

Effect of Social Media in the Academic Life of Students.

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 10 November, 2018.

Keywords

Social media, higher education, teaching and learning

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ABSTRACT

In 21st century use of information technology explored to a greater extent to improve the quality of higher education. Social media have significant impact to improve the quality of higher education. Social media helps to share information among friends and teachers in higher education in different forms like text, audio, video, image and pdf. The students experience that social media has played an important role towards their study habits. It helps to improve their learning and skill outcomes. Since today's education is dominated by mobile devices and applications, it is necessary to rethink the academic work environments based on social media tools and applications like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, in accordance with the learning needs, skills, and competencies of students. But sometimes due to excessive use of social media also cause to downgrade the result due to distraction of attention of the students towards the studies.

1. Introduction

Social media constitutes a community of "network-self" learners. This online and social media learning attitude involves use of computing and internet technology. With the emerged use of social media tools, a large number of such institutions are embracing this new ecology of information offered by social media. More and more colleges and universities from all over the world are transitioning from traditional teaching/learning towards social media teaching/learning. The term "Social media" is defined as the application that allows users to converse and interact with each other to create, edit and share new forms of textual, visual and audio content, and to categorize, label and recommend existing forms of content. Social media therefore denotes to the wide collection of Internet based and mobile services that connect people together to communicate, participate, collaboratively interact, discuss and exchange ideas and information on an online community. Commonly used social media devices in higher education are web 2.0 technology, facebook, youtube, blog, linkedIn and MOOC courses. In India National Programme in Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) has launched more than 100 online courses and more than 10,000 registered sessions. Government of India is planning to recognize online certificates at par with that of regular courses. By considering the importance of social media, the paper is divided into the following sections like literature review, different types of social media in education, use of social media in academics, and privacy and issues of social media in academics.

2. Literature Review

A literature review is conducted from the period 2005 to 2014 to study the use of social media in higher education. A study by Fishman et. al (2005) also indicated that college students produce tremendous volume of writing through various social media tools such as blogs, emails and other social media environments. According to Boyd & Ellison (2007), Social networking sites are web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile

within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The sharing of information ranges from news, debates, gossips, feelings or statement of mind, opinions, research etc.

Conversely, Banquil et al. (2009), found a continuing drop of grades among students who use social networking sites. This was supported by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), who found a significant negative relationship between Facebook use and academic performance. They concluded that students who use Facebook spend fewer hours per week studying on an average than Facebook non users and this resulted in lower mean grade point averages (GPAs). Ahn (2011) adds that Social Network Sites (SNS) provide a platform for the youth to participate in communities that help them to learn and practice skills within a particular knowledge area. Junco (2012) examined the relationship among numerous measures of frequency of Facebook use with time spent preparing for class and overall GPAs. Hierarchical linear regression analysis indicates that time spent on Facebook was strongly and significantly negatively correlated with overall GPA.

Davis et al (2012), refer to social media technology (SMT) as web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage and share new user generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication. Through this platform, individuals and organizations create profiles, share and exchange information on various activities and interests. Examples of these social media platforms both on the web and mobile application include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp, Instagram, blogs etc. Deng and Tavares (2013) also concluded that web-based discussions can contribute to the development of students' reflective ability and critical thinking skills. Also, compared to face-to-face interaction, students are more willing to voice their views or even disagreement and are more attuned to others' opinions in online discussions. According to Apeanti and Danso (2014), students believed that it would be fun for their lecturers to use social media. Also, their grades

would be better if they could contact lecturers through social media and lecturers should hold lecture hours on social media.

3. Types of Social Media in Education

Different forms of social media are internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wiki, podcast, photo or video sharing, rating and social bookmarking. Web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share new user generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication. Popular social network platforms on mobile and web applications include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp, Instagram, snap chat, Google Plus etc. Social media types can be categorized as follows (Wikipedia):

- Collaborative project (ex. Wikipedia)
- Blogs and microblogs (twitter)
- Content communities (youtube)
- Social networking sites (facebook)
- Virtual game worlds (world of warcraft)
- Virtual social worlds (second life)

Technologies used in social media include: blog, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-posting, email, instant messaging.

i)Blogs :Blogs are easily created and updateable websites that allow authors to publish to the Internet instantly, hence allowing instructors and students to communicate easily. Basically a blog is an online journal in which pages are usually displayed in reverse chronological order.

ii) Wikis : A wiki is a collective website where any participant is allowed to modify any page or create a new page. Anyone can add and edit what has already been published. One well known example is Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia that makes use of wiki technology.

iii) Social bookmarking : Bookmarking sites allow users to organize and share links to websites. This enables users to produce a searchable personalized internet. Examples include reddit, Stumble Upon and Digg.

iv) Social network sites: Social network sites are public web-based services that allow users to develop a personal profile, identify other users with whom they have a connection, read and react to postings made by other users on the site, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly. These web based services allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system. Among the most popular are Facebook and LinkedIn.

v)Status update services : This kind is also known as micro blogging services, status update services such as Twitter allow people to share short updates about people or events and to see updates tweeted by others. These are limited list that are certain to revolution quickly, probably could be by our own contributions to the field like messaging, music-sharing, crowd-sourcing, and VoIP.

4. Use of social Media in Academics

The usage of social networking according to its support in academic activity includes the following :

- Task Assignment
- Announcement
- Class Rescheduling
- Task/schedule negotiation
- Examination
- Resource Material (searching/sharing)
- Searching and solving question papers on different subjects available of different universities
- Others (entertain, communication, information update)

The Social Media can be useful in all kinds of educations. The Content communities and Blogs can act as a digital library. It can provide useful information and contents which are not available by nearest resources. Content communities can provide both visual and text information. You Tube like Content Community members are providing lots of education programs. Written communication on cyberspace enables students to take part in discussions at a time convenient to them and articulate their ideas in more carefully thought-out and structured ways. Students are able to formulate group discussions to exchange ideas and communicate to their teachers as well as appeal to their friends about assignments on social network sites. Also YouTube has increased participation, personalization (customization) and productivity. YouTube also improved student' s digital skills and provided opportunity for peer learning and problem solving. Online communities are also helping the students in their education. They provide instant communications between the members. Active participation in online communities of practice can produce significant value for educators, students, schools and districts. The usage of social network media in higher education can vary from marketing media, information media, communication media, feedback, complain, announcement, sharing, task assignment and examination.

5. Social Media Privacy and Issues

While using social media, students need to remember following things :

- Since social media is public in nature and the decision to post videos, pictures, thoughts, experiences, and observations to Social Networking sites is personal, hence a single act can create far reaching ethical consequences for individuals.
- Students and youngsters are sometimes not mindful of what are private and public in Social Networking sites. Several issues and concerns are being publicized for the students to be aware of the risks of posting private information on the Social Networks.
- Social networks distract the attention and concentration of the students toward learning and converts it towards non educational activities such as useless and unnecessary chatting.
- Social media also included criminal activities such as identity theft and fake contacts which is prevalent today. cyberbullying is a category of bullying that occurs in the digital realm or medium of electronic

text. It is any behavior performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others

- Individuals' private information are publicly displayed on some of these social networks and malicious people take advantage and perpetrate all kinds of harassment.
- Most of the students engage in the use of social media for socializing activities rather than for academic purposes.

6. Conclusion

In this era fundamental changes in education are brought by virtual worlds and augmented reality. Social media has boundless potential to improve quality of higher education. It helps to improve content delivery based upon user semantics

and also support present day requirement of educational institutions like students experience and their placement. Social networks have become an integral part of student social life. Social networks are now been seen as learning platforms or communities that could be utilized to enhance student engagement and performance. Social media generate new opportunities to engage students in higher education as they are remarkably effective at connecting people and facilitating the exchange of information. Students can make use of the interaction services, blogging services, group services in their studies and also use social media effectively for search for colleges and career opportunities. It is the responsibility of the student to make the right decision in relation to the use of social media networks. Students should be aware regarding the use of social media for the excellence in their study and should avoid distraction of attention caused by the use of social media which could have serious consequences on the academic life of students.

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