



SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: A VERSATILE PLATFORM FOR MODERN CLASSROOM TEACHING

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ABSTRACT:

Social networking has become an important part of everyone's life across all the ages for communication purpose. It has evolved as a most powerful communication tool over the past decade, for sharing information in the society. Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are used in a number of areas beyond their leisure use. This paper focuses on the use of SNSs in classroom's teaching-learning environment and its impact on academic practices. Due to the very casual nature of social networking usage, the serious concern over its integration in a learning environment is doubtful but there are many and varied potential positive outcomes of its use in modern classroom. Its effectiveness as a good communication tool is already apparent in the millions who use SNS to communicate on a daily basis. So it is feasible for an educator to create a learns cape - an environment for formal and informal learning in the classroom adhering to the educational guidelines. This paper entails creating new learning ecology, and exploring the challenges of technology experts and educators in delivering an innovative and effective approach to education

KEYWORDS:

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES, LEARNING.

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INTRODUCTION

People of all ages have very easy access to internet on their mobile phones which has made the use of various internet applications very accessible to them. People use internet most widely to access social networking sites (SNSs) out of the wide range of internet applications. They make their profiles on social networking sites for getting entry into the online world of virtual communities where they post information on various topics and in varied ways. On social networking sites, they also get opportunities to entertain themselves with videos, music, online games and daily news. SNSs are used mostly by the youngsters so significant impact of SNSs is very much apparent on their psychological and social development. Users post information about their educational institution, organization, work, mobile phone number, email address and other personal information like their interests and the music they like through the functions provided for sharing messages with other users. They use real-time messaging and video sharing also.

The booming development of use of SNSs has made people accustomed of sharing every bit of their daily life on social sites. They talk about their interests, experiences and maintain contact with family, relatives and friends online (Leung 2002; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher 2003). The primary use of personal computers is mainly establishing contact with friends and relatives through online social interaction in terms of time spent (Hamburger & Artzi

2003; Morahan-Martin & Schumacher 2003). Amid of all these social activities, relationships are managed via Internet with the friends and relatives who are originally met in real life (Ledbetter et al. 2011; Parket et al.2009). A versatile platform is offered by SNS for people to come together online to share information.

There has been a significant increase in the amount of SNSs usage in recent years. The massive increase in the use of social media for the expansion of social network sites is not a new idea to people of all ages now but its potential as a significant phenomenon with of teachers' preparation for the 21st century is relatively a new idea. SNSs can be significantly implied to K-12 teaching and learning process. This information and communication technology can be used for interaction between teachers and students, teachers and parents and teachers and teachers to facilitate and co- create the content of curricular and co-curricular activities for young learners.

Many social network sites such as Orkut, MySpace and Friendster, were used by users at beginning of social network sites in 2002 but with the advent of Facebook around 2007 it became the mainstream social network site (Boyd and Ellison 2007). The most popular social network site in the present time is Facebook with more than 2.94 billion monthly active users worldwide. It was developed originally by a sophomore Mark Zuckerberg of Harvard University in 2004 for university and college students as a

way to connect with one another. Users spend around 30 minutes a day on the site and more than 1.4 billion are users who log in at least once a day. According to Meta (2022), Facebook has more than 2.94 billion monthly active users worldwide. Facebook has become vital to the students of school, college and university for sharing information on daily basis. According to recent statistics of usage in the United States, Teenager's social media practice is governed by Facebook; 78% of youngsters aged between 12-17 were reported using Facebook in 2014 (Elliott 2014). Learning platforms have been provided by Facebook to number of users. Pedagogy and learning applications fabricated to meet the needs of young users will help bridging the gap between the informal and formal learning with suitable learning opportunities among students' on daily basis for arranging appropriate interaction among them on curricular and co-curricular subject matter.

Many teachers' educators and teachers are not confident with the use of technology in assessing the impact it for meaningful integration (Crook 2012). Even experienced teachers who are using technology feels difficulty in assessing the process and product of students' projects based on the use of Internet or in the identification of online applications helpful in developing their capacity for learning (Greenhow 2006). Teachers are required to "re-imagine" the conventional illustrations and standards of teaching-learning and methods of assessment in order to endorse teaching- learning which helps in providing constructive and productive feedback for boosting the use of emerging technologies for teaching-learning and helping them understanding the successful ways of learning including participation in the feedback exchange inside and outside the traditional classroom (Windschitl 2002, p. 151)

An extensive research has been made on the learning features of students in higher education born since near the beginning of 1980's and are known as 'Millennials'. Prensky (2001) believes that the education systems which is not contemporary will fail to facilitate the makeup of these students which has been changed radically. The 'digital natives' (to whom all digital things are natural and are well-versed with technology) are totally different from 'digital immigrants' (who are in process of getting familiar with technology). Prensky states that students of 21st century are technocrat and are loaded with the wealth of using technology that they "think and process information differently from their predecessors." Number of studies are available on the attitudes and behaviour pattern of digital students. Students of 21st century possess the below shown characteristics:

- They are multi-tasker and do parallel processing.
- They aspire to learn using multimedia.
- They prefer interactive learning to studying individually.
- They want pragmatic learning.
- They wish to learn through creation, self-

discovery and self-organization.

Good visual-spatial skills are exhibited by millennials, they have crave interactivity and preference to teamwork. Negative aspects of learning attributes have also been highlighted in research such as poor ability in evaluating the authenticity of the content provided online, dumpy attention span and fall in literacy (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). As this is the era where knowledge is the dynamics of economic and social development, the importance of technology cannot be ignored for entering into the network of knowledge. Society which ignores the importance of technology "will be left behind" because the technology adopted by a society moulds it. (Johnson & Johnson, 2004)..

CONCLUSION

Technology must be adopted by the educators in an endeavour to make teaching-learning process an engaging style for modern learners whereas some analyst are worried about the superficial use of social software in learning. Kapp (2006) presages that breakdown in using it as an effective tool of teaching and learning will result in the dissatisfaction of the modern students.. "Conducting traditional classroom lectures for these gamers isn't going to cut it and neither is our multiple-choice question, e-learning module format. We better stop bad mouthing SNS and start using these technologies or by passed up by the 'digital natives'" (Kapp, 2006).

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