

SOCIALISATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

This exemplar is an example of a High Achieved or possible Low Merit.

Introduction

Socialisation is a process that everyone is involved in throughout their lives. Socialisation occurs in a variety of contexts such as within our families, in school settings, in our peer groups and within social media contexts. In my report I will identify and explain the main ideas behind the socialisation process and some of the issues we face as individuals and a society when it comes to the socialisation process. I will also explore the way we are influenced and shaped by socialisation that occurs when we use social media which is a type of mass media.

What is socialisation?

In general socialisation is the process where we learn the norms and expectations of whatever social groups, social institutions and society in general. The three main roles of socialisation are to teach us how to perform certain social roles throughout our life, to develop a common set of values and beliefs with others in our society, and how to change our behaviour and actions so we can fit in with others in social groups or society. Even though socialisation is important there is also some issues with it. The socialisation process doesn't always mean a person or group of people will develop positive or good values, beliefs and behaviour. Depending on the situation because of the socialisation process a person could either develop good or bad beliefs and values which could result in their actions being either good or bad. Often in the socialisation process you will have people are agents of power where their role influences others and then there are passive participants who the ones being influenced by the agents of power. An example of this is in the social institution of Family. Parents are usually the agents of power influencing and shaping their children's (passive participants) beliefs and behaviour.

Social media and Mass Media

Social media is a type of mass media which is considered a social institution. Mass media is technology that is aimed at reaching as many people in society as possible. It uses technology to communicate information as widely as possible, influencing as many people as possible. Newspapers, television, radio, magazines and the internet are all different types of mass media. Although technically social media isn't officially its own type of mass media yet it fits into the internet aspect of mass media because social media uses the internet to communicate to people. More and more social media is having a big influence on how young people behave and participate with others both in the social media context and in real life.

The role and influence of socialisation in the context of social media.

Social media has become a big influence in the lives of young people today. More and more we are influenced by what we read and see when we use social media. Social media is also influencing us to spend more and more time scrolling through our Instagram feed or sending funny memes to our friends on

Facebook which can sometimes mean we don't spend as much time with our family and friends in real life. Social media has become a big way that we connect and communicate with each other where we often say more than we would if we were face to face. In fact sometimes we say things we might never say to a person face to face.

Social media can have quite a big impact on what people think about themselves and can influence people's values as well. Especially for young people and even children now social media is having a big impact on influencing who they are. One example is body image for young women who use Instagram a lot. When they see all the images of what are supposedly normal women's bodies with a slim hour glass figure, perfect makeup and hair it influences young women to believe that this is how they have to look to be "beautiful". On the other hand social media can be used positively as well to influence people values and ideas. Body positivity is also a theme on Instagram where different social groups are using Instagram to try and send the message that every body type is okay and beautiful. They post images of "normal" women with all sorts so different body types which is helping more young women and women to feel and believe that they body type is okay the way it is. This type of influence on social media is more and more changing how women dress and act in the real world as well because they are starting to believe they don't have to be perfect.

A more darker side to how socialisation works via social media is when hate groups use different platforms to promote their message and try to get more people believing the same as them. Some groups will post messages and images that influence people to agree with what they are saying. Another aspect of social media is that more and more it is making it more acceptable for people to use either Facebook or Instagram account to post inappropriate content. For example earlier in the year the person who attacked the Muslim community in Christchurch posted a live video feed of what he was doing. Millions of people watched this video and in a sense by doing this they were supporting what he was doing because in real life would you actually stand around watching someone kill other people? Another example is when people use private accounts to post content that is explicit or bullying other people. The ability to do this on social media makes people think that it is okay bully others because it is hidden to the public but available to a specific group of people.

One of the things for me about social media and socialisation is that people behave quite differently (sometimes worse) via social media. They think because they are behind screen it's okay or doesn't matter. But the real problem is that more and more people are now starting to do the things they do online in real life. Social media teaches us all that it's okay to be the worse version of ourselves because no one can stop us because we can be anonymous which I think shifts peoples moral line of what is right and wrong.