

I never do any research without going to the internet first. It gives you the most effective research. It has a variety of sites from which you can choose almost any topic of research. In addition to that, it greatly impacts on how us students learn and perform. What a great way to learn: not only do you save time looking for books in the library for your research, you can also give and receive feedback from your teachers and fellow students using online sites. It's almost like the internet is a collection of various services and resources! However, the internet can be used uncritically which would not be productive. Nevertheless, research has proven that internet technology in education can enhance the way people learn and makes learning easier and more exciting than ever, if it is effectively harnessed by teachers to promote learning.

Internet technology is roughly 40 years old. Well, if you don't know what something is like, you're not missing anything. Meaning that in the past, before internet technology was established, the education system felt like they were doing just fine but when we look back now, we realise that they would have been so much better off if they used the internet in their learning. There will be amazing inventions in the future that we are living without today; tomorrow we'll say, "How did I live without this?"

Technology changes along with demand. Just like internet technology, a long time ago, there was no need for big factory machines because people didn't know that they needed (or even knew how) to use the machines that would be produced. A long time ago, no one would really want a car. People used to use horses instead of cars, or walked. They knew how to ride and take care of horses not because they didn't need or wouldn't have perhaps preferred the cars but they had no idea that cars would ever exist and be such a necessity. They used what they had, even though it might not have been the best or most effective. Before planes, there were boats which at the time were thought to be the quickest method of transportation and no one knew one

day there would be a faster method. Before boats, well you don't go very far. So just as planes and cars have changed transportation, so has technology re-shaped education.

Internet technology has changed present students' education so much compared to the students in the past. "Today's students are unlike any the educational system has ever experienced. Members of this generation are most often referred to as 'digital natives' or the 'Net generation' because they have been immersed in technology since birth." (Hicks 1). Marc Prensky explained that digital natives are people who were born after 1980 and have grown up with digital devices such as cell phones and computers. They are unique because they have grown up with digital technologies and the exposure to these technologies from an early age has made them native speakers of the digital language. The ones who were born before 1980 are just immigrants to the digital world. Thus traditional method used by most teachers are not as effective as technology to these digital natives (Prensky). Since we have a "new generation" of people, our schools have to adjust to how they are going to teach digital natives. Teachers therefore, should modify their instructions to include technology which keeps students engaged and wanting to learn. They have a more complex mind and need to be taught differently. The saturation of technology in students' lives has produced an entirely different type of students, shaping the way they think, learn, and experience the world around them.

Classrooms today are very different than in the past in many ways. One of the most important of these ways being research. A long time ago, people used to search through card catalogues just to find a book at the library instead of now, where we just use an online system. Two, rather than watching educational videos on a VCR, today's students just view online videos from sites such as youtube. Three, school work was physical, involving pen and paper or printed

paper, but now, students usually use online documents, blogs, journals, sites like edmodo to finish their homework online.

There has been a problem in the past concerning distance learning. Contact with teachers then had to be in person -making distance learning very difficult to execute, but now students and/or teachers can communicate on email or through online forums. Teacher and student communications with parents in the past was through the P.O but now one can use email, skype, etc. Nowadays, teachers use online encyclopedias and online books which was not really done in the past. “A whopping 90 percent of faculty uses social media in the courses they’re teaching, and 8 in 10 have used online video in class. In addition, colleges and universities are reaching out to students in a way they never could before—85 percent of admissions offices use some sort of social media, from video blogging to social networking” (Dunn).

Online translation is used and mostly preferred for translating texts. International students are found to have trouble trying to learn and write a new language and they usually use translators to help with their learning. The internet in this case has made these resources just a click away proving to be such a relief to these students. One of the international students I interviewed stated it this way,

Internet has helped me learn English a lot because for example, when I don’t understand a word in a subject, I use a translator and change it into Spanish, in which I can easily know what it means. I have also found software online that helped me learn how to pronounce words in English, which before I would pronounce Spanish-like. I also encountered different types of really interesting short articles which I would read and it would improve my vocabulary and make me more comfortable and confident talking around people (Lilienfeld).

The huge changes to education brought about by using internet technology enhance the way students learn and makes learning easier and more exciting than ever. However, there are disadvantages and limitations. Teachers must learn how to harness the internet for true learning

in order to make it effective. “The whole ‘21st century’ mindset is more than technology itself. It’s the confidence teachers have to effectively use it in class.” (Monica)

There are many ways the internet can enhance learning if used effectively; one is using internet technology for research in order to make students more active. This changes the source of information. The teacher becomes facilitator, rather than source of knowledge. e.g flipped classroom. A second way to enhance learning through the internet is to use it for review and studying after class hours. Thirdly, the internet can be used by teachers to create exciting presentations of work, e.g using Prezi. Fourthly, the Internet can now be used to better the communication triangle between teachers-students-parents. Finally, the internet is also one of the only methods that have actually proven to be supportive to students with disabilities.

The internet enhances research possibilities and opens more sources to students which were not available before. The school library will always be important and useful, but the internet has made it much broader and easier to get to online journals that were once accessible only in select libraries. Entire encyclopedias, books and other tools can also be found online, often for free.

Nevertheless, this information is a mixture of bad and good information and its all up to the researcher to tell whether the information acquired is genuine or not or if its useful at all. Without support, students might use the internet uncritically, selecting bad resources over good ones. “In fact, most students’ (an incredible 93 percent) first instinct when confronted with a research problem is to turn to Google or Bing to get information rather than going to the library” (Dunn). Teachers need to teach students how to use the internet; how to evaluate good from bad information by thinking critically and questioning what they read. When this is done, students become active learners guiding their own education.

When students are using technology as a tool or a support for communicating with others, they are in an active role rather than the passive role of recipient of information transmitted by a teacher, textbook, or broadcast. The student is actively making choices about how to generate, obtain, manipulate, or display information. Technology use allows many more students to be actively thinking about information, making choices, and executing skills than is typical in teacher-led lessons. When technology is used as a tool to support students in performing authentic tasks, the students are in the position of defining their goals, making design decisions, and evaluating their progress. (Ram).

The internet can switch the focus so that the student rather than the teacher directs the learning with the teacher as a guide. Before internet was invented, students would just sit in the classroom and listen to what the teachers says and it ended there. They could not find out anything more than what the teacher had said or correct him if he were wrong because they could only get information from him. “The key is that the pedagogy driving the students’ use of the computer has changed from an instructional/direct instruction/didactic pedagogy to one where the students are more active in their learning.” (Hicks 325)

A classroom where students are in charge of their learning is sometimes called a flipped classroom. The easiest way to define a flipped classroom is to think about it in contrast to a traditional class. In a traditional class, students usually get the first exposure to course content inside the flipped classroom via direct instruction from their teachers. For example, the first time they hear about the Pythagorean Theorem happens during the class. In a flipped classroom, that first exposure happens before class meets. Students prepare for class time by doing some kind of research activity, for example by watching a lecture video created by their teacher or created by anyone else or they would complete a reading assignment all online. During class, students work on applying the key concepts or ideas they covered in their out-of-class work. They interact with their peers and instructors during class time. The cycle then completes when after class, students

use that feedback gained during class time to further their learning by reviewing concepts they found difficult, confusing or interesting.

Another advantage the internet gives to education is that it enhances student opportunities to work outside of the classroom and outside of school hours. "Students will find websites that can help them with their homework or answer questions that would help with understanding a subject further." (SweetSearch@DulcineaMedia.com). Students can get all the help they need outside of the classroom easier than ever before. Teachers can create and review exercises online to help their students learn their lessons and prepare for exams.

Before the internet technology, if a student would miss a class or two because of certain reasons like sickness or lack of fees, they would miss out on a lot, but now "Through social media, students can log on anytime or anyplace to do their work, allowing more interaction beyond the school day." (Mellett). Everything is online and even when you're not physically in the class at the moment, one can still be able to follow up. Long before internet, so many people would not go to school because of a lot of reasons, for example one couldn't afford school fees, one lived far away from school, one had to help parents with home chores, and so couldn't go to school on a regular basis. Now, one can take as many courses as one likes on the internet for free at any time!

Internet can also help teachers present information during class in new and exciting ways that engage students. The establishment of the internet has enabled teachers to access powerful resources that can be used to help students while teaching and also helped teachers engage students like never before into what they are learning. Online encyclopedias, online access to books, videos, games, images, forums are few of the many ways teachers have used to do this. Other types of technologies also made this possible such as computers, projectors etc. Mellet

once said that internet technology in learning, when harnessed creatively and effectively, is something students using, which increases the chances they will spend more time engaged in their work. (Mellett) Pedagogy technology has greatly improved the art of teaching. Today, teachers can create and present their information in so many different ways, such as online videos. Also teachers can talk directly with experts who are unable to visit a classroom in person and from these interactions, they can use PowerPoint to include what they learned in a lesson. For students to watch an educational movie or video in the past, they had to have a VCR, and after that a huge group of students would have to struggle to all watch the video and maybe would not have a good view of the movie; there was no YouTube or other video sharing services.

Another helpful technique teachers can use to teach writing is blogging. "Blogging not only teaches writing, it also shows students how to create hyperlinks and embed images. Students can even use tools like Storify to tell their own accounts of events online" (Mellett). Instructors can create online forums and blogs where students, outside of the classroom setting, can discuss what they are learning

Internet technology can also greatly enhance science technology through online models and simulations that illustrate scientific principles. "There is a need for improving science and technology achievement in public schools. Elementary teachers can assist in this endeavor by exposing students to scientific and technological concepts through the use of freely available Internet resources that can be accessed in the classroom" (Lazaros). Not only is it good for these kids to learn how to use the internet technology at an early age, but also need the technology in order to get good careers in the future and a better "paycheck". "Today practicing mathematicians and scientists in many cases are not looking for single answers but rather a host

of answers through the design of models and simulations...Let's prepare our students for their futures by exposing them to the latest field practices" (Salpeter, 1999).

Communication is also another factor that continues to improve as the result of internet technology. Teachers can use email, texting, instant messaging, video chats and more to make themselves more available to students who need help with their school work and can provide extra assistance. Whereas in the past, To get teacher interaction, students would have to physically visit the teacher, which was very difficult for those students who lived really far from the teacher's residence, today they can just chat in forums or leave messages on message boards. In the past it was also difficult for the school or teachers to communicate with parents who lived far away; they hand-wrote letters and mailed them through the post office. Now, even at a distance, parents can be actively involved in the students' school life. "Teachers, campus administrators, and parent-teacher organizations are using various tools, such as Volunteer Spot to let parents get more involved in the classroom. These websites help parents know what a teacher may need in the classroom or organize who's bringing what for the school fundraiser."(Mellett).

Internet technology is among the few other methods that have greatly supported students with disabilities and special needs. "In many cases, a student's digital ability does not directly reflect his or her intelligence regarding core subject areas. Because of this, teachers may be able to use technology to help students with special needs progress academically." Also, "Technology has provided students with severe disabilities many rehabilitative tools that aid them in gaining cognitive and physical skills and abilities. Students with disabilities often rely on technology to function in everyday life" (Hicks 2-3). This new technology has allowed students with special needs to make miraculous gains that would otherwise have been impossible.

In the past, sometimes it took years just to produce a book and even longer when the books had to be written and bound by hand. Today our society enjoys the benefits of modern technology. We are blessed with modern tools, which can perform tasks that once seemed impossible, such as retrieving information in a matter of seconds. Books in the library have no shortcuts and they require a lot of time to skim a majority of texts; computers however are quick and to the point, minimizing search time and giving you the answers that you need. Books are now becoming outdated and we have begun to solve our problems with computers.

In the future of technology in education, more people will be motivated and fewer will drop out. There will be less paper work in the future; technological devices such as laptops, ipads, etc will have replaced them. This world will be a knowledge based society. To achieve this we go back to utilizing the students interest in ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and using it critically to their advantage. Imagine if ICT together with reading, writing, math and speaking was part of the syllabus as a basic skill, that would be a good start. But first, encouraging the teachers to use the internet into their lessons through giving them enough time and resources to adjust to it and also trainings would be a suitable way to educate a digitized generation. This generation will influence different lifestyles and values in education which will inspire the education system to continue on this path.

People today have all turned to technology and if we don't digitise our leaders for tomorrow through education, then who will?

Technology has changed the way the world functions on a day-to-day basis: People will send a text instead of a hand-written letter; they'll call from a mobile phone instead of running to a pay phone; and they'll prowl the Internet more often than flip through a book. But with all these advancements, why do we still continue to stick with outdated teaching methods? Technology helps students learn at their own pace, teaches necessary skills needed in the modern economy,

and holds the attention of a generation glued to gadgets; also, it is increasingly recognized as an integral learning tool for promoting the social, linguistic, and cognitive development for students of all ages. Interactive projects equipped with technology allows students to be intellectually challenged while providing them with a realistic glimpse of the modern day office and preparing them for a better future. (Barreto)

In 2020, schools will carve out non digital preserves for students to read and write with books, pens, and paper. “Educators and students will see non digital space as a crucial part of the curriculum, recognizing that aspects of intelligence are best developed with a mixture of digital and non digital tools”. (Mark 24)

Works cited:

Bauerlein, Mark. “Literary Learning in the Hyperdigital Age.” Jan-Feb 2010. 24. eBook.

Hicks, Stephanie. "Technology in Today's Classroom: Are You a Tech-Savvy Teacher?." Clearing House. 84 (2011): 188-191. Web. 20 Oct. 2013.

Jeff, Dunn. “How Has The Internet Changed Education?” [Infographic]. Edudemic, 16 12 2011. Web. 20 Oct 2013. <<http://www.edudemic.com/education-internet/>>

- Lazaros, Edward. "Using Freely Available to Promote the Study of Internet Resources in Elementary Classroom Science and Technology.." Children's Technology and Engineering. 12 2012: Vol. 17, No. 2. Web. 12 Nov. 2013.
- Mellett, Laura. "How Teachers Are Turning to Social Media to Extend Learning." 18 09 2013: n. page. Web. 12 Nov. 2013. <http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/time_and_learning/2013/09/how_teachers_are_turning_to_social_media_to_extend_learning.html>.
- Miners, Zach. "Classroom Technology Integration." District Administration. 04 2009: n. page. Web. 12 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.districtadministration.com/article/classroom-technology-integration>>.
- National School Boards Association- Budget Response Fiscal Year 2011
—Monica Beglau, director, eMINTS
- Prensky, Marc. "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants." . On the Horizon, 05 10 2001. Web. 9 Dec 2013. <<http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky - Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants - Part1.pdf>>.
- Ram, Singh, and Ram Singh. United States of America. Ministry Of Education. U.S Department of Education. Web. <<http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/EdReformStudies/EdTech/effectsstudents.html>>
- The Future of Higher Education: How Technology will Shape Learning. London: Economist Intelligence Unit, 6. eBook. <[http://www.nmc.org/pdf/Future-of-Higher-Ed-\(NMC\).pdf](http://www.nmc.org/pdf/Future-of-Higher-Ed-(NMC).pdf)>.