Evaluating an Argument Essay Assignment

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**Introduction**

Social media has become an essential part of life for many people, and the information about people can be found on their profile without asking anyone. The law enforcement officers being part of the society also use the social networks for in their life. Just like every other person, personal information about the law enforcement officers could be found on these social media profiles and this information can also be used as a liability by criminals. The challenge of social media needs to address positively to avoid any difficulties faced in the future. The issue could be resolved if different state department acknowledges the existence and effects of social media. Departments must realize the fact that the social profile of a law enforcement officer must be different than that of an average person. They are the representatives of a state department. The law enforcement officers should not be careless with the information that they provide to the general public which could be damaging to the state's reputation.

**Discussion**

To understand the situation the law enforcement department must first understand the media itself. Stuart (2013) noted that social like any other media is used for communication and in the present time, it is more engaging than any other form of media. "Media is a means of communication with the intent to influence a wide audience" (n.p). Profile plays an important part in any social media site, and it serves as the base where all the information is stored. The information that is visible on any social media profile can be controlled, and it depends on the user what information is intended to be visible or what should be kept hidden. Stuart (2013) noted that each year the amount of social network users is increasing making the information more insecure with each increase. "Twitter grew from 75 million registered users in 2010 to 175 million in 2011. Facebook experienced similar growth, rising from approximately 350 million active users worldwide in 2010 to near 640 million a year later" (n.p). It is up to the users to hide the information that could be damaging to them. The law enforcement officers should protect the information regarding their employment because they are the direct representative of the state and their choices might have an impact on the general perception of people regarding the state's departments.

Social media does not only be seen as the source of general information, and the acknowledgment of social media on a deeper level can yield a deeper understanding public. Stuart (2013) noted that social media could serve as the primary channel of communication between the law enforcement agencies and society that can reveal information. "Citizens can receive real-time information, as well as an electronic method of asking questions, making suggestions, and providing tips that help solve crimes" (n.p). Social media can provide information to the investigators thus speeding up their rate of the investigation. The criminals might share their activities and ware bouts on the internet which can be of great help in apprehending the criminals. Stuart (2013) noted that the information shared on social media could act as a double-edged sword and the knowledge that law enforcement officers provide about themselves can become their weak points. "Law enforcement agencies must understand the problems that can arise when work and personal life converge in social media" (n.p). When the officers of law share posts regarding their professional experience on a private space such as social media then it can blur the line between the two responsibilities.

The law enforcement officers post different events of their life on their social networking site. Such information could cause people to question the behavior and duties of the officers. Stuart (2013) noted that professional experience should not be mixed with personal life as seen in the posts of many police officers who post their pictures with evidence before the evidence is officially revealed. "When exposed, inappropriate information may lead to undesirable attention from the media and other parties" (n.p). The information found on the social networks of different police officers can be used against them if such information helps in proving a government official guilty than it can damage the repetition of the institution as well. The public would not be so welcoming of the data as the criteria of selection can come into question further damaging the image of a state institute. Criminals can also use the information to track down the law enforcement personals.

Officers cannot be expected to cut themselves off from social media or the internet. Stuart (2013) noted that law enforcement personals are expected to live a normal life, but there should be criteria. "Law enforcement agencies must establish criteria for social media usage that balances the constitutional rights of officers while protecting the integrity of departments and investigations" (n.p). At the present state, there is less than 50% of the state institute responding to this crisis, and only a small percentage of institute provide special training to address the problem. Stuart (2013) noted that the restrictions need to be focused on preventing the officers to share their professional duty on social media. The officers have the right to retain their personal life. "Government entities can restrict the speech of their employees under certain circumstances" (n.p). Administration of different government institute must decide the public and official information, and they will be the one regulating such information among employees. The official must also monitor and decide its formal relationship with the public through social media. Officers need proper guidance to realize what is appropriate to share on social media and what is not if the officers know the utilization of social media conclusively without compromising the integrity of their department than it will prevent many internet related loopholes of the department.

**Conclusions**

Social media has become an essential part of daily life for many people, and it can provide information about a person without even the knowledge of that person. The increasing users are increasing the risk of security for these platforms of law enforcement personnel and the general public. Law enforcement department must take steps to reduce the amount of unnecessary information that leaks through social media. The policies regarding social media platforms need to be created to avoid any complication. The social media should be used as a tool for the betterment of departments instead of being its liability. The law informant officials need to be careful while revealing any information because they are the representatives of the state.

**References**

Stuart, M.S., R. (2013). Social Media: Establishing Criteria for Law Enforcement Use. Retrieved from https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/social-media-establishing-criteria-for-law-enforcement-use