**Technology in classroom**

Have you ever used a cell phone in classroom? About a year ago, I was sitting in my first class as a high school student. My friends and I were really bored because our teacher was late getting to class from a meeting. So, we decided to take out our cell phones and play games on it. We thought that our teacher would be fine with us using cell phones in class since we were in high school. But, as you could guess we were wrong and our cell phones got taken away. The teacher told us that cell phones are harmful to the learning experience because most people are unable to focus on two things at the same time. Thus, I, just like everyone else in my school, was restricted from using any kind of electronic devices in classroom for the next four years of high school.

However, the first day of college was different. In my first class, there were about 800 people. Out of those 800 people, about 90% of the people were using either a cell phone or a laptop while the professor was going over the syllabus. I, on the other hand, was aware of my high school experience, and thus decided not to use my cell phone. However, about halfway through the class, the professor encouraged us to use laptops to take notes. As soon as he said this, I started to think that it would be easier to take notes on laptop for every single class. So, I decided to carry my laptop with me to all the classes the next day. However, I experienced something unusual again. The professor in my last class of the day told us that we are not allowed to use any kind of electronic devices in classroom. This surprised me because I thought that professors in college don’t care whether you use laptop or cell phones in classroom.

After a week in college, I began to wonder why are some professors are letting me use electronic devices in classroom, while my high school teachers and other professors restrict me from using laptops in class. How does the type or size of class, and student’s age affect professor’s decision to let students use electronic devices? Why are some professors more restrictive or permissive to students using technology devices in classroom?

To begin, the use of electronic devices is permitted based on the type of class. There are many different types of class offered at both high school and college level from math to science to English. While it may be useful to use cell phones and laptops in some of these classes, it is extremely disadvantageous to use these devices in other classes.

When I was a junior in high school, my Spanish teacher allowed us to use cell phones in classroom. However, we were only allowed to see what a Spanish work meant in English or vice-versa. This was the first and the only time we were allowed to use any kind of electronic device in high school. On the other hand, it would have been inefficient to use laptop or cell phone in an English class in high school. For the most part in English, you are either having discussions or reading a book. If a cell phone were to be permitted in this situation, the students would be unable to pay attention on what they are working on. Thus, it would be unproductive to use electronic device in an English class.

Similarly, there are certain types of classes in college where electronic devices would be helpful, while others in which they would not. For example, in a class where professor is giving lecture using a slideshow, it would be useful if students had that slideshow opened on their devices as reference or to take notes. In this case, it is much easier to follow what a professor has to say. On the other hand, if a student is in a discussion class, it would be inappropriate to open up a laptop or cell phone while everyone else is participating in a discussion or taking a quiz. This shows how the type of class affects the use of electronic devices in that class.

Additionally, the size of the class plays an important role in determining whether an electronic device is being used in that class or not. Through the first two weeks of college, I have noticed that professors in a big lecture hall would allow students to use laptops in class. They believe that it is more important to take notes rather than ask questions during lectures. On the contrary, professors in a smaller classroom setting prohibit students from using any kind of electronic device. They think that it is important for a student to be an active participant in class discussions. Therefore, the use of anything outside of books for a reference in unacceptable. All in all, professors with larger class let their students use laptops, while others don’t.

Finally, the professors tend to be more restrictive or permissive based on the age of the student. Most students start using electronic devices during the last few years of their elementary education. While students who are older tend to use their cell phones more, the social media is causing youth to do the same thing. Thus, it is increasingly difficult for professors to decide whether they should be more restrictive to younger students or older.

When I was in school, I began to realize that professors are more permissive to older students than to younger students. For example, the first time I used cell phone was in middle school. Similar to millions of other people, I have the tendency to use something while its brand new. So, I used to take my cell-phone to school everyday against my parents’ consent. Even though we were completely restricted from using cell-phones, I cautiously used it. After a few days, my teacher saw me use it, and confiscated the device. She required my parents to sign the form, and only then she handed my cell-phone back. I described a similar experience at the beginning of the paper that happened during the first day of high school. In that situation, the teacher only kept my device for that particular class. At the end of class, she casually warned me not to use cell-phone in class and gave it back to me. In comparison to middle school, the high school teacher was much more lenient. This shows that teachers tend to be more permissive to older students than to younger students. As this event suggested, the age of a student plays an important factor in determining whether an electronic device will be permitted or not.

Even though most professors have genuine reasons of allowing or disallowing students to use electronic devices in classroom, there are some professors who do not. For example, my teacher in a high school computer science class did not let us use laptops in class. This class was designed for us to learn writing computer codes. If we had computers, we could have written codes more efficiently than writing them on paper. Our teacher thought that we would do non class related stuff, and thus, prohibited us from using computers. It does not make sense that a teacher would disallow students to use computers when the objectives of the class are clearly related to learning computer language. Thus, there are some professors who allow or disallow students to use technology for wrong reasons.

The issue of technology in classroom has been hot recently because of controversies surrounding it. I developed interest in this topic recently in college when I found out that electronic devices were restricted in some classes, while allowed in other classes. These caused a lot of confusion in my head because there are some classes in which I strongly feel the urge to pull out my cell-phone to take picture of notes or take my laptop to type notes, while there are other classes in which I would hate to interrupt someone who is talking by using cell-phone. In conclusion, I want to know more about why are some professors letting me use electronic devices in classroom, while my high school teachers and other professors restrict me from using laptops and cell-phones in class? How does class size/type affect their decision? How does the age of the student play a role in professor being restrictive or permissive?

In order to answer these questions, I need to conduct a research. There is a specific procedure I will use to research this issue. First, I will design a survey question of whether or not technology devices should be allowed in classroom. I will have my professors take this survey to know what is the general view on the issue. Next, I will personally interview professors to know more about their perspective on why electronic devices should or should not be used in classroom. By conducting a survey first and interviewing the professors next, I would be able to analyze arguments from both sides of the issue. Thus, I would be able to state my view on the topic clearly.