle and Downs states, “seeking answers to these kinds of questions entails participating in conversational inquiry, a kind of research that brings people together to talk, question, and cooperatively argue in order to better understand problems or questions that are not yet understood” (31). This research would help me obtain conversational inquiry in order to fulfill the ultimate goal of this research paper which is to make new knowledge about the impact of social media.

Justification

This study is necessary because it shows how social media impacts the future generations. Social media affects our self image, mental health, and communication skills. Mental health is very important because it influences how we think, feel, and act when coping with life. We use multiple forms of communication every day such as texting, calling, or even a conversation to the Starbucks barista. Regardless, social interaction and communication need to be studied because they change our daily lives.

Methods:

The methods I will be conducting are interviews and genre analysis. I will interview individuals of different ethnic backgrounds and sex to fully grasp the unbiased opinions regarding social media. There will be 5 interviewees: Bianca Ariabas, Kaden Kesteloot, Isa Gambrill, Ronan Hennessy, and Isita Leonmbruno. These individuals are all students here at UCF; however, they all differ in race and sex. The purpose of interviews is “to learn about participants’ histories and experiences and to learn from insiders how writing works in communities” (Lunford 13). I will be conducting a semi-structured interview and will mainly focus on my predetermined questions; however, since social media affects individuals subjectively, I will build off or go more in detail with my interviewee if needed. My questions will mostly be open-ended so I can “draw out a participants’ experiences or stories as well as a personal or community schema” (Lunford 13). Some questions I am anticipating to as are:

1. Do you think social media has changed the way you view yourself? Why or why not?
2. When did you start using social media?
3. Do you think social media affected the way you grew up?

4. Did you notice any differences with in- person social interactions rather than online?
5. Do you think social media plays a large role in your mental health?
6. In your opinion, what are some toxic attributes regarding social media? Positive?
7. Do you think social media harms or benefits society more?
8. In your opinion, do you think social media is polluting the youth?
9. If you could live in a world where social media doesn't exist, would you?
10. How do you think social media impacts your life?

I will also be conducting a genre analysis on different trends on social media to deepen my understanding on how they may affect others. Lunsford states, "Genre analysis leads to real-world actions and conversations that have an important effect on the community's environment" (10). I will analyze by using my primary source from the interviews and information regarding trends and genre. My findings and analysis will be my secondary source. By conducting a genre analysis, I will strengthen my understanding of the different ways social media uses texts to communicate with others.

Timeline:

- 1/31: First Research Proposal Draft
- 2/4: Revise and Edit from Peer Review
- 2/11: Conference with Professor
- 2/12: CITI Training
- 2/27: Gather Research
- 3/7: Conduct Interview with selected individuals
- 3/10: Genre Analysis
- 3/20: Explanations/Thoughts

- 3/28: First Paper Draft Due
- 4/1: Revise and Edit from Peer Review
- 4/1: Second Paper Draft due
- 4/8: Conference with Professor
- 4/10: Revise/Edit
- 4/11: Third Paper Draft Due
- 4/13 Final Revise/Edit
- 4/15 Submit Final Research Paper



Works Cited

- “Facebook Launches.” *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 24 Oct. 2019,
<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/facebook-launches-mark-zuckerberg#:~:text=Over%20the%20course%20of%20his,first%2024%20hours%20of%20existence.>
- Ingram, David. “Facebook and Apple are in a fight. Your browsing history is in the middle.” *Simon & Schuster*, CBS News, 17 Dec. 2020,
<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/facebook-apple-are-fight-your-browsing-history-middle-n1251612>
- Lunsford , Andrea. “Determining Primary Research Methods.” *EasyWriter* (Seventh Edition) (p. R-7-R-10). Macmillan Learning.
- Ngak, Chenda. “A History of Social Networking Sites.” *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, 4 Feb. 2014,
[https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/then-and-now-a-history-of-social-networking-sites/2/.](https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/then-and-now-a-history-of-social-networking-sites/2/)
- Shah, Saqib. “The History of Social Media.” *Digital Trends*, Digital Trends, 14 May 2016,
[https://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/.](https://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/)

Wardle, Elizabeth & Downs, Doug (2020). *Writing About Writing (4th)*. Bedford/St. Martin's,
Macmillan Learning.

Appendix:

CITI Certificate:



Completion Date 14-Feb-2022
Expiration Date 13-Feb-2025
Record ID 47433161

This is to certify that:

Amanda Wang


Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Research
(Curriculum Group)
Human Subjects Research- Group 2.Social / Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification
through CME.

Under requirements set by:

University of Central Florida



Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w0649eeeb-b87a-42cf-9dac-699c78512155-47433161

