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Should Metaverse Educational Institutions Replace Traditional Ones?

Many people believe that the current education system encounters severe challenges and needs drastic changes. One of the possible solutions is meta-universe, which is a rapidly developing technology of virtual reality. While some think that meta-schools are a perfect alternative to brick and mortar ones, others argue that the new way of studying has drawbacks that surpass its advantages.

One of the strongest arguments in favor of metaverse studying is accessibility. Although the current generation is the most educated, compared to their ancestors, some issues still emerge. First, there is the problem of high tuition costs, which leads to increasing student debt (“75% Of College Students Unhappy With Quality Of Elearning During Covid-19” par. 15). Growing prices divide students into the elite who can afford a degree and the rest. Fully virtual classes can give students access without the expenses for tuition, making top institutions more affordable (Koenig par. 9). Moreover, metaverse solves the problem of commuting, making it possible to join classes from anywhere in the world. Whether a student comes from another city or even abroad, their main concern is transportation and housing. In such cases, the ability to study from home or any other place saves both time and money.

Another argument supporting metaverse educational institutions is safety. Many insist that school and college grounds are rather unsafe. Large crowds of people tend to attract



criminals with all the wrong motivations. Even with growing investments in security, the chances of such incidents are still high.

Moreover, digital classes can diminish the hazard of physical abuse that comes from bullying. Unlike real-life studying spaces, virtual ones protect students and faculty members from any kind of physical harm. Although the risk of verbal and psychological abuse remains the same, the studying space becomes much more comfortable. Few people would disagree that a safe environment boosts the academic performance and general psychological state of the students.

On the contrary, there are several arguments against the transition to metaverse schooling. To begin with, a fully virtual process leads to lower quality of communication. Those who believe in the necessity of face-to-face contact, argue that avatars are unable to replace real people (Eisikovits par. 15). At least half of the information we receive is through non-verbal signals. How is the entirely artificial environment going to affect interpersonal relationships? Since Metaverse is an innovative concept, it is rather complicated to make any predictions. The level of technology has to evolve enough to reflect body language (Eisikovits par. 15). Otherwise, expressing thoughts and feelings may become a troublesome task. For instance, the absence of eye contact often causes regular miscommunications with peers and teachers.

A further complication is the issue of discipline and focus. The main concern of those who oppose studying in the metaverse is the expanding number of virtual distractions. Considering that many students already have smartphone addiction, they might continue the same behavioral pattern in digital classrooms (Eisikovits par. 12). VR gaming and online shopping would be a temptation for bored teens and Universities will not be able to stop them \. As an illustration, the massive shift to online lectures in 2020 resulted in a decrease in the level



of students' academic performance ("75% Of College Students Unhappy With Quality Of Elearning During Covid-19" par. 5). While staying home, many treated school with less responsibility than usual. Hence, with further immersion into the vibrant alternative world, the damage could be irreversible.

To summarize, the idea of educational institutions in the meta-universe has both advantages and drawbacks. This concept appears to be superior when it comes to accessibility and safety. At the same time, there are issues with student communication and attention. In my view, metaverse schools have a right to exist, despite all the criticism. The important thing is to make thorough preparations before implementing the idea into life.

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