

Maintaining Integrity: How influences of social media and Chat-GPT have and will pave the path forward in our school assignments

In an era where technology has taken over the modern world, how do we maintain integrity in our work? How are we meant to maintain a degree of originality in anything we do so as to avoid confusion and misinterpretation? These two questions spark a deeply interesting topic surrounding the usage of modern artificial intelligence tools, such as Chat-GPT, as well as other apps and websites online that make it easy to gain copious amounts of information in school and in the workplace. In this essay, I will specifically examine how the influences of social media and Chat-GPT have completely altered the way students perceive the realm of education and the concept of hard work. In more ways than one, social media has resulted in a drastic and observable shift in the minds of adolescents, causing a decline in critical thinking and an intrinsic obsession in following the easiest path to achieve a desired result. Along with its impact on the minds of students, social media and Chat-GPT have become dangerous tools that are threatening to erase any sense of novelty in school assignments as a consequence of the immensely helpful information they provide. And finally, social media and Chat-GPT have and will continue to affect learning environments in schools across the globe for the foreseeable future, resulting in a drastic change in the mindset and work ethic of the next generation.

In recent years, social media apps have garnered considerable attention from adolescents and young adults, partly because the information that is posted on them is provided by people from these age demographics. There is an inherent sense of trust among students who are watching their peers online preach about something that has benefited their lives. With online learning being introduced a couple years ago, this effect was only compounded as teenagers were spending more time on their electronic devices than ever before. Consuming this content each and every day has influenced teenagers into believing everything that they see online and has concomitantly encouraged them to set their beliefs into motion. In fact, a study conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA - [Why young brains are especially vulnerable to social media \(apa.org\)](#)) stated that social media is linked to certain structures within the brains of adolescents, which control instinctual behaviours and motivating action, meaning that social media is both physically and psychologically impacting the way students are acting upon their perceptions. It is also providing students with gateways and shortcuts that can make working hard very easy, and this is extremely precarious. Not only is this impacting the way students are perceiving schoolwork and how to approach it, but it has also fostered an environment in which achieving a result is more important than the work it took to achieve it in the first place. While that is important in certain areas of the workforce, exposing this concept to students from a young age can deleteriously impact how they analyze assignments in the future, which will definitely hold more meaning than a high school essay. In the end, social media has become one of the most harmful things in the online space, contributing to the growing impulsivity of the adolescents who use it and leading to wrongful perceptions surrounding the potential of plagiarism to aid them in their educational endeavors.

In light of the uproar of social media, other technologies such as Chat-GPT have been introduced to anyone and everyone with an online persona, leading to its widespread use among students. And while Chat-GPT can be incredibly helpful, it also acts as a harmful tool that leads to more plagiarism and less creativity among students. For example, students are now able to submit essays that are written entirely

by Chat-GPT, and since it utilizes a wide array of data from the Internet, other people's work online are being plagiarized more than ever without the rightful credits being given. Many students have also been caught by their teachers, seeing as their writing style on their previous assignments compared to the confiscated ones are vastly dissimilar. In turn, this disingenuous style of completing schoolwork in hopes of achieving an acceptable mark makes it unnecessarily onerous on both the teachers, who now have to consider this new strategy and alter their assignments or teaching styles, as well as other students, who do not cheat or plagiarize but are being adversely affected by this sudden change in how assignments are being completed. Finally, the harmful nature of Chat-GPT and social media is not restricted to its increase in plagiarism. It also creates a learning environment where students conduct less of their own research, preferring instead to rely on artificial intelligence or their favorite content creator to feed them information, thereby contributing to an increase in the number of misinformed students who are unable to develop and articulate their own opinions. The consequences of this go beyond the scholarly atmosphere, for it has unintentionally created a society of students and future workers who mistakenly rely on potentially false sources of information to complete tasks or to formulate their own character and beliefs.

Finally, I believe it is important to take a closer look at how Chat-GPT and social media are affecting learning environments as a whole and how they will continue to do so in the coming years. As of now, Chat-GPT is becoming an issue within the education system, specifically in high schools across Canada and the United States. Social media is contributing to these problems, for it essentially advertises its use to students, claiming it to be the next "saving grace". With its accessibility, it is difficult to imagine any student not taking advantage of its benefits. However, that is precisely where the problem lies. While Chat-GPT is incredibly easy to access and use, producing results students could never even fathom prior to its arrival, it is also creating an environment of learners who seek the easy way out instead of committing the necessary time and effort to achieving their goals. In the long run, it is clear to see the dire consequences that can result from this trend: students in high school applying to top universities with perhaps fraudulent grades getting admitted and immediately being shocked by the workload and the rigorous nature of the university standard; numerous dropouts who are overwhelmed and much too reliant on external sources like Chat-GPT to complete their work for them; and, less hard-working students contributing to the workforce and implementing creative and unique ideas to the companies they work for. Unfortunately, we are witnessing the dawning of a society of obedient individuals who have developed lazy habits and a substandard work ethic. All of these factors combine to form the next generation of people who were stained by the illusion of progress that they saw in Chat-GPT, leading to an increase in plagiarism, a decrease in the will to learn, and a future of diminishing returns in all walks of life.

In closing, I want to consider some nagging thoughts that cross my mind whenever I think about the topic of our future with technology. Most people online have heard about the possibility of AI taking over our world in the near future, and when truly pondering this otherwise unfathomable occurrence, it paints a clear picture as to the problems we face today. The hyper-focus on getting things done without committing time and effort is a plague that will result in a complete change in how we approach the topic of work and life itself. Is being lazy good enough now? Is it really reasonable to believe that humans could function alongside AI and robots in the workforce? Only time will tell if the usage of Chat-GPT and social media turns us into the best versions of ourselves or into the types of people who are unable to think or work without the crutch of various technologies. It is a scary and unknown future we are heading

towards, one where new technology and artificial intelligence will undoubtedly reshape the world around us as we know it.