English Writing Competition 2021 Winning Essays

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Content

PREFACE

Professor Thomas LUK Yun-tong
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The Department of English at Chu Hai College endeavors to improve students' English language during their four-year study. Since the establishment of the English Language and Culture Centre (ELCC) in January 2021 with the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS), the ELCC has launched a series of English language enhancement activities in the form of Language Table, Online Consultation, English through movies, Road to IELT, and a more recent one is the Essay Competition which received remarkable interest from students. The present collection of the 19 winning essays is the fruition of the writing competition in question and has provided our students a chance to learn basic writing protocols as well as expressing their ideas.

The 19 essays selected are compiled into an e-booklet format to appear on the ELCC website and made into a printed booklet, something solid for the students to remember and others to read and learn. Hopefully, this collection will create an impetus and ambience to encourage Chu Hai's students to enhance their writing abilities in English.

I would like to thank all students who participated in this competition and my colleagues in the Department to make this event so worthwhile. Meanwhile, I look forward to the coming series of events from the ELCC, concerning Public Speaking Workshops, Creative Writing Workshop, English through Drama, etc.

Miss Cecilia LI Suet-sam
Adjudicator & Senior Lecturer, Department of English

In this English Writing Competition 2021 organised by the English Language and Culture Centre (ELCC), students of Chu Hai College of Higher Education are invited to express their ideas on the topics 'Has Social Media Benefitted People's Social Lives?' and 'Should Filial Piety be Legally Enforced?'

As the adjudicator of the competition, I have enjoyed reading the entries, and these 19 entries in particular, which have been selected and edited into this compilation. The participants demonstrated skills they have learnt in English classes, writing with an attention to protocols, especially those pertaining to academic writing, and showed creativity through their fresh points of view on these much-discussed social topics.

Among these 19 selected entries are 1 championship, and 5 merit awards. The winners exhibited good mastery of the language, showed organisational skills with clarity in mind, and presented current, relevant and insightful contents. In addition to discussing the topics from the local perspective, the participants could situate themselves in a wider global level, expanding their horizon and establishing a dialogue with readers of diverse cultural backgrounds. With experience and exposure, these young writers can go a long way in their writing journey.

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Year 1
BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN COMMUNICATION AND CROSSMEDIA

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

In this era of unprecedented technology, social media sites such as Facebook, MeWe and Twitter, have become an indispensable part of our everyday lives. According to Digital 2020 reports (2020), we can see that there are around 3.8 billion social media users and most of them spend one-third of their time on social media when they are online. Evidently, social media influence people's daily habit and their social lives. However, is it really beneficial to us? Some argue that the prevalence of social media allows more people to express their own opinions online, while some contend that social media hinders people's interaction. Given how polarized people's opinions can be, I believe that social media has benefitted people's social lives.

Central to my stance are a few arguments. The most noteworthy one is that social media provide people alternative platforms to connect with their families and friends and strengthen their relationships. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2011), 22% of the teenage informants use their social media account more than ten times each day and half of them send messages through the social media. Many people like to share their daily life or their favorite games or books with their followers by uploading photos or videos on their pages. By doing so, the users of the social media can know more about their friends and start conversations with different topics. Amid with Covid-19, people are missing the chance to have

face-to-face interactions. People are afraid of virus's infection, so they don't go out much for any gathering. Without the help of social media, people will have a hard time to stay connected with each other. Shane (2020) mentions that during the pandemic in 2020 in Australia, 56% respondents said that they spend more time on social media and interact with their friends during the lockdown down period. It is clear how social media help maintain friendships for many people around the world. With this in mind, it is apparent that social media have benefitted people's social live.

Another point that is closely associated with the argument mentioned above is that social media provide safe place for people to communicate with people from all walks of life and expand their social circle. Apart from school and workplace where can people meet new friends? Whether you are a high school student, a middle-aged housewife or a grandparent, you can share your thoughts on different social media platforms. Amanda (2015) stated that it is common for teenagers to meet new friends on social media such as Facebook and Instagram. According to the survey conducted by the American Teenagers (2018), there were 57% of teens who tried to meet friends online. Moreover, people can join online forums to discuss any topics, or gossip or have small talks, voicing their opinions freely with anyone online. For example, the "killing of George Floyd" which is about an American police officer knelt on Floyd's neck for a long time and eventually killed him. After the video posted on Facebook, many people shared their emotions and spread quickly on social media. Patricia (2020) mentioned that social media have catalyzed people into paying attention to the Floyd incident. Many of them commented on this case and protested against the police in the street nationwide.

Therefore, it demonstrated that social media can increase the communication between people and expand their social circle.

Critics may be contended that social media will hinder people's social lives because of cyberbullying and scramming. At first glance, it seems like a sound argument. Upon close observation, however, it is not without flaws. Granted, it is not uncommon to see that people will bully their peers such as virtual lynching, cyber manhunt and online hoax. It may lower the victim's self-esteem and develop suicidal thoughts. Nevertheless, those experiences can improve people's problem-solving skills and benefitted their social life. Nowadays, most teenagers grow up in "greenhouse" and lack independent judgment. Thus, if they face cyberbullying, they can practice how to solve it rationally. For example, victims can try to check the IP address to find out the bully. They can also talk to their family and friends when in doubt and prevent exposing too much personal information. According to the survey from the American Teenagers (2018), 87% of respondents aged from 13 to 17 said that they have never been cyberbullied and it shows that this problem isn't affecting lots of people. I disagree with the argument that social media would bring disadvantages into people's social lives. With crisis comes opportunities and people can improve their social skills when they face cyberbullying. It is therefore clear that social media have benefited people more than harm.

Taking all aspects into consideration, I believe social media are beneficial to people's social lives. They allow people get closer with their friends and family and expand their social circle. If people use social media carefully, it will absolutely

boost their social interactions both online and offline. Hopefully people can enjoy using social media and make their social lives more colorful.

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STUDENT: CHAU YIN YAT {Merit}
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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN CHINESE LITERATURE

Has Social Media Benefitted People's Social Lives?

Social media has penetrated into people's life. Social media users are pervasive around the world with approximately three billion people. Users share one thing in common – they tend to invest two hours per day on social media platforms, such as participating in virtual interaction, updating and navigating (Brown, 2018). In people's eyes, social media helps them getting connected with others. However, is social media beneficial to people's social lives? Contrary to popular opinion, I am inclined to the view that social media is detrimental to people's social lives. Thus, this essay seeks to shed light on how social media blocks people's gateways to social interaction. That is exactly the value of this question. By investigating such question, the relationship between usage of social media and poor social lives can be revealed. By showing such truth, the potential downsides of social media will no longer receive scant attention. By heightening the public awareness towards the usage of social media, people may be keen to restart the genuine social interaction they used to have.

Behind my stance are several arguments. The first point to be noted is that social media can trigger low self-esteem which will dampen people's enthusiasm of engaging in physical social interaction. Social media platforms enable users to present their detailed daily life via uploading videos and photos. However, users tend to exaggerate their current state in the hope of portraying their perfect selves

(Vogel & Rose & Roberts & Eckles, 2014). Guo (2018) pointed out that such behaviors provide a host of chances for views conducting social comparison orientation, which compare their scenarios with that of those users and which leads to viewers' self-esteem are in decline in the course of self-evaluation on social media platform. A survey from a charity organization, Scope which shows that social media prompts users to have a sense of inadequacy (Brown, 2018). A study from the Pennsylvania State University also points out that viewers' self-esteem can be depressed by comparing their appearances with selfies of happier others (Brown, 2018). It appears that people are inclined to have the thought that others lead a more stunning life as shown on the platform than that of theirs. The problem will only worsen when it comes to chronic exposure to social media (Vogel & Rose & Roberts & Eckles, 2014). The more time people dedicate to social media, the more access to others exaggerated profile people will get, in turn making more rooms for self-evaluation. Through discovering the grave inconsistency between their offline selves and the online others, they will examine themselves negatively by labeling themselves as losers. The low self-esteem will also be harmful to their social lives. Those who suffer from low self-esteem always put a brake on the tendency of expressing their opinion in real-life interaction with others (Woolfe, 2019). After a series of self-evaluation online, they have no faith in themselves and can no longer bear the enormous pressure of being ridiculed and rejected based on their behaviours. In order to prevent such painful experience from happening, they strive to forbid themselves from interacting with others. While avoidance of social interaction preserves people, it deprives people of opportunities in forming a bond with others. It comes as no surprise that they will be disconnected from the society as consequence.

What must also be taken into consideration is that the usage of social media is directly associated with increased social isolation. People deeply indulge in social media activities since social media enables them to communicate and interact despite the absence of real-life social activities. The stake fact, however, is that a myriad of research shows that the usage of social media can put a blow on users' social connectiveness. A study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine in 2014 surveyed 1,787 American social media users aged from 19 to 32 and discovered that those who dedicate more than two hours in using social media daily are more likely to suffer from social isolation than those who just spend thirty minutes (Sandoiu, 2017). That means less time were spend in real-life social interactions and consequently, the bond between each other will start to become loose. Those people who are deficient in physical touch with their friends and families will become estranged from the society (Cohut, 2018). Arguably, social media acts as an alternative to real-life social interactions will block access to healthier social life-style.

Opponent may counter my stance, claiming that social media is a true blessing as it allows users to connect to others online despite distance and time. No doubt, social media has such function. However, we can look at this from a different perspective - it is social media's convenience that enables supervisors to distribute tasks after working hours via social media and then inflict a profound impact on employees' social lives. The workplace in China is a case in point. The right to disconnect has become a subject of contention since the employee in Ningbo was fired after she failed to give an immediate response to supervisor's message at midnight (Wong, 2018). Wong (2018) also points out that while social media

applications, such as WeChat, QQ and Line, bring a host of benefits to people's communication, they also generate problems of invisible overtime work. With the assistance of social media applications, supervisors can allot the job orders to employees online. Employees are compelled to pay attention to their phone messages with the aims of not missing any work assignments from senior management. Gone are the days when employees were not necessarily receiving any job order allotted after working hours. Thanks to social media applications, the boundary between work and life has become blurred. Employees' personal time for social interaction with friends will then shrink substantially since they ought to dedicate more time to tasks assigned after working hours. Worse still, the time for visible overtime work will replace the time for real-life social activities. Therefore, social media is a scourge to social life, rather than a blessing.

For the above reasons, it is clear that social media has not benefited people's social lives. Not only do they lower people's self-esteem and thus dampen the thirst to social interaction, they can also cause social isolation from real-life and allow overtime work to invade people's personal time. There are pros and cons as regards the usage of social media. If people use social media excessively, the problems that I have just mentioned above are bound to happen. Therefore, I hope that users will use the social media in a wise way.

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STUDENT: WONG CHUN HEI COLIN
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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Should filial piety be legally enforced?

Chinese children are expected to care for their parents in tradition. Emphasized by the Confucian tenet in the Chinese four system of thoughts, filial piety is treated as necessary as honesty, loyalty, or upon. However, does that mean being caring to parents has to be constrained by law? Would that wander from one's true intention of doing a good deed? Does this argument rely on a law aspect to resolve?

The generalization in the Eastern society of taking care of parents ensures the elderly to receive stable financial or living support. In more detail, adult children are obligated to care for their older parents. However, the argument of whether should setting any law to constrain the action of caring for older parents or not must come with an agreement on the Chinese moral concept. In other words, setting up a rule is a secondary action after the common basis. This essay is based on an agreement on "young adults are responsible to support their parents".

The embrace of setting up rules to force people to look after their parents, such as what the Chinese Central Government did in 2013, requiring the Chinese citizens to visit their parents if they are not living together. The Chinese Central Government also states that family members are responsible for providing financial support, taking care of life, and comforting spirituality for their parents. Such

actions are due to the situations in which elderly living alone lacks home nursing services or lonely deaths. Especially the low population density regions would have more cases with the above issues. The public health scheme is consistently unable to digest an incredible amount of health care needs, which is not a Hong Kong exclusive issue. To explain alternatively, the elderly in poor financial conditions will have more problems of reaching out for help if their children do not provide any.

Moreover, in the 21st century, the younger generation is now more focusing on their individuality. The time spent with their family becomes less after the globalization, an idea coming from the West. To prevent such tragedy, it is understandable for that government to enforce their citizen with legislation.

On the other hand, what people concern about is in a more ethical phase. In Confucian thought, there is an idea that filial piety is the first to consider in every single action. Being respectful and careful to older parents is a must in Chinese culture to respond to their nurture. More than that, filial piety comes with heart. The biggest argument with this topic is whether it is still a philanthropic act after being forced by what the government requested. Scholars even claim that medieval China's reliance on governance by filial piety formed a society that could better prevent crime and other misconduct than societies that only did so through legal tricks. Being filial piety with what the law compulsory asks one to do is hypocritical, which completely conflicts with what Chinese tradition has spread for 3000 years ago. To explain in a more western way is that enforcing the citizen to be filial piety clashes with the law's original intention. Unlike the lower level of the Rule of Law, justice through law is always the first aim in every law judgment. Under this

argument, it means it should still be just after constrained by law or enforced filial piety.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that global citizens mostly agree that taking care of older parents is one of the law's responsibilities, which is also set up in the United States, some European countries. Legalizing filial piety did not happen only in China, though we could barely see the charge report of not being filial piety. Before criticizing if it is suitable to set up laws to be filial piety, as global citizens we are responsible for having a better discussion on caring for elderly though different community care policies and measurements and look for poverty alleviation.

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YEAR 2
BECHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

Nowadays, the development of the whole world is changing every day. Social media is just a kind of solution of how people express their ideas and make their communication between different ages. In the 21st century, every person needs to have a mobile phone in their hands all the time. Social media becomes a must in daily life. On the other hand, when people talk about social activities, not all of people will mention using social media only. They will discuss some physical social activities instead, such as dancing, parties and dinning.

Benefits brought by social media are a sensitive topic because of the rapid development of mobile phones and their applications. The history of social media is traced back to the evolution of smartphones. Smartphones have becoming more high-tech and been improved with functions of higher quality. People can take photos or videos and can edit them on their smartphones. Normally, if you are not a professional photographer, probably you would never consider to have a digital camera or any devices other than a smartphone. The first reason we buy a mobile is for communication because it helps us to transfer our messages immediately.

Distance was one of the biggest problems for sending messages in the old days. Now we got the smartphones everything becomes easier. According to the report cited by the Telegraph, 50% of 16-24 years old spend more than seven hours

every day online. The result is not surprise because the report also shows the average phone users will check their phone in every 12 minutes – whether they are checking emails, replying messages or just looking for funny cat videos (Gadget Cover, 2019). People are able to use Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram to direct message in private or create a post on the online public forums. So, bloggers are showing up quickly. Some people think that the birth of online blogging is a creation for daily life and makes it easy for social connection through online. From a positive aspect, it connects people despite the distance. But at the same time, social media might alienate relationships too.

Family has the strongest relationships in the world. No one can choose who their parents are. Yet, people in any age group could pick up and play with their smartphones all the time, browsing online media, online personal blogs or latest posts by celebrities. According to the report by Telegraph, presenting ourselves online become more popular especially among teens. A survey conducted by the Manchester Metropolitan University, asking about the level of identifying strong relationships in family, shows the mean of the scale is high at 4.4. The mean of the response to the question 'do people think that spending time with family is bored', is 3.97 (Faculty of Health, Psychology and social care, The Manchester Metropolitan University, 2015). This data cannot be ignored because social media may affect the way of our communication patterns. People decrease face-to-face interactions because it is apparent that the Internet has already re-defined the definition of human communication.

In the cultural aspect, a survey shows that the majority of the respondents think that internet is a place to interchange different cultures, opinions and views (Faculty of Health, Psychology and social care, The Manchester Metropolitan University, 2015). This shows that when people use social media to work out a whole social connection, they see it as part of the human culture. Social media play an important role in delivering messages in world and affect human development of society. Social media also benefit the social lives of the public by spreading information differently from the traditional ways. We see that even timid people can talk more and more because they do not have to identify who they truly are.

Without the problem of health issue bringing up by using electrical device, social media are harmless to people who build their relationships online. The development of culture is not controlled only by social media. It is similar to an online forum where people can be themselves and be more open-minded. Therefore, social media are definitely beneficial to the public's social lives.

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STUDENT: WONG TRUST
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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Should filial piety be legally enforced?

Filial piety, which is 'xiao' in Chinese (孝), means to treat our parents well[1]. A hug or even just talk with them can be an action with filial piety. However, smartphones seem to take away all the attention from people. As a result, people in this era do not put much attention to anyone in their surroundings. In recent 10 years, some countries implemented laws to force them to show their filial piety. Should we use laws to enhance filial piety?

Currently, there are four countries in Asia implementing laws on filial piety. They are China, Singapore, India, and Bangladesh.[2] What citizens need to do is give their parents money or provide enough spiritual needs. Both Bangladesh and Singapore's filial-support laws focus on the economic needs of the parents, such as providing reasonable money to the parents. China and India's filial-support laws focus on the spiritual needs of parents, such as spending enough time with the parents. If citizens do not follow the laws, they will be fined.

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[1] 孝:「善事父母者。从老省从子。子承老也。」（《說文》： 173 / 171)
[2] Serrano, R., Saltman, R., & Yeh, M. (2017). Laws on filial support in four Asian countries. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 95(11), 788-790.

Pros and cons of implementing filial-support law

In terms of economics, filial-support law could reduce the government's expenses on supporting the elderly. When these laws are implemented, citizens need to take their own initiative to provide enough economic support to their parents. Therefore, parents should have enough money to support their daily expenses without needing economic help from the government. So, the government's expenses on elderly support will be reduced due to the implementation of filial-support laws. However, in terms of inter-relationships between adult children and parents, this law may ruin their relationships or make it worse. Filial support law forces children to give money to their parents. To the children, parents are just like a house owner who ask for money regularly. This law turns filial piety, which should be something intrinsic, into a contract. Once the law is implemented, supporting their parents becomes a citizen's responsibility, not from the bottom of their heart. Can money buy love?

Is filial piety still intrinsic?

I think these laws cannot work well in the society. The intention of these law is to encourage practicing filial piety in society. But this law is more of a contract to force people into giving financial support to their elderly parents instead of love. Filial piety should be an intrinsic instinct. If it is carried out with the force of others, it is not intrinsic. It is compulsory when the action of 'giving' is forced by others.

Problem of fairness

These laws require children to give economic and spiritual support to parents. But who and how can the government ensure or supervise children to give

'enough' support to their parents? In terms of economic support, the term 'enough' is ambiguous. One thousand dollars? Ten thousand dollars? There is no measurement. So, it is hard to set a benchmark for children to give enough money to parents. And in terms of spiritual needs, supervision is hard to implement. Laws may require people to spend enough time with their parents. But no one is going to time it with a timer. So, what is the meaning of such laws?

Education rather than law enforcement

Promoting filial piety by education would be more effective than enforcement by law. If we taught the new generation from kindergarten that filial piety is very important, this concept will deeply be planted in their mind. So, when they grow up, they will know the importance of caring and supporting their parents.

Filial piety should be an intrinsic instinct. We should promote filial piety by education but not by law restriction. To conclude, filial piety should not be legally enforced.

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STUDENT: LUONG KA CHING NATALIE
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YEAR 4
BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN ADVERTISING AND CORPORATE
COMMUNICATION

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

With the rapid development of technology nowadays, there are more and more social media and platforms. Nowadays, people also rely heavily on online platforms to share their daily lives and publish recent personal life. When they rely on social media, they have the opportunity to create many problems, such as indulging in the online world and cyberbullying. But at the same time, social networking platforms can also bring a lot of benefits, improving people's self-confidence and social skills. The following article will discuss the different effects of social media on people, about the pros and cons.

Benefits of social media

First of all, social media can greatly improve people's social network circles and communication skills. Social media networking sites have big data centers that collect different types of users. The biggest advantage of social media is the ability to recommend relevant users based on their personal interests, which can make people meet new friends instead of relying on their existing circle of friends. Personal communication skills can be improved when meeting new friends, because when communicating and getting to know each other, you may need to use a different tone and relevant topics to communicate. This requires people to

judge their preferences and characteristics, and how to make the relationships better during the communication period. While looking for topics, social media will also provide them with knowledge on different aspects of life.

Communicating with different types of people allows them to jump out of their comfort zone and no longer surrounded the same type of friends. Some people with more introverted personality can seize the opportunity to train their conversational skills in the online world, which can gradually improve in real life. Social media provide opportunities for practice, no matter if it is helpful in daily life, it is also good for work and socializing.

Secondly, social media has different functions, which can bring many developments to people and bring a little much fun to life. The media has developed in many ways, and people's established beliefs believe that social media is used to make friends and share daily life. However, the development of social media has made a lot of progress- not only can it bring economic benefits, but it also offers professional sharing of personal interests. Some people will set up interest classes on social media, and when people are interested, they will regularly follow and participate in activities. Not only can you make new friends, but you can also learn new skills and add value to yourself. Many people also open majors to share personal interests and insights, such as horoscopes, social issues, diet, etc. When people feel negative, they can find some relevant positive energy and relevant experience to solve their troubles. With the multi-functional development of social media, it can solve the elements that people lack in daily life. Not only can

you improve your personal quality, but you can also explore more areas to help your future development in society.

Disadvantages of social media

Firstly, social media is vulnerable to cyberbullying, which destroys the self-confidence and lives of victims. People are also intoxicated in the online world, spending a lot of time in the online world every day, and ignore the real life. Social media does not require real-name registration. Many accounts can only be opened via email. Not using real-name registration will make many people think that they are not responsible for their comments on the Internet, so they will post malicious comments to attack others. These behaviors will also have a negative impact on adults or young people. They will lower their self-confidence and self-esteem in order to solicit the opinions of others. Many news reports also pointed out that the problem of cyberbullying is very serious, such as pornographic video clips, public photos of victims and attacks. Many people attack other people on the Internet with little impact, and other users have the opportunity to share the incident and spread it to other platforms, even if they don't know the victim. Social media cannot control the speech on the Internet and the identity of the registrant, and has the opportunity to have a negative impact, thereby hindering personal development.

Secondly, social media is prone to scams, leading to many victims. Social media has users who do not do sports, buy insurance, fitness products, and

financial products. The online media provides different platforms for them to share information and attract more customers. But at the same time, many commercial deceptions have been committed and many victims have emerged. Everyone has their own desires and needs, and many people choose to shop online because of lower price and numerous online advertisements which are very convincing. But they have forgotten that there are many fraud cases on the Internet, and they are less vigilant because of advertising and tracking the number of people. There have also been many unknown challenges on the Internet. The most famous one is the "Blue Whale Challenge". The nasty behaviors went viral on the Internet and caused many lives. But it is precisely because of the power of the Internet that many people follow blindly, so personal judgment is required when searching for information on social media, otherwise there will be negative consequences to follow.

Everything has positive and negative effects, and the most important thing is people's judgment when using social media. For example, when people use the media to meet new friends, they should communicate for a longer period of time before making an appointment to meet in real person. After getting to know each other in depth, people should decide whether to become friends instead of trusting that person plainly from judging based on those photos posted on the Internet. When shopping online, people can also consider the shops' credibility and compare their products' price with that of their competitors. If people have the ability to think independently, they can enjoy the benefits and advantages of using social media and improve their personal lives and living quality. But if you are a teenager

and feeling confused, you should communicate with your friends, parents and teachers to avoid falling into scams and accidents.

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BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONS) IN CIVIL ENGINEERING

Has social media benefit people's social lives?

In the recent decade, the number of social media users has been dramatically increasing due to the rapid development of the social networking service and smart phone. The use of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube such kind of social media becomes the most popular entertainment, not only to the teens but also the adults. The purpose of social media is to make use of platforms for users to share their daily lives, opinions, and enlarge their social circle. In other words, their goal is to benefit people's social lives. Now, they have reached their purpose. However, does it really mean that social media benefits people's social lives? It is hard to agree that since it is not the whole picture. This topic is worth investigating because social media is affecting the whole world. It is necessary for people to recognize the disadvantage of using social media.

First of all, social media does not benefit people's social lives due to the unilateral communication. Although social media allows people to build connections though interactions, most of the interactions are simple and are only the small parts of daily lives. Users seldom talk about their inner emotions or feelings on social media. The most common way to respond is clicking a 'like' or using emoji. According to Indo Asian News Service (2018), users sent more than 900 million emoji without text on Facebook Messenger and post 700 million emoji on Facebook every day. Sometimes, comments can be found but only consist of a

few words. Under this kind of brief communication, it is hard for people to express their own feeling in detail which makes it almost impossible to understand others. Moreover, the information provided by users may not be true since they can edit it without restriction. People usually share the bright side of themselves only in order to attract others' attention. For example, retouching or photoshopping selfies before posting. The more perfect the photo is, the more confidence they have. Nevertheless, no matter how good the photo is, it is not true. The relationship will lack mutual trust if people are not showing the truth to others. A survey conducted by TruePic indicated that 58 percent of the 1984 respondents does not believe dating site due to edited photos. Resnick, one of the respondents, claimed that it is dishonest and insecure if people's appearance is different from photos (Spector, 2017). It shows that it is hard to gain others' trust using filters, which is bad for maintaining the relationship. Due to the brief communication and the partial information shown by users, social media does not benefit people's social lives.

Besides, it is easy to be addicted to social media. Social media is a very convenient tool to find information of people whom you pay attention to. Like where your friends go, what they eat, what they play. You can immediately find that information without meeting an obstacle. Traditionally, if you want to know these things, you need to make a phone call or have a gathering. Now, you just need a simple click. Under this circumstance, a phenomenon comes out, which is checking the latest updates frequently. They may think that they will stop after finish reading the latest post. However, they will refresh for the new post again and again. After several refresh, they may put down the phone if no new post appears.

Nonetheless, it does not last for a long time. As a result, users pay lots of attention to their phones but not the surroundings. According to a research done by Andrew Przybylski and Netta Weinstein, the conversation among people who had a phone nearby, was less positive and meaningful, compared with the one having a notebook instead (Jarrett, 2012). It shows that social media interrupts people social communications in real life. As a result, social media does not benefit people's social lives due to its overpowering attraction.

Some people may claim that social media allows users to express their opinions as they may have better communications by diversifying the ideas. Therefore, people can get closer to each other and finally benefit users' social lives. However, it is not the whole picture. It is hard to have a good discussion on social media. Social media tends to attract people who have similar interests because users usually search what they like or are interested in. When people having different opinions get into the group, they dispute altogether instead of discussing with each other. Echo chamber always happens on social media. Echo chamber is an environment where a person only accepts others' opinions that is similar to them. Under this situation, opposite perspectives are not considered and complex topics cannot be discussed, as suggested by GCFGlobal (n.d.). In other words, there is little room for discussion. Therefore, social media is not a good place for exchanging points of view.

To sum up, social media does not benefit people's social lives due to three main reasons. Lopsided communication and incomplete information hinder the understanding of other users, which makes it difficult to developing their

relationship. In addition, the huge attraction of social media leads the users to pay too much attention to it and be distracted from the conversations in real life. Besides, repealing opinions and conflicts are rarely found on social media, showing that it is not a platform for discussion. These three effects make people's social lives worse. If people do not pay attention to these disadvantages of social media, their social lives will experience serious impact.

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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Has Social Media benefited people's social lives?

The use of social media has exploded in the last two decades. The world having a population of 7.7 billion people and at least 3.5 billion people online (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). But has it benefited people's social lives? I would argue that social media has benefited people's social lives.

Firstly, people can connect with friends and family members more easily. Many social media apps and websites have been used to connect with people all around the world wherever they may be. This is more important nowadays due to the pandemic. Ever since the pandemic started, international flight has been canceled all around the world, forcing people to use other means of getting together. Social media has thus become a tool for people to get together. For example, this year my family used Facebook's video call feature to have a family gathering for Christmas. This demonstrates the social media's ability to connect with others no matter which part of the world they are in, therefore benefiting people's social lives.

Secondly, it helps develop their individuality. We live in the information age, meaning that we can gain information easily. Social media contributes to this concept as it has given us a vast amount of information easily and readily accessible. News sources have posted on social media countless times informing

people about current events, and these events create opinions and thus giving people their own beliefs and opinions. Having differing opinions gives people individuality. Having passionate opinions on a certain topic, for example, during the U.S. presidential election, many people were Trump supporters and after the counting was done and Biden won and people were outraged. This example shows people's differing and conflicting opinions on social issues, thus developing their individuality by sharing their own opinions and believing in their own opinions that are different from how others think.

Lastly, social media has improved our quality of life. It has benefited people in many ways and one of those things is creating job opportunities. Social media has helped people get jobs, whether by direct advertisement on social media or by posting the job listing on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a social media application and website that focuses on job listing and job seeking. Companies can post job listings and individuals post their CV's and other information on this app. Many people have found their jobs through LinkedIn. According to a blog called "Kinsta", over 122 million people have had interviews from LinkedIn and 35.5 million people have been hired from the interviews. The statistics show that many people get hired through LinkedIn, thus helping us meet people and socialize with newer and unfamiliar people and thus improving an individual's social life.

Although there are many different benefits, there are also disadvantages to consider. One major disadvantage of social media is cyberbullying which is unfortunately, the most common problem on social media. Cyberbullying by definition means a form of harassment via electronic means including social media

(Wikipedia). A blog mentions 95 percent of teens are connected to the Internet and 85 percent are on social media. This blog also mentions that in 2021 73 percent of students feel they have been bullied in their life, this information shows us that many people are affected by cyberbullying. But being affected by cyberbullying is only scratching the surface. The effects of cyberbullying are where the true nature of social media has on our social lives. From the same blog abovementioned, 41 percent of people developed social anxiety, 31 percent developed depression, and 26 percent have had suicidal thoughts. The effects of depression and social anxiety have severe effects on a person's social life, such being anti-social, introverted and pessimistic. These effects do not only affect their social lives but their physical health as well. Cyberbullying has negatively affected social lives and this all came from the seemingly harmless social media.

Cyberbullying truly is a major problem in the modern world. However, cyberbullying has to some degree benefited people. People who have been cyberbullied eventually develop thicker skin, meaning people would not care about how others think about them, also people who are victims of cyberbullying are more aware of mental health and would take action to fight against cyberbullying or any kind of unnecessary harassment. The cyberbullying experience also helps people realise self-love and self-importance. Once this is realised by people, a person's social life will improve, as they may seem more optimistic and can find themselves helping others who need their help and therefore benefiting their social life due to their awareness of self-love, self-importance and the awareness of mental health.

In conclusion, the benefits outweigh the disadvantages of social media as social media can connect friends and family together and help people make new friends. Social media helps develop people's individuality which improves their social skills and social lives. Lastly, social media has given people jobs and help them meet new people and improve their communication skills. Although cyberbullying is a major problem and exerts great impacts on people, people can turn these negative emotions into positive and develop resilience and help people who suffer from cyberbullying. These all demonstrate that social media can benefit people's social lives.

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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN CHINESE LITERATURE

Should filial piety be legally enforced?

Last year, there was a news story about an old man in Shanghai who gave three million yuan of property to a fruit stand owner, once again sparking a heated debate on filial piety.[3] Shanghai resident Mr. Wang is 88 years old. He is too old to take care of himself. His own family members do not take care of him. For many years, it was Xiao You who took care of him. Xiao You is a fruit stall owner. The old man then gifted his property worth three million to Xiao You as reward. The old man's relatives found out about this from a TV report. They did not approve of this. They took the old man to court. The law finally upheld the old man's actions. Everyone applauded this. We applauded the judge's decision. It also showed us that the law protects the enforced of "filial piety", which is necessary for those who are not filially pious.

"Filial piety" is a traditional virtue of Chinese culture. Traditional Chinese culture believes that of all good virtues, filial piety comes first; of all sins, the greatest is filial impiety.[4] Confucius believed that all morality came from "filial piety". He also advocated the use of the authority of state law to maintain moral order. For over two thousand years, filial piety has been enforced by law in China,

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[3] CCTV website 18 November 2020
[4] The Classic of Filial Piety

and the incorporation of "filial piety" into the law proved to be positive. The incorporation of filial piety into the law not only provides legal protection for the elderly, but also plays an important role in maintaining the moral order of society.

However, since the Opium War, China's traditional culture has been strongly influenced by Western culture, and the traditional culture of filial piety has been in crisis amidst great social changes. After the May Fourth Movement, traditional culture was overthrown, the State no longer advocated "ruling the world by filial piety", the content of the law to strengthen filial piety was diluted, and education on filial piety was missing, and the people's belief in filial piety reached its historical bottom.[5]

Concerning the case at the beginning of the essay, we can accept the outcome, but there are more cases of "elderly people being abused", "elderly people being abandoned" and "elderly people living alone who died without being known" ...... These are often seen in the news, and they show that filial piety cannot be entirely left to self-discipline, but also relies on strong laws to enforce it.

Singapore ranks among the developed countries as a highly developed economy in Asia. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, Singapore, which was so preoccupied with economic development and learning from the West, was also embarrassed by cultural issues in the international arena. The Singaporean government finally decided that filial piety was essential for shaping personal qualities, strengthening families and sustaining the development of society, so it

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5 Xu Xinyi : "The Traditional Chinese Belief in Filial Piety and its Reconstruction"

made filial piety compulsory through government legislation, elevating it to a national consciousness and making it a fundamental part of its governance. In 1995, the Maintenance of Parents Act was enacted, making it the first and only country in Asia to enshrine filial piety in law. This has made Singapore a "model of modern civilization in the East".[6]

Chinese law also enforces filial piety, but compared to Singapore, there is still a big gap in its implementation, and the Singaporean approach is worth learning from. Family is the cornerstone of society. When families are stable, society will be harmonious and the country will be stable. And filial piety is the foundation of family happiness. The China Development Report 2020, published by the China Development Research Foundation, predicts that by 2050, China's population over 60 years old will reach 500 million.[7] And as China is influenced by traditional culture, the elderly are reluctant to go to nursing homes and family retirement is the mainstay, how can the rights of the elderly be protected? There is no doubt that the law will be the final safeguard.

Filial piety, as a moral concept, has a moral and a legal character, the two are not contradictory. Morality requires education to achieve, while ensuring that filial piety is implemented requires legal enforcement. Some people say that legal enforcement only makes wounded family ties even more unbearable. In my view, the opposite is true, the fact is that legislation and strict enforcement will do precisely the most to prevent parents and children from going to court together.

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[6] Wei Xueyan et al. "A Study of Adolescent Filial Piety: Linking Family and Self"
[7] "China Development Report 2020" Source: The Paper 2020-10-15

As the British scholar Devlin argues, legal coercion is for the betterment of morality.[8]

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN COMMUNICATION AND CROSSMEDIA

Has social media benefited people's social lives?

For several years, technology has tremendously evolved. Not just that, but so did social media platforms like Myspace, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and so on. Nowadays, people use those types of apps almost every single day, as a way to communicate with one another and even share a moment with them. So, one day I was wondering "*Has social media benefited people's social lives?*", considering that social media is best known for. The next thing I know is that I realise there is, without a doubt, no way that I can agree to this statement.

When it comes to social media, I find that we have two main types of users nearly every one of us know. On one hand, we have a group of normal users, which includes those that use social media with nothing else to worry about. On another hand, however, we have a group of people using social media to show unacceptable, annoying behaviours. We would call such people as toxic users or trolls on the Internet, especially when they are known for upsetting and cyberbullying users on purpose in order to satisfy themselves with what they would call "dominance" ("Internet trolls", 2021).

With those types of users around, it is doubtful whether other people can enjoy social media with a better demeanour. Think about the users' mental health. Social media may help users become socially connected to others. Not only can

they ease stress, anxiety, and depression, but they can also provide more comfort and joy, and even prevent loneliness. Unfortunately, in the meantime, there are also cases where there is an increased risk for such factors like anxiety, self-harm and even suicidal thoughts (Robinson and Smith, 2020). All those mentioned factors leading to such risky situations are on the negative side, which turns social media into a dangerous place in the first place.

Users also fear missing out on certain things in social media, especially Facebook and Instagram (Robinson and Smith, 2020). They tend to worsen their feelings towards the fact that other users like friends and relatives are having either much more fun or better lives than you are. This can certainly affect their self-esteem that they will start having anxiety. Because of that, they could decide to use social media even more than expected, checking for every single update and responding to every single alert while taking such risks like driving or staying up all night long. Not only would such actions jeopardise their health, but they would prioritise social media over reality, thus isolating themselves away from nearly every event in the real world.

Speaking of isolating, I find out that the more we use social media, the lonelier we would feel. Unlike the expectation where social media could decrease feelings of loneliness (Robinson and Smith, 2020), such high usage of social media is revealed to have increased them instead. It is possible that users may have deteriorated their face-to-face communication skills. Social media may be able to affect the ways they react to emotions, social cues or nonverbal cues, if they spend too much time on them (Jacob, 2021). Using text messages may be helpful most of

the time but that would not improve their social communication. Though most of the social media apps have voice chat and video calls for them to communicate with one another, they may also feel a little bit off that they are not talking face-to-face. Conversely, it is also stated that reducing social media usage can actually make you feel less lonely and isolated, as well as improving your wellbeing in general.

In other words, social media can bring negativity to you, whether it is because of the toxicity towards you, or the anxiety and the loneliness around you. So once you start your life on social media, you should better try to avoid every negativity in many possible ways.

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BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Should filial piety be legally enforced?

Over the years, there has been a controversy over filial piety. Even though traditionally we attach great importance to the concept of filial piety, we can still see children's filially impious behaviors from news or the Internet. Although some people believe setting a law enforcing children to treat their parents well is a way out, my opinion is that there is no need for filial piety to be legally enforced.

In general, "filial piety" denotes taking care of one's parents with respect, either economically or mentally. Based on this definition, fundamental to my stance are several arguments. First and foremost, it is beyond doubt that care from children enforced by law is not from the heart, and cannot develop family affection. This issue roots in people thinking that there is no need to look after their parents or respect them. Hence, even if the society stipulates that children must provide support to their parents by law, since the support is not based on sincerity but fear of breaking the law, it will distort the concept of filial piety and cause more family friction, so much so that children may simmer with resentment at their parents. Along this line of thinking, I believe that the result will not be what people expect, and filial piety should not be enforced by law.

In addition, under no circumstances should we overlook the incapability of some people to abide such a law. Chinese traditional society is dominated by huge

families with usually more than four children, the responsibility of supporting parents can be shared among siblings. However, the concept of the extended family has gradually been replaced by nuclear families nowadays, with parents only giving birth to one or two children. They may not be able to support their parents on their own, especially for low-income groups or youths who can barely feed themselves. Furthermore, according to the results of the 2016 Population By-census, lamentably less than half of Hong Kong citizens live with their older family members. In case children live far away from their parents, they may find it difficult to visit their parents day to day while working with a tight schedule. Judging from the fact that people may still be unable to fulfill certain standards of filial piety even after legislation, such a claim may achieve nothing but burdening people on low incomes.

Closely associated with the above point is the subject of law enforcement. If children refuse to provide economic support or being mean to their parents, the most efficient way to prosecute them is to be reported by their parents. However, due to parental love, also as children may have a criminal record after lawsuit, parents will hardly sue their loved ones. Take the Chinese situation as an example: the "filial piety" law came into effect in China seven years ago, but the number of empty nesters is still crazily increasing, it shows that this is not the best way to promote filial piety. Even when parents prosecute their children, it may put the parents at odds with their kid, causing serious damage to their relationships, and add fuel to the problem instead. Therefore, I am inclined to the view that enforcing children to uphold filial piety using legislation is worthless.

Advocates may think that parents have raised children unconditionally, the government should encourage citizens to reciprocate their parents for their kindness by legally enforcing filial piety. Such a claim may sound valid, but after close inspection, one would find it hardly tenable indeed. We can look at this matter from another perspective: not every parent is a good parent. Equivalent to the news about children's filially impious behaviors, we can also see many cases of children being neglected or abused, they may not talk about it in view of ethics or unable to make accusations, but this situation remains rampant. Therefore, no one can deny the fact that it is unjustifiable to legally enforce child abuse victims showing respect to the parents. On top of that, considering only parents who do not care about the children will use the law to force their next generation, this kind of legislation may do nothing but hurting children that have never received love and care growing up. With this in mind, it is beyond dispute that filial piety should not be legally enforced.

All in all, it is evident that advocating filial piety by law enforcement may face enforcement difficulties. This rarely inspires children to respect their parents. Instead, the best solution is to educate both parents and children from childhood to develop a sense of belonging and sense of pride in their families and be kind to each other.

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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (HONS)

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

The smartphone is one of the greatest inventions of the 21st century. Almost everyone in any developed and developing countries has one. With the development of smartphones, social media has become popular. Have you heard of Facebook, Instagram, or Tik Tok? I guess so. These are the famous social media applications in the world. According to H. Tankovska, the global social media usage in 2020 is 49%, and this number will only increase in the near future (2021). Why? Because social media is a drug, you cannot easily get out of it once after you get addicted to it.

Social media has affected people's moods and mentality. The rise of social media has developed a new phenomenon called influencers. They have a remarkable appearance, a well-proportioned body, and a luxurious life. It creates the illusion that everyone is young and rich. Some immature teenagers may compare with them and feel that their body, appearance, and family background are inferior to others, leading to anxiety and cultivating psychology of comparison. Blindly following the influencer, they will only lose themselves.

Social media increased the polarization of society. It recommends relevant videos and information based on users' preferences and habits, which has a well-known name 'algorithms'. As users passively accept homogeneous information, they will think that the standpoint they see and believe is the mainstream of

society. It will be difficult for them to accept reports from different positions as time passes. For example, a Netflix documentary called The Social Dilemma, in which top social media executives point to social media as the leading cause of America's social polarization (2020). In severe cases, arguments and fights between different views occur. That is why social conflicts have become more common around the world in recent years, and people will trust in each other less and less.

Addiction to social media weakens social skills. Communication on social media is very different from actual social communication. For instance, if you encounter questions on social media that you cannot answer or do not want to answer, you can use some emoticons to skip that topic. But communication is face-to-face in reality, and there is no way to escape. You have to learn to observe other's body language and eye contact. When people have problems communicating with others, they will avoid reality and go back to social media, which is another vicious circle in the long run.

Many people think that they can make new friends with the same interests through social media and enrich their social circle. In fact, most friends on social media are casual acquaintances. For example, many social media apps have a "like" button, such as Facebook and Instagram. Are all the people on the "like" button friends of the author? I don't think so. They look like they have many friends, but they are just "friends" to each other on the "like" button. It is pointless to "make new friends" because their purpose is to satisfy their vanity.

Some single people will say that everyday life is either work or home. They have no chance to meet new people. Indeed, that is why developers are launching dating

apps, such as Tinder and TanTan. But the online world is the easiest place to fake, and you may be in a chat with a person who has stolen other people's photos. According to Quentin Fottrell's research, 54% of the daters have "seriously misrepresent" their profiles. Usually, man will exaggerate their height, and women will shave off their weight (2013). It is easy for you to give away personal privacy in the conversation; some will also be threatened by scams and fraud. Social media is a virtual reality, and getting too emotionally involved can do more harm than good.

Social media is indeed the last backstop of human beings, on which they can freely express their feelings and do what they like. Chronic addiction to social media can lead to a weakening of social skills and an escape from the real world. With the proliferation of social media today, eventually, all users can be a "weapon" that divides a nation.

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

It is now the digital age and we witness the popularity of smartphone soaring to an unprecedented level. One of the most significant functions of these gadgets is social media apps. We may have downloaded Instagram, Facebook and snapchat to stay in touch with our peers. However, a recent controversy has been raised—some considered beneficial to our social lives while their counterparts stated that it is a hurdle for our mental health. Frankly, the pros of social media certainly outweigh its cons owing to the following reasons.

First and foremost--Thanks to the Internet, each person with marginal views can see that he is not alone. And when these people find one another via social media, they can do different things — create memes, publications, and entire online worlds that bolster their worldview, and then break into the mainstream.[9] We are greatly entertained by social media, such as memes created by admins around the world, posting their ideas on Instagram. According to a study in 2008, free content in social media seemed appealing to the public. 65 percent of U.S. respondents thought it is crucial that they are able to access their entertainment

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[9] Understanding the Impacts of Social Media: Pros and Cons. (March 21, 2021)
https://www.simplilearn.com/real-impact-social-media-article

on a number of different devices.10 Users manage to share common topics through reading and transmitting news, memes and short video clips to one another.

Secondly, as you and I may also be a great fan of superstars, social media users around the world are now able to communicate with their favorite celebrities in near real-time. "As soon as a top singer or actress posts a new photo on Instagram, for example, fans can immediately comment and reply on that photo. As soon as a top actor or entertainer tweets out a reaction to an event, hordes of loyal fans can reply or even DM the celebrity."11 When we are scrolling down the message area, some fans may even state that they have got replies from the idols. Just imagine in the old days we could only queue outside huge stadiums just for watching our idols' show. It was definitely a "mission impossible" to chat and message our favorite idols. Time flies and in modern days, it is still now a delight to witness ourselves replied by superstars—but now we are always standing a chance. Fans may communicate with each other through social media and their social circles will then be extended. We may even interact with fans around the globe—and eventually our social lives will be advanced as there will be vivid texts and exchanges among fans.

However, opposers of such motion stated that social media may have negative impacts on users' mental and emotional health. Users may encounter anxiety and

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[10] S*ocial Media Now a Leading Entertainment Source.* (May 23, 2010) https://www.provokemedia.com/latest/article/social-media-now-a-leading-entertainment-source#:~:text=Fifty%20percent%20(US)%20and%2056,Internet%20brands%20as%20entertainment%20companies.
[11] How Social Media Changed the Entertainment Industry. (Oct 7, 2020) https://socialmediahq.com/how-social-media-changed-the-entertainment-industry/

loneliness.[12] For example, we may suffer from a "fear of missing out" (FOMO), witnessing other people have a good time when you are on social media and constantly want to check social media when you are off it. I believe that you and I have concerned on whether our best friends have read our message and we subconsciously believe that their replies are vital. Once when we find out that they intentionally refused to reply us, we eventually get anxious. Even if they just missed the message, when we get up in the early morning with double-blue ticks, stress will be generated. We may be stressed from the possibilities behind these double-blue ticks. Tension between interpersonal relationships will then intensify when either one side is over-cautious on the reply of messages.

Why not limit ourselves each time we use social media apps? Gregory Ferenstein commented on Forbes Magazine. He made good use of app limits, which allow users to create their own time limits on social media use and automatically alert them when they have reached it. He set his social media time limit to 15 minutes a day.[13] If a proper time management is carried out with great self-discipline, there will not be risks which may lead to web-anxiety. We may still enjoy benefits brought by social media through appropriate use of social media.

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[12] Social Media Affects Your Life More Than You Realize. IEEE Computer society.
https://www.computer.org/publications/tech-news/trends/social-media-affects-your-life-more-than-you-realize

[13] How I Reduced My Social Media Use With App Limits. Forbes. (Jan 11, 2019)
https://www.forbes.com/sites/gregoryferenstein/2019/01/31/how-i-cut-my-social-media-use-with-app-limits/?sh=2ed059aa4c39

We are always the masters of social media, but not slaves. Bear in mind the paramountcy of proper use in such apps. If we manage to use social media in a rational way, all of us can have a rich and productive social life.

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BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

Think about it. What if we do not have social media in our social lives? Is it good or bad? There is no doubt that social media is a convenient tool that has a lot of effects on us. Social media is a platform with multiple functions on the Internet such as sharing and sending messages to anyone. Also, it contains various information for users to explore. Social media has benefitted people's social lives because it provides a different opportunity for us to communicate with others.

Social media is like a human bridge to maintain our relationship with friends or family. Most social media, such as Instagram and Facebook, have a chat function that allows us to communicate with others regardless of time and location limit. For instance, social distance needs to be concerned under this situation. According to a survey about average willingness to social distance published in 2020, in a range from 0-10 (0 means "unintentional social distance" and 10 means "maximum social distance"), the average answer (1.56 out of 10 points) shows that people generally follow the social distancing advice. It means people try to avoid face-to-face communication socially. Owing to this, they still could maintain the relationship by using social media when communicating with their friends and family at home.

When it comes to content in social media, there are various types of platforms and information. Take Instagram as an example. An explore function allows users to find a diverse topic such as travel, pet, architecture, and fashion design. It may spark their interest in which they have more chances to get a common interest with others. Sandy Maynard, an owner of Catalytic Coaching, wrote an article about how to meet new friends. She expressed that common interests and keeping a connection with members can make friends easily. Social media have a group function that can allow several people to join it and the members can interact with each other based on their common interests.

Some people think that social media can cause people's negative emotions because they may compare their lives with others, and this leads to feelings of jealousy. A better argument would be that they will only feel negative for a while. Yet, there is a potentially positive effect on them. Accordingly, research about "envy" from Michigan University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found that this kind of feeling may make them more hardworking. It means that social media may create envy in them during a short period but it could bring a more powerful positive effect to them. Compared with others, its advantage is more important than its disadvantage.

In conclusion, social media is good for people's interaction because it keeps people connected easily and provides diverse opportunities for making friends.

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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Has social media benefited people's social lives?

What do you think when you hear the term social media? Some people may think of a platform that enables them to meet and communicate with people around the world. Others may think that social media is a channel that allows them to send and receive a lot of information and get updates from people. Social media has become a part of our lives. At this point, we cannot even imagine a world without different social media channels. We all know the importance of social media; however, some think that it benefits our social lives and some do not.

The first negative impact of social media is the echo chamber effect. On social media, people only want to know friends with similar ideas and join a particular group. The content of these conversations is similar. This group of people sometimes does not accept another voice. Conflicting ideas easily lead to bullying.

The second impact is potential social media manipulation. Social media can be very powerful but that does not mean we are bound to be cheated or deceived. Today, a single source on the media can no longer be trusted. People must check the facts of the important news and look from different perspectives. If you are not really sure about the authenticity of the information, you should not forward it. Some social media or news media will dictate or block some news from the political parties because of their background and political stance. Therefore, we should

open ourselves to different voices while using the Internet. It is also very important to tolerate and listen to voices from different standpoints, so as not to become an extremist.

Moreover, social media can make selfies addictive. The media quoted online rumors saying that some people thought that "selfie addiction" was a mental illness, a type of obsessive-compulsive disorder and the main symptom was to keep taking selfies and uploading photos to the community. Since the rise of social networking sites, many people have taken selfies more frequently and some teenagers even tried to commit suicide because they could not take perfect pictures of themselves. Apart from this, the increase in facial plastic surgery cases may be related to social media and the growing trend of selfies. People who upload more selfie photos on weekdays are more likely to be narcissistic and mentally ill than ordinary people. Also, people who are accustomed to using software to edit pictures after taking selfies may also be prone to self-objectification.

However, some people argue that social media can promote cultural exchanges in various places. Because social media can connect us with people from different countries. Yet this function is not totally useful for us. For instance, when there are political changes in other places, we mostly use social media to learn about the miserable situation. It makes the social atmosphere heavier and social pressure increases. It also makes us pay more attention to things in other places rather than in our own country.

In conclusion, there are more disadvantages than advantages when it comes to using social media. It has not benefited people's social lives.

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BACHELOR OF COMMERCE (HONS) IN ACCOUNTING AND BANKING

Social media has not benefitted people's social lives

In the 21st century, with the rapid development of technology and society, social media plays an important role in our lives. Social media are interactive digitally-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation, share or exchange of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. (Kietzmann, Jan, & Hermkens, 2011; Jonathan & Steve 2015). Social media as an indispensable part of people's social life, but has social media benefitted people's social lives? My answer is NO.

The popularity of social media makes many people, especially teenagers, spend too much time on social media. The decrease of communication and interaction in real life has led many people to have increasingly strained or even worse relationships in real life. With the increasing popularity and improvement of the Internet, the increasing size of the smart phone market and the expansion of mobile network coverage, social media usage has become a new trend in social life. Social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and so on, have emerged to provide new platforms for people to share their daily lives, communicate online and relax. Many people are more willing to spend more time interacting on the Internet by using social media applications in order to broaden their circle of friends, share their own interesting stories and learn more about new current affairs. The rich and colorful social media makes people addicted, resulting

in the decrease of interaction and communication between many people and their families and friends, and the deterioration of their interpersonal relationship. Even worse, some people may disconnect with the real life. At the same time, the emergence of social media has greatly wasted many people's precious time, distracted their attention from their life goals, reduced their creativity and concentration on things, and strengthened their over dependence on social media. These negative effects from social media lead to the inability to use limited time to effectively increase self-worth and maintain efficient self-discipline, which have a lot of adverse effects on people's life, work and study.

Social media will affect the physical and mental health of many people and produce a series of negative effects. First of all, it is reflected in physical health. Many young people are addicted to social media, resulting in the lack of rest and irregular diet. Secondly, it is also reflected in mental health. Some research data shows that the more time people spend on social media, the more negative psychological effects people will have. Anxiety, depression, inferiority complex, loneliness and jealousy will appear, and even suicidal tendency will appear in serious cases. There are some cases to prove this argument. For example, researchers from The State University of New York at Stony Brook found that the excessive use of Facebook is prone to teenagers' anxiety and depression. The symptoms are called Facebook depression. (O'Keefe Schurgen, et al. 2011). In 2017, a study of almost 6,000 adolescent students showed that those who self-reported addiction-like symptoms of social media use were more likely to report low self-esteem and high levels of depressive symptoms. (Bányai Fanni, et al., 2017).

Social media violates and leaks users' privacy. With the establishment and improvement of the Internet and big data networks, the security of personal privacy information left by users when using social media is threatened. The leakage of privacy data of social media users occurs frequently. Social media, such as social networking sites or social networking software, saves or even sells users' personal data or other data information in various forms for profit. These data are not only about the users' names, users' preferences, history or cookies viewed, but also about the users' pictures, emails or communications record uploaded by the users. In the case of Facebook, the personal information and privacy of Facebook users have been compromised and stolen on several occasions in the past years. In conclusion, users' privacy is being seriously compromised and violated by social media.

Social media is not only colorful, but also has a "dark side". The dark side of social media is full of cyber violence, cyber bullying, spam, computer viruses, false information and even illegal violence or illegal trading. If social media users do not have proper judgment and willpower, they can easily fall into the dark side of social media and get hurt as a result.

The emergence of social media has been an important and integral part of social development and people's lives. We have to agree that the emergence of social media has made it easier for many people to make friends and widen their circle of friends. Also, social media can serve as the platform for people to share, like and comment in these platforms at any time, which makes people's life more colorful.

However, we have to admit that the emergence of social media has also caused a great negative impact on people's lives. Social media's negative aspect has deeply affected the social relationships, physical and mental health of many people. Besides, social media has even threatened the privacy and security of people. In conclusion, social media has not benefitted people's social lives.

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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

Nowadays, there are more and more social applications for people to share their daily lives and look for like-minded friends. This essay will explain if social media has benefitted or deteriorated people's social lives in the physical and psychological aspects.

First of all, according to 14Garth Japhet, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of *Heartlines*, 42 percent of the customers in the US use social media to search for information related to health, and they all benefitted from the health care information. Social media provides an open platform for people to discuss their symptoms, therapy process and share healthy lifestyle. What's more, people who are suffering from giving up smoking and alcoholism can find moral support. Apart from that, a considerable number of people are joining different organizations to hold up the drug discovery area, finding cures for some specific diseases.

In the psychological aspect, for students,[15] Kim Beasley, author of "positive effects of social media on students, argued that social media can boost students'

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[14] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2014/06/social-media-health/
[15] https://kimbeasley.com/positive-effects-of-social-media-on-students/

creativity. On social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, students can post their writing or original song, so that they create new things with comments. For employee's social media can upgrade their job performance and examples include a blog entry by [16]Marketing Ninjas who have proven this point. The main function of social media is communication, based on this main point, cooperation and companionship can enhance their work efficiency. Sometimes employees need to recharge themselves, and appropriate relaxation can create even higher efficiency.

However, [17]Alex DiRenzo, former contributor, stated that social media has negative effects on people's physical heath. He claimed that as people are surrounded by electronic products, especially mobile phones, they can be easily addicted with it resulting in spending large amount of time on Instagram or Facebook. Some diseases will be aroused, for example, repetitive motion disorder, tiredness, ocular diseases, diabetes and being absent-minded. If people keep typing too long, they may experience wrist and finger discomfort. Electronic product radiation does harm to people's eye seriously, as too much exposure to radiation will degrade people's eyesight. Scrolling social media day and night makes people form sedentary lifestyle, leading to fatigue and lack of exercise, and this situation is quite dreadful among teenagers. Paying too much attention can easily distract people's focus, and people can hit the streetlights or get a car crash when they are posting something on social media.

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[16] https://blog.marketingninjas.com/blog/social-media-workplace-benefit-business-fboc
[17] https://sysomos.com/2016/10/27/can-social-media-affect-health/

According to [18]Denny Carter Managing Editor, social websites and applications have the most negative impact on students' academic performance. Staying up late at night just for social medias causes a lot of issues for students, for example, lack of sleep. They cannot focus on the class during daytime. [19]Alex Womack, a blog writer, also mentioned this point in a website. Students develop a bad habit of using informal words on social media, which leads to poor performance in writing. Besides, students can easily find answers on websites, so that they will rely too much on the Internet but not themselves.

People's mental health can be easily affected by cyberbullying, and this is one of the main issues about social media argued by[20]Kathy, an online writer. Some employees may post their thoughts on their work or colleagues, and this will create an unhealthy working environment for other colleagues. A bad atmosphere leads to low working efficiency.

In conclusion, more evidence stated that social media has not benefitted people's lives, although other evidence showed social media benefits people's lives. According to [21]Maria Clark, a blogger writer from 2008 to 2017, 71 percent of teenagers suffered from mental problems and also the proportion for young people

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[18] https://www.ecampusnews.com/2013/04/17/research-social-media-has-negative-impact-on-academic-performance/
[19] https://clclt.com/charlotte/the-influence-of-social-media-on-academic-performance/Content?oid=18569257
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to commit suicide increased 47 percent, which showed an increasing tendency in the future years. So, I believe that social media does not benefit people's lives.

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STUDENT: CHAN CHI LOK CARLOS
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YEAR 1
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) IN ARCHITECTURE

Should filial piety be legally enforced?

Filial piety definitely is a noble, vital moral value which has been developed a few thousand years ago, started from Spring and Autumn period. And it is one of the actions that Confucian focus on. As a result, the definition of filial piety should be determined by that scripture from Confucian. For example, The Analects and The Works of Mencius have interpreted lots of explanation of filial piety. In their definitions, treating your parents according to the "propriety" and reverence is two important key points of filial piety1. And after reading those interpretations of Ancient Chinese Philosophy, I think filial piety should not be legally enforced, undoubtedly. I will explain it from two perspectives, the fundamentals and feasibility.

From a fundamental perspective, mandatory filial piety actually discourages people doing it. Although there is a law that enforces people to do it, people who actually respect parents will become less and less because they only target to follow and fulfill the law. Take handing in an academic assignment as an example. If the student only wants to finish the work and they do the assignment, this process deviates from the real aim of the assignment because originally the assignment is to assist students to learn knowledge. But once when students only want to finish the work, they will learn nothing. Just like the enforced filial piety, people only want to comply with the law. And this kind of filial piety is fragile and

empty. Once when people find a chance or a grey area to escape and not to do it, they will definitely abandon filial piety. Law only changes their action, but not mind.

From a feasibility perspective, enforced filial piety is hard to implement because the standard of filial piety is complicated and tough to delimit by word. For example, we could not only take 'giving money to your parents' as a standard of filial piety because reverence is also needed2. At the same time, another problem pops out. The standard of reverence is also hard to delimit because it is an intangible value, so as who to set the standard and act as a supervisor. You cannot expect parents to report their children because they love their children, and not all parents have the righteousness to send their children to jail. As a result, a supervisor apart from the family is needed and that actually costs a lot of money because there are millions of families in Hong Kong. As a result, I think it is not possible to implement the enforced filial piety from a feasibility perspective.

Someone claims that enforced filial piety is the most effective way to promote filial piety. However, I have pointed out a situation that people will abandon filial piety once if they find out a grey area or a method to escape from it because they only want to obey the law. In my opinion, the most effective way to promote filial piety is through education, which is a long-term way to promote filial piety. There is a situation from Tao Te Ching. In my interpretation, once when people force themselves to follow filial piety, the governor even does not need to set the law3. Also, people who are educated could affect people around them. Finally, most people will have a change of mind by education and that is the most

effective and valid way to promote filial piety because it tackles the problem at its root.

Filial piety should not become legally enforced because it will only give out side effect, i.e. people only targeting to fulfill the lowest requirement. Once when they can escape from it, they will abandon filial piety without hesitation. As a result, the best way to promote filial piety is through education, reaching the scenario that Lao Zi mentioned.

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2. The Analects (1282923775 946241084 D. Sturgeon, Trans.). (n.d.). Retrieved on March 31, 2021, from https://ctext.org/analects

   The Master said, "The filial piety nowadays means the support of one's parents. But dogs and horses likewise are able to do something in the way of support; - without reverence, what is there to distinguish the one support given from the other?"

3. Dao de Jing (1283066476 946334130 D. Sturgeon, Trans.). (n.d.). Retrieved on March 31, 2021, from https://ctext.org/dao-de-jing

   He constantly (tries to) keep them without knowledge and without desire, and where there are those who have knowledge, to keep them from presuming to act (on it). When there is this abstinence from action, good order is universal. Therefore, a sage has said, 'I will do nothing (of purpose), and the people will be transformed of themselves; I will be fond of keeping still, and the people will of themselves become correct. I will take no trouble about it, and the people will of themselves become rich; I will manifest no ambition, and the people will of themselves attain to the primitive simplicity.'

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YEAR 1

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING (HONS) IN CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT

Has social media benefitted people's social lives?

According to the Digital 2020 Global Digital Overview reports, there are over 3.8 billion active social media users in 2020. It equals to 49% of the population of the world. Nowadays, the average internet user spends over 2 hours and 24 minutes on social media each day. There are a variety of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc. These social media are all-around and fulfil different types of people around the world. Social media has become an indispensable part of our life and provides a huge convenience to us. However, there are some disadvantages of using social media, and we must pay attention to those potential risks.

There are a bunch of negative effects on social media. The first and the most common influence of social media users is that it will increase the possibility of contracting depression. According to the study "Frequency and Quality of Social Networking Among Young Adults: Associations with Depressive Symptoms, Rumination, and Corumination" The researchers involving over 700 students, found that some symptoms of depressive such as feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness were linked to the quality of the users' online interaction. Another study in 2016 also found a similar result- researchers involving 1,700 people found that there is a threefold risk of anxiety and depression among social media users.

The reasons behind the scenes include having a distorted view of other social media user's lives, cyber-bullying, and feeling that it is a waste of time on spending time on social media. Therefore, we can see that the influence of us from using social media is not always positive. We need to pay more attention when we are using social media and try not to be so envious of others' lives on social media since it will affect our social lives in realistic way.

Apart from that, social media can also be an addict just like alcohol and cigarettes. Although social media addiction is not included in the diagnostic manual for mental health disorders at this point, we can never underestimate the endangerment of social media. Kuss, D. & Griffths, M. from Nottingham Trent University analyzed over 40 studies on the matter and found that spending excessive time on social media will cause relationship problems. For example, their academic performance becomes worse, they desire only to be left in peace on social media and are not willing to have social contact with others in reality. Besides, being addicted to social media will also affect their sleeping quality.
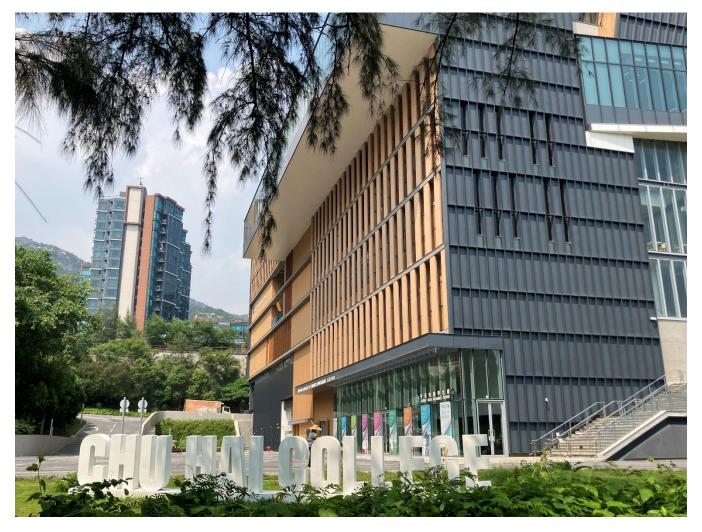
According to the report from "The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism", using phones and electronic gadgets at night will inhibit our body's production of the hormone melatonin. The reason which makes the above phenomenon is that blue light will be emitted by gadgets and it will cause us to head for restless slumber. Another research from the University of Pittsburgh recognized the link between sleep disturbances. They asked over 1,700 people between 18 to 30 years old and found that the more time they logged on, the higher likelihood that their sleep is disturbed. In short, if we do not use social media

in a sparing way, it will highly affect our social lives both psychologically and physically.

In the same manner, the jeopardizing of personal information is another disadvantage of social media. According to the study from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln and the investigation from Pew Trust, 13% of Americans have had the experience of their social media accounts being taken over by unauthorized people. After those criminals get access to our social media accounts, they can get valuable data (such as name, phone number, birthday, personal interests, and geographic location) and they can sell it easily on the internet. Besides, the use of ransomware to extort money, as well as spyware to steal our sensitive information, and profit from forced advertising have become more and more prevalent these days. If we do not use social media in a correct way, it will not only affect our social lives but also become a nightmare.

Getting back to the question, Social media is a double-edged sword. Although social media makes us be able to connect with others easily, and provide convenience and detriment to our social lives at the same time, it has its own problems and dangers. If we do not use it wisely, it will bring a bunch of drawbacks to us.

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