

Analysis of Utilitarian Ethics in Primary School Students' Use of Social Media

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the relationship between utilitarian ethics and the use of social media by primary school children. This paper critically examines the potential positive and negative effects of social media use for primary school children from the perspective of utilitarian ethics. The hermeneutic method is a philosophical method that examines, explores and seeks meaning for a particular concept. The researcher tries to reflect and interpret the study of utilitarian ethics while providing a sharp analysis of the issue in the context of social media use for primary school children. The results of the analysis show that utilitarian ethics can influence the behaviour and use of social media for primary school students. The implementation of utilitarian ethics has both positive and negative effects on children's social media behaviour. The value of utilitarian ethics can develop children's digital moral behaviour such as altruistic attitudes, positive cooperation, productive and responsible actions, social awareness, being critical of social issues, and engaging in online learning communities using social media. The results of this analysis are expected to provide philosophical contributions for students to use social media more responsibly, wisely and in accordance with universal moral values.

Keywords: Utilitarian ethics, social media, digital media, internet, cyberbullying

1. Introduction

The development of social media has had a significant impact on the behaviour of primary school students (Bozzola et al., 2022). Social media has been created to digitally connect individuals and as a means of disseminating information. Social media has become a primary and integral need of students' lives (Swain, 2024). Adegboyega (2020) and Swain (2024) explains that social media is a digital platform that helps users to share, interact and create content, both in the form of text, images, video and audio, with others online in the school environment, workplace, home and other communities. Social media also provide a space for users to collaborate, discuss and communicate for a variety of purposes, including entertainment, information, business and social relationships (Tajvidi et al., 2020; Nursyam et al., 2024). Livingstone & Smith (2014) confirms that the internet and social media have positive impacts such as opportunities for learning, socialising, participation and entertainment. Social media is growing rapidly among primary school children. They have a strong desire to share everything they feel through social media (Roemintoyo et al., 2020).

The survey results of Badri et al. (2017) shows that children feel more comfortable interacting via social media than directly face-to-face. In the context of education, social media encourages students to be more creative, to create works of art, to be flexible in their skills and to have extensive network relationships (Akram & Kumar, 2017). Students can use social media in learning activities (Purwanto et al., 2022), motivating students (Nursyam et al., 2024) to learn to get information and fast communication according to their wishes (Roemintoyo et al., 2020). The same thing is expressed by Sadagheyani & Tatari (2021) that the use of social media properly and wisely can manage depression, emotional and build a broad community. Social media also enhances networking, self-expression, self-identity, building and maintaining relationships, interacting, learning, communicating and having fun (Bhargavi, 2024).

Uncontrolled use of social media has a negative impact on the moral behaviour and character of primary school students. Ojiakor-Umenze et al. (2024) asserts that the high use of social media by Nigerian students can damage students' lives, especially their moral lives. Through social media, students can easily find, watch and download inappropriate videos. Social media has changed students' attitudes, beliefs, opinions, lifestyles, values, rules, morals and behaviour patterns (Globokar, 2018). Students become vulnerable to cyber moral crimes such as sexual violence (Anierobi et al., 2021) online prostitution, online gaming, fake news, pornography and cyberbullying (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). Research by Shronih et al (2024) found that social media has changed the character of children, namely indifferent attitude towards the environment (pubhling), loss of politeness, laziness in doing assignments and failure to focus on learning.

The results of research by Smahel et al. (2015) showed that digital and social media use had an impact on students' mental health symptoms such as cognitive impairment, aggression and sleep problems. This assertion is corroborated by Khundadze et al. (2017), who found that excessive social media behaviour problems in children aged 3-12 years resulted in emotional disturbances, language and cognitive delays, tics, stuttering, poor attention and aggressive phobias. Children become easily emotional, defensive, combative, violent and rebellious towards anyone if they feel disturbed while playing with gadgets. According to Kominfo (2018), two students were treated at Koesnadi Regional General Hospital in Indonesia for attempting to kill their parents for banning them from using social media on their smartphones. Some of the descriptions above show that the use of social media has changed children's behaviour, lifestyle and morality in the virtual world. This phenomenon needs to be studied and analysed in depth from the perspective of philosophical ethical theory.

The basic question of this research is what can be said about the use of social media by children of elementary school from the perspective of utilitarianism ethics? This article aims to understand the impact of utilitarian ethical theory on primary school students' social media behaviour. It analyses how utilitarian ethical theory influences students' actions on social media, while critically reviewing its potential negative effects.

The findings of this study provide philosophical and conceptual insights into how the ethical theory of utilitarianism influences primary school students' behaviour and use of social media. In addition, this study identifies potential risks and negative consequences of applying utilitarianism principles to social media. Utilitarian ethics considers the positive and negative effects of social media use on oneself and others. Ultimately, this research is also expected to make a philosophical contribution to the formulation of more appropriate ethical guidelines to help students use social media more responsibly, wisely and in accordance with universal moral values.

2. Method

The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a hermeneutic approach. The hermeneutic method is a philosophical method that examines, explores, and searches for the meaning contained in a text or writing so that the meaning is well understood. Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic (2014) claim that the hermeneutic approach has a framework for literature review, classification and mapping, critical evaluation and argument development. The research process was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher collected relevant literature on utilitarian ethics theory, children's digital behaviour and the impact of social media on primary school pupils. Secondly, each source was critically evaluated to identify its suitability, relevance, strengths and weaknesses. Thirdly, an in-depth hermeneutic circle approach was used to repeatedly read, interpret and compare texts to find the relationship between utilitarian ethics theory and children's behaviour on social media.

3. Results and Discussion

a. The Ethical Concept of Utilitarianism

The word utilitarianism comes from the Latin noun 'utilitas', meaning usefulness. Utilitarianism seeks to equate moral goodness with utility. Utilitarianism is often understood as a 'success ethics', an ethics that judges the goodness of people by whether their actions produce something good (Magnis-Suseno, 1987). Utilitarian theory is also often referred to as consequentialist theory (Mitov, 2021; Dimmock & Fisher, 2017). Goodness is determined by the overall ethical consequences of an action (Bonde & Firenze, 2013). As a branch of philosophy and ethics, utilitarianism was originally

developed in the United Kingdom by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Bentham (2004, p. 66) asserted that it is 'the property of everything that it tends to produce utility, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, or to prevent harm, pain, evil, or misery'.

Subsequently, the formulation of this school was developed by John Stuart Mill, Bentham's student, in his book *Utilitarianism* (1863). Utilitarianism was intended as an ethical basis for the reform of English law, particularly criminal law. According to Bentham (1789), the purpose of law is to promote the interests of citizens, not to enforce divine commands. By nature, man avoids displeasure and seeks pleasure. Happiness is achieved when people have pleasure and are free from pain (Bertens et al., 2018). Since human behaviour is directed towards happiness, an action can be judged good or bad if it can increase or decrease the happiness of all people. With this understanding, Bentham arrived at the principle of utility, which reads: the greatest happiness of the greatest number, 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people' (Bentham, 2004, p. 65; Dimmock & Fisher, 2017). Bentham understands the achievement of happiness only in quantitative terms, and the means of achieving it are not important to him. An action is good if it brings the most pleasure to the most people. This principle of utility has become the norm for both private and public action (Ohoitumur, 2007; Bertens et al., 2018).

What is attractive about utilitarianism is that it is concerned with rational calculations about the degree of happiness and the number of participants (Bertens et al., 2018). Utilitarianism expresses a critical and rational moral evaluation. There is no recognition that actions are intrinsically obligatory or forbidden. Therefore, utilitarianism seems more rational than Kant's ethics of obligation because utilitarianism no longer requires the notion of obligation, but instead shows the benefits of moral action. An action is said to be morally good if it produces the most good effects for humanity, where the good effects are in accordance with empirical propositions and can be counted in empirical favour (Magnis-Suseno, 2005).

The main point of utilitarianism is that people should always act in a way that maximises happiness for as many people as possible. People should act in ways that produce as many good consequences as possible and avoid as many bad consequences as possible. In other words, the hallmark of utilitarianism is that good consequences are seen not only in terms of the actor's own interests, but also in terms of the interests of all those affected by the actor's actions. Morally, people are expected to be kind to others. So, if people do something that is beneficial to others, then that action should be considered good in a moral sense. Conversely, an action is not necessarily good in a moral sense just because it is beneficial to me. For example, an act of corruption is morally bad because it is only beneficial to the perpetrator (Magnis-Suseno, 1987). Utilitarian ethics is universal because what becomes the moral norm is not good consequences for the doer alone, but good consequences for the whole world. Utilitarianism requires attention to the interests of all those affected by the action, including the actor himself.

b. Social Media Phenomenon in Primary School Students

The use of social media among primary school students is increasing with the development of digital technology. Because social media platforms are easy to use and entertaining, they attract the attention of most children (Bhargavi, 2024). Recent research by the Pew Research Center (Vogels et al., 2022) found that children and adolescents in the United States have experienced a 95% increase in social media using smartphones. Similarly, the opinion of Mensah & Kyei (2019) that students are the largest users of social media worldwide (Ojiakor-Umenze et al., 2024). The study also looked at the frequency of use of the top five online platforms by children and teenagers in the US, namely YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook. As many as 35% of them use at least one of the five platforms almost every day. More than 90% of students use social media sites (Hasugian et al., 2020). This phenomenon shows that primary school students are now increasingly involved in various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok, which were originally designed for adults.

The EU Kids Online report shows that the majority of 9–17-year-olds across Europe use social media via mobile devices, and that it is the main way they access the internet daily. Children are connected anywhere, anytime (Smahel et al., 2015). Similar research by Livingstone et al. (2011) found that most children use smartphones daily. The amount of time children spend online with digital

media has doubled to three hours per day. Primary school students use social media to interact with peers, seek entertainment and access information (Tajvidi et al., 2020; Nursyam et al., 2024). Social media allows primary students to build social relationships and improve communication skills. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), social media platforms can increase children's sense of community by allowing them to interact outside the school environment.

Social media can be a means for children to access educational information and engaging learning content. Educational content tailored to the age of the user can help students expand their knowledge beyond the formal curriculum (Chau, 2010). Livingstone & Smith, (2014) asserts that the internet and social media provide positive impacts such as opportunities for learning, socialising, participation and entertainment. Bhargavi (2024) outlines some of the positive impacts of social media, namely that children can connect with their parents and friends; learn new things, exchange ideas and improve social networking skills; increase children's knowledge through online education or courses; and learn better communication skills and freedom to express themselves (Ben-Joseph, 2023). A survey by the Pew Research Centre (Bhargavi, 2024) revealed several popular topics that children and adolescents post on social media platforms. Namely, about half of children and adolescents (49%) post about their achievements, followed by posts about family (44%), posts about feelings and emotions (34%), love life (22%), personal problems (13%), religious views (11%) and political views (9%).

Primary school children do not have the mature cognitive ability to understand the consequences of their actions in the digital world, such as posting personal information or engaging in negative behaviour such as cyberbullying. A similar reality is revealed by Young (2014) that primary school students do not realise that the digital footprint that is conveyed, posted and shared through social media is very risky. Kaum Muda Japelidi found four dominant unethical behaviours of children when using social media through smartphones, namely toxic behaviour, cyberbullying, SARA threats and pornography (Amihardja et al., 2022: 15). This assertion is reinforced by Akhwani & Wulansari (2021), who argue that various cybercrimes committed by children in cyberspace, such as spreading fake news (hoaxes), hate speech and cyberbullying, are evidence of weak supervision by parents, teachers and society. Furthermore, Haryani (2024) provides some negative effects of social media for primary school children, namely that social media can lead children to inappropriate and dangerous content, which greatly affects the mindset of children.

C. Positive Analysis of Utilitarian Ethics in Social Media Use

Here are some of the positive values of utilitarian ethics in primary school children's social media behaviour.

1) Developing Altruistic Attitudes

Hooker (2000) asserts that the utilitarian approach emphasises the impact of actions on the happiness of others. From a utilitarian perspective, social media becomes an opportunity and a medium to care for more people, both friends, family and society at large (Zhang & Liu, 2024). Children's altruistic online behaviour is manifested by not sharing content that can hurt other people's feelings. Not spreading false information and messages that harm many people. This principle is in line with empathy, which is an important part of the moral development of primary school children. This is relevant to Floridi's (2013) assertion that information ethics must include respect for the social and emotional well-being of others in digital and social media environments. James et al (2009) found that one of the main factors shaping children's ethical attitudes in digital and social media is moral support. A child who acts ethically in cyberspace needs to understand the possible consequences for themselves, others, their community and society. Teachers and parents are responsible for guiding children to use social media for more social and moral benefits. Children are trained and supervised to use social media as a means of caring for others, obtaining useful information, and providing emotional support to friends (Alam et al., 2023; Sobon et al., 2024).

However, children's actions in the digital world need to be weighed against good intentions according to moral values. According to Kant (1993), every human life is full of moral value and should be treated with dignity. Everyone has an obligation to treat others as ends in themselves, not just as means to an end. Therefore, digital ethics education is very important for primary school children. This assertion is relevant to the claim that digital ethics is a fundamental part of the school education

system (Martínez Negrete, 2014) and a key skill for 21st century students (Parra, Chaves & Villa, 2020). Similarly, Ribble and Bailey (2007) stated that the concept of digital ethics in primary schools is a fundamental strategy for shaping children's character and morals in the digital age.

2) Positive Collaboration

The act of working together is an important dimension of developing children's behaviour to achieve mutual well-being and happiness. From an early age, students are encouraged to collaborate well with others through social media. From a utilitarian perspective, good collaboration is collaboration that benefits many people. The phenomenon of online learning collaboration and discussion through social media platforms helps children to strengthen each other by involving many friends and can be done anytime, anywhere. Through social media, students learn and discuss remotely from home to help each other and share ideas and knowledge for the benefit and common good (Suci et al., 2022). Student behaviour on social media helps students get the most out of other friends. The presence of social media makes it easier for students to interact, share experiences, discuss and get up-to-date information to complete school projects and assignments (Stathopoulou et al., 2019). Zabidi & Wang (2021) mentions social media as the closest, most convenient and influential learning tool for students. Students can form learning communities through social media (Zarzour et al., 2020) and share solidarity for friends who need help (Stewart & Schultze, 2019).

The wise use of social media with a utilitarian ethics approach, as described above, can minimise some of the research that shows that social media makes children egoistic, who are always selfish (Mitov, 2021). The altruistic dimension of social media from the perspective of utilitarian ethics provides a different study from some research findings that suggest that children become individualised, their social behaviour decreases (Maula, Sindi, & Sheila, 2023; Alma, Charisma, & Chintya, 2023), and their ability to communicate, empathise and cooperate decreases (Wellman et al., 2006). Digital media and the internet encourage children to rarely communicate and dialogue directly with family members and friends (Bassam, 2022). This claim is supported by Sharma et al., (2023) namely that the negative impact of social media is to distance people who are close and vice versa.

The principle of utilitarianism can encourage children to use digital platforms as a positive means of collaboration. Zabidi & Wang (2021) mention social media as a collaborative learning activity for children. They can share useful information, help each other with learning activities and spread messages that promote solidarity (Jiang et al., 2022). As Turkle (2017) explains, social media can be a space for developing a sense of community. Through an attitude of collaboration and useful communication, children learn that their actions in the digital world should impact as many people as possible. They can create greater social good. Social media is not only a means of communication, but also a space and a means of building social solidarity that strengthens cooperation for collective happiness outside the classroom (Suci et al., 2022). In this way, social media become effective and meaningful collaborative learning.

3) Productive and Responsible Behaviour

Utilitarianism emphasises that a good action is that which produces the greatest benefit or happiness (Bentham, 1789). In the context of social media use, this principle can be applied by encouraging children to use different social media platforms productively and responsibly. They can develop the habit of sharing content that educates, inspires and has a positive impact on themselves and others. As Livingstone and Haddon (2009) explain, social media can be used by children as a tool to make a positive contribution to society. They learn to use social media wisely and ethically. The information shared can be guaranteed to be true and to benefit many people. Social media actions are always meaningful to others and not just for personal entertainment or pleasure. Klisanin (2012) argues that social media can improve physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health, strength of character and virtue. Abbas et al. (2019) found that social media stimulated children's creativity in creating assignments and schoolwork. Children's assignments were turned into creative videos and posted on social media for teachers and others to see and access.

4) Social Awareness and Social Criticism

The principle of utilitarianism teaches the importance of considering the social consequences of any action (Mill, 1863). In this context, children can be taught to be more sensitive to social issues that develop both in the real world and in cyberspace, such as environmental, health or humanitarian issues. Zhang & Liu, (2024) found that social media has a positive influence on young people's willingness to donate blood. Information about blood donation requests through social media increases young people's attitudes towards donating for others. Social media becomes a platform to discuss these issues. Students can learn to positively contribute to social campaigning activities and spread messages that fight for the common good of social issues (Green, 2023). Ye et al. (2020) explained that social media is useful for many people's lives, such as promoting public health and social equality. Social media can increase an individual's social awareness of others. As Floridi (2013) explained, an information ethics approach that focuses on the well-being of many people can help primary school students engage in activities that promote better social values. A child can educate other friends about the importance of maintaining online privacy and combating cyberbullying.

5) Positive Engagement in Online Learning Communities

Zuboff (2019), in his book *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, suggests that by promoting actions that benefit as many people as possible. Good engagement in online communities is engagement that produces the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people. Children's actions on social media are directed towards the collective good, which can bring happiness to themselves and their peers. The principle of utilitarianism can be applied in the context of digital education. Children can be taught to engage more positively in online communities. Primary school pupils can be involved in activities that support digital communities. Pupils are encouraged to spread correct information. Children support friends who are experiencing problems on social media. This approach encourages children to understand the importance of social responsibility in creating a safer and healthier digital environment (Zuboff, 2019).

d. A Critical Review of Utilitarian Ethics for Children's Behavioural Development

Utilitarian ethics also has several weaknesses that should be critiqued. Below are some negative critical assessments of utilitarian ethics in the use of social media by primary school children.

1) Behaviour Focuses on Outcomes Rather Than Processes and Intentions

Utilitarian ethics asserts that every action a person takes is focused on the result or the benefit to the majority, without paying attention to the process and intention behind the action. This assertion is relevant to Zimdahl's (2012) statement that the morality of an action according to utilitarian standards lies in its outcome or consequences. This standard does not focus on intentions as other moral standards do. A similar statement by Smart et al. (1973) that utilitarianism ignores the intentions of actors and focuses on the outcome of a given action or rule to maximise pleasure and minimise pain. Moral goodness in the utilitarian framework depends entirely on whether the outcome of an action is maximally beneficial. This view differs from what Craft (2013) said, that one's moral intention to act is the ability to prioritise moral values over other values. Therefore, the action requires a desired outcome and is bound by moral values.

In the context of social media use by primary school children, utilitarian ethics raises ethical issues. Children experience ethical dilemmas when using social media. A pupil may share content that many people find funny or entertaining, but which may hurt someone's feelings. For example, a student records and uploads a video of a classmate doing something funny or embarrassing during a class presentation. Many people feel entertained and make positive comments or laugh. The video is seen by many people and goes viral at school and online. But the friend who is the subject of the video feels embarrassed, humiliated and hurt. The friend feels ridiculed or made fun of. From a utilitarian perspective, many students or people who watched the video were entertained and happy by the content. The student's actions are seen as 'good' because they bring happiness to the majority. In the context of social media use by primary school children, utilitarian ethics raises ethical issues. Children experience ethical dilemmas when using social media. A pupil may share content that many people find funny or entertaining, but which may hurt someone's feelings

Children's lack of responsibility on social media is relevant to the findings of Al-Anshari et al (2022) that social media is not being used for learning and meaningful activities for others, but rather is becoming a medium of entertainment for children. Children are more concerned with their own satisfaction or happiness through social media rather than providing benefits to many people. By focusing only on the benefits for the majority, the good intentions, communication processes and ethical actions of a child in cyberspace can be ignored. The child's actions have the potential to lead to morally irresponsible behaviour (Gert & Gert, 2020).

The above descriptions and examples are immediately familiar to teachers and parents. In principle, 4-year-old children already could distinguish intentions from desires and the results of an action (Hilton & Kuhlmeier, 2019). Without the help of parents and teachers, the ethical principle of utilitarianism can interfere with the moral and cognitive development of young children, who are essentially beginning to understand the relationship between desires, intentions and the results of their actions on social media. The search for temporary pleasure and happiness through social media makes a child lose the orientation to distinguish between good and bad intentions and the consequences of their actions in the digital world.

2) Disregard for Individual and Minority Rights

Utilitarian ethics focuses on maximising the welfare or happiness of the majority, often ignoring the rights of individuals or minority groups. This is relevant to McGee's (2024) claim that utilitarian ethics has structural weaknesses. An action or policy can be considered ethical even if it violates someone's rights. According to utilitarian ethics, it is reasonable to violate the rights of others if the outcome is positive. In the context of social media, students tend to be influenced by trends and social pressures that emphasise pleasure and majority approval. To gain peer group approval, children tend to ignore the rights of others in the digital world. According to social learning theory, positive reinforcement, attention and strong support from friends can reinforce children's negative and aggressive behaviour both offline and online.

This claim is relevant to the findings of James's (2014) research, namely that peer norms and values both online and offline have a strong influence on children. This means that peer norms on social networking sites are very powerful influences (Nesi et al., 2023). The influence of offline peer culture is as important as technology, literacy and youth culture in digital media (James et al., 2009). This is relevant to Williams' (1973) statement that a utilitarian will insist on removing the rights of a minority to increase the happiness of most people, and therefore it will be a moral action. In this case, students may be trapped in behaviours that prioritise social approval from their peers without considering the rights and feelings of other parties who are being harmed (Nesi et al., 2023). This is contrary to the moral principle that prioritises the protection of the rights of everyone, including those who may be harmed by the actions of the majority.

3) Difficult to Measure Long-Term Benefits for Children

In utilitarian ethics, an action is considered good if it provides immediate benefits to most people, without considering the long-term impact on individual character development. The use of social media for primary school children should not only focus on momentary pleasures such as getting 'likes', but also help children learn social, moral and emotional skills. Sean Parker, founder of Facebook and Napster, said the platform taps into human psychology by satisfying the need for validation. The likes and comments feature are designed to trigger dopamine and make people feel good when they get a positive response. This excitement makes users want to keep posting to get more validation and feel liked and accepted by others (Bergman, 2024). The results (Dumas et al., 2023) showed that the number of views, comments and/or likes on social media content uploaded by adolescents and children in Canada exerted positive pressure on their relationships and mental health. Having many followers on social media increases the closeness of friendships and the sense of being noticed on social media (Lajnef, 2023).

The utilitarian approach to ethics in social media makes children less likely to learn moral values such as integrity, honesty and moral courage. Children tend to think that an action is right if it makes a lot of people happy, without thinking about whether the way it is done is right or wrong. For example, a student may follow a certain social media trend for the sake of 'shared happiness', not

understanding that his or her actions may violate more fundamental moral principles such as honesty or respect for others. Character development should not only focus on the pursuit of the happiness of the majority but should also include the teaching of intrinsic values that form a child's strong individual ethics. Children need to be guided to develop values that not only prioritise the result, but also pay attention to the moral process they go through in social interactions, including social media. A balanced moral education helps students understand the importance of personal responsibility and ethics in their lives, so that they become not only happy but also moral people (Mill, 1863; Gert & Gert, 2020).

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Utilitarian ethical theory plays an important role in shaping primary school children's behaviour when using social media. On a positive note, utilitarian ethics promotes children's digital moral development through altruistic behaviour that reflects concern for the welfare of others. This can be seen in healthy, productive and responsible acts of collaboration on social media platforms, as well as critical attitudes towards social issues. Children can also become more involved in collaborative online learning communities, develop their social awareness and use social media as a useful and productive tool.

However, there are some weaknesses in the application of utilitarian ethics in children's digital environments. For example, an over-focus on outcomes without attention to the intention behind an action can undermine the value of honesty and empathy, where children may overlook processes or individual rights that are not in line with the common goal. In addition, utilitarian ethics tend to overlook minority interests or individual rights in the pursuit of greater good, which can be detrimental to children's personal experiences and well-being. The difficulty of assessing the long-term effects of any action on social media is also a challenge, as behaviours that appear beneficial at one time may have negative effects in the future.

Overall, this analysis makes a philosophical contribution to the digital moral and ethical education of primary school students, particularly in the more responsible use of social media. By understanding the ethical principles of utilitarianism, students are expected to interact more wisely, uphold universal moral values and be aware of the wider social impact of their online activities. Hence the importance of moral education in guiding students to use social media in a positive way that benefits not only themselves but also the surrounding community. Teachers should integrate digital ethics education into their teaching. Students must practise the responsible use of social media. Parents should guide their children by setting a good example of wise digital behaviour. Stakeholders should provide policies and programmes that support digital literacy and ethics in schools.

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