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Internet: A Treasure Box for Teachers and Students

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ABSTRACT

In the past there were limited resources for learning. Books were the prominent resources and they could be borrowed and studied. Definitely books are also the best source in the present era. Meanwhile the technological growth increased rapidly and the world has become globally interconnected. In this digital world one should be able to use technical inventions properly. Digital literacy has become inseparable part of everyone's life. Traditional methods of teaching-learning can be assisted with the help of ICT (Information and Communication Technology). Internet, interconnected network of computer servers, can be brought into play as the teaching-learning tool by the teachers as well as students constructively. With the minimum technological knowhow as well as basic technical equipment one can access internet. Internet can be a great assistance as well as resource to both teachers and students. It is the fact that Internet has brought a tremendous change in the teaching-learning process. Thus, this paper is an endeavor to create awareness among the teachers and the students regarding the effective use of internet in teaching-learning process.

1. Introduction

Bill Gates states that *"The internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow."* Technological growths as well as inventions are significant in the development of every human being. There have been so many inventions in various sectors like transportation, medical, information exchange, banking, administration, security, government, etc. Internet, being the greatest invention of technology and globally interconnected network system, provides all sorts of information to everyone. The word 'internet' is the blended word of two words: 'interconnected' and 'network'. It is the globally interconnected computer servers worldwide. It has become the part and parcel of everyone's life. Technology has brought the world close and made it the 'Global Village'. The world has come on the tip of the finger. In short, Internet is the key factor that has made it possible.

Specifically internet facility is a kind of treasure box for all teachers and students. All sorts of information related to sub-topics, topics and subjects are made available on internet. It can be accessed in any corner of the world. It is the prime duty of every teacher to make the students aware of this treasure box and guide them how to manipulate it constructively. Both teachers and students can upgrade their knowledge. If internet is used as a teaching-learning tool, learning of any subject would become the most enjoyable activity. Definitely technical knowhow is the basic requirement for using internet properly. In brief, it is crystal clear that internet can be utilized as a resource for the betterment of the students with positive approach.

2. What can We find in this Treasure Box?

The below mentioned is the essential treasure for teachers and students which can be utilized for collecting the information and knowledge of various subjects.

1) MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

MOOC stands for 'Massive Open Online Courses'. These are the free courses developed by experts from various renowned faculties from worldwide prominent educational institutions and universities. The following are the features of MOOCs. MOOCs are the recent development in the field of academia. It started in 2006 and now it has become a popular way of learning. There are a number of MOOCs providers. Some of the MOOCs providers are edX, Alison, coursera, FutureLearn, Khan Academy, OpenLearning, openSAP, WizIq, etc.

- Unlimited courses and updated regularly
- Focus to reach in all the corners of the world
- Open Content
- Free of Charge
- Affordable
- Virtually available
- Interactive
- Assessment – Scripted assessment and Feedback
- Self-paced with start and end dates
- Available in a variety of subjects
- Instructors guide the learners

2) NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning):

NPTEL is an acronym for 'National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning'. It is an initiative by seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT Bombay, Delhi, Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Madras and Roorkee) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) for creating course contents in engineering and science. E-learning is possible with the help of various web based as well as video courses. Learning material can be downloaded from the NPTEL website and can be used as per convenience.

3) Shodhganga

The Shodhganga@INFLIBNET Centre provides a display place for research students to deposit their Ph.D. theses. It makes all the research available to the entire scholarly community in open access. The depository has the ability to capture, index, store, distribute and preserve the data submitted by the researchers. This can be very useful and informative for the teachers and students to keep themselves in touch with the recent developments in all subjects. All the research work uploaded on the website can be downloaded and saved for the further reference. Thus it is a reservoir of all research done in India.

4) ePathshala

To promote ICT based education ePathshala has been developed for showcasing and circulating all educational e-resources. It includes textbooks, audio, video, periodicals, and a variety of other digital resources. ePathshala is a joint initiative of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Govt. of India and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Mobile app is also designed to achieve unbiased, quality, comprehensive education and lifelong learning for all and bridging the digital divide. Students, Teachers, Educators and Parents can access eBooks through multiple technological platforms. ePathshala also allows users to carry as many books as their device supports. Features of these books allow users to pinch, select, zoom, bookmark, highlight, navigate, share, listen to text using text to speech (TTS) apps and make notes digitally. Such an extensive and vast ocean of knowledge is really a gift that can be accessed only because of internet.

5) SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active –Learning for Young Aspiring Minds)

SWAYAM is a dynamic platform that assists hosting of all the courses, taught in classrooms from Class 9 till post-graduation to be accessed by any user, at any place and at any time. The features of the courses are interactive and informative and free of cost. They are developed by the best teachers and subject matter experts. The courses hosted on SWAYAM are in 4 quadrants – (1) video lecture, (2) specially prepared reading material that can be downloaded/printed (3) self-assessment tests through tests and quizzes and (4) an online discussion forum for clearing the doubts. Steps have been taken to enrich the learning experience by using audio-video and multi-media and state of the art pedagogy / technology. Nine National Coordinators have been appointed in order to maintain the best quality content which are being produced and delivered. Learners who want a SWAYAM certificate should register for the final proctored exams that come at a fee and attend in-person at designated centres on specified dates. Eligibility for the certificate will be announced on the course page and learners will get certificates only if these criteria are matched.

They are;

- AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) for self-paced and international courses
- NPTEL (National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning) for Engineering
- UGC (University Grants Commission) for non technical post-graduation education
- CEC (Consortium for Educational Communication) for under-graduate education
- NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) for school education
- NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling) for school education
- IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) for out-of-school students
- IIMB (Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore) for management studies
- NITTTR (National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research) for Teacher Training programme

6) YouTube

YouTube is an American video-sharing website. Videos can be uploaded and they can be utilized by the teachers and the students related to their subjects. A variety of videos as well as video lectures can be watched online. They can also be downloaded and stored for future reference also. The quality of the contents must be evaluated before using and recommending them to the students. Besides, YouTube channels can be started to upload videos related to specific subjects. Such videos are really useful to clear doubts and gain knowledge. They can also be used to reinforce the knowledge. One can search the topic on YouTube and gets directed to a variety of videos. Both the teachers and students can make fruitful use of YouTube. It provides very interesting as well as informative videos including simulations, diagrams, graphs, charts, etc. It should be used as a resource for teaching-learning process.

7) Simulations

Simulations are the imitations of the processes. They can be used to clarify the concepts of the students. The teachers can search such simulations on internet and you can show them in the class. Simulations are very supportive in the technological field. The students of engineering can utilized such simulations. They are accessible free of cost on internet. Simulations can be very useful for clearing the concepts.

8) Academic Blogs

Academic Blogs are useful on internet where one can get information, ideas, and subject specific discussions. Doubts can be cleared on academic blogs through interactions. It is also the duty of the teacher to identify such blogs and then to be recommended to the students. These blogs are started with specific aims and objectives. They may work to collect data and information, to do analysis, to know views and counterviews, to share new discoveries in the field, to keep in touch with the subject, etc.

9) Educational Websites

There are a number of educational websites that provides knowledge in a variety of subjects. Some of them focus only on particular subjects. In depth information is provided on such websites. Besides, such resources are useful to both the teachers and the students. Online practice can also be done on these websites. Online quizzes, practice assignments, case studies, simulations, interactive sessions, videos, and

discussions are available on educational websites. The example of this is the website of BBC (www.bbc.co.uk) provides authentic information to learn English.

10) Virtual Laboratories

Virtual Laboratories, an ICT based project, are designed to provide remote-access to the labs. Virtual Labs project is the scheme of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India under the aegis of National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT). This project is an association activity of twelve participating institutes and IIT Delhi is the coordinating institute. The following are the aims of this project.

a) All students and Faculty Members of Science and Engineering Colleges who do not have access to good lab-facilities and/or instruments.
b) High-school students, whose inquisitiveness will be triggered, possibly motivating them to take up higher-studies. Researchers in different institutes who can collaborate and share resources.
c) Different engineering colleges who can benefit from the content and related teaching resources.

Virtual Labs do not require any additional infrastructural setup for conducting experiments at user premises. The simulations-based experiments can be accessed remotely via internet. In addition to this are other virtual labs from other countries also. They can also be used to perform the experiments.

11) Online Books

Many books are made available in soft copy online free of cost and paid also. They can be read and stored for future reference. Some books may be referred to by the teachers and students. It is an easy way to get books online. There is a separate link given on internet for books.

3. Conclusion

Stephen Hawkings rightly said that *"We are all connected by the internet, like neurons in a giant brain."* It is remarkable that internet is only the key that has unlocked the treasure to the world. It is never ending resource for teachers and students. Such a great invention of technology must be employed and manipulated constructively in the field of teaching-learning. Selection and gradation of the available data on internet should be cross-checked with the authentic sources. Internet helps to share information quickly and can be accessed at any place, anytime and anyone. With minimal technological knowhow one can handle and access internet on desktop, laptop, mobile phones and tablets. It is observed that such instruments are handy to most of the teachers, students, and people. In a nutshell, this paper is knocking to every teacher and student to make use of this treasure box called 'INTERNET'. It is a huge platform to explore your knowledge and make teaching learning process effective, dynamic, interactive and interesting.

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