The online revolution has changed education

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On education

During my good old days of high school in the late '80s and early '90s, the Internet did not exist. Nobody knew or understood the concept of e-mail or text messaging. Cell phones were an unknown entity, only belonging to the rich and famous. A message was left on an answering machine if someone wasn't home, and you had to wait until they got home to call back. Tracking this person down on their cell was not a possibility.

Schoolwork and research reports involved going to the library and using the Dewey Decimal system to find the needed books. We used books, encyclopedias, magazines and microfiche. More time was required in the respect that once the book was found, a student then had to actually read the book to find the necessary information. There weren't any buttons to push that would result in data magically appearing on a computer screen. A student actually had to put forth effort by leaving the comfort of their desk in an attempt to find knowledge. Computers were only used in designated classes that taught how to use them and to type reports.

The rise of the Internet has drastically changed education. As with any situation, there are both positive and negative effects. More resources are literally available at your fingertips. Learning is made easier by the time saved when using the World Wide Web for researching.

Time is of the essence, especially when it comes to homework. Utilizing time efficiently is key when you are a student, considering there are numerous fun activities to partake when schoolwork is completed. The Internet allows students to research information in just a matter of seconds.

Educational web sites provide additional explanations to assist students when extra help is needed during an attempt to conquer an evening's homework assignment. Chat rooms and bulletin boards are available to seek assistance from fellow students who are studying the same topics, but are living in different areas. The various viewpoints can be educational in themselves.

The experience of other cultures is more easily obtained with the plethora of sites providing interesting knowledge and facts. Within a matter of minutes, a student can find, collect and print three to five sources of information.

However, there seems to be an over-dependency issue when it comes to using the Internet for schoolwork. If a student's computer is experiencing issues, completing homework becomes a problem. "I don't have my work because my printer is broken" is a common excuse heard in classrooms today. When there

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is an inability to print researched information or a typed essay, other options do exist. A pen and lined paper can be used for taking notes and handwriting an essay or report. This seems archaic and time consuming, but it can be the answer for not getting in trouble because an assignment isn't done.

On a more detrimental note, specific homework assignments, mostly reports and essays, can be bought on the Internet so a student doesn't have to waste any time at all doing their own work. They can pass off someone else's work as their own, get in trouble for plagiarism, and possibly be given the opportunity to redo the assignment, or receive a failing grade. More time and energy is wasted, resulting in embarrassment and lack of integrity.

Overall, the Internet is a positive vehicle for educational purposes. Students can experience environments and cultures from across the globe with a touch of a button and a view of a screen. The creation of valuable experiences through technological advancement continues to make learning easier for all students.

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