



Social Media Platforms and Learning Outcomes in Digital Era: An Overview

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Abstract: Social media is becoming an essential tool for human communication, sharing, exchanging, commenting, discussing and creating information and knowledge. Social media tools are rapidly changing the communication landscape and its advent is having major implications for the way students learn and the way teachers teach. The influence of social media on the teaching and learning environment has been increasing over the years, and its use has the potential to enhance teaching resources, positively influence debates, cooperation and so on. In order to stimulate collaboration, knowledge construction and thinking skills, educators and researchers are experimenting with social media technologies. This paper aims to find a knowledge gap in adoption of social network sites in teaching and learning process in formal sites with effective application in educational system and provide direction for subsequent research and as a guide for future research on social network sites in education.

Key Words: Social networking sites, social media, pedagogy, ICTs.

1. INTRODUCTION :

Communication tools to facilitate teaching and learning activities have been revolutionized by the emergence of social networking sites. Over the last few years, social networking has become one of the most important communication tools among people, existing through the web, providing accessibility to an enormous number of people. The use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) in teaching and learning has a positive impact on the adoption of SNS and opens the door to the new days of learning and teaching. The main focus on social networking is on identity, network infrastructure, privacy concerns, technological issues and the need to use it as a tool for teaching and learning (Kevin, P. B., Lori B. H., and Bethany, V. S. (2010).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the use of social media/social learning in higher education. New technologies, commonly referred to as Web 2.0, have created a growing public and academic phenomenon, changing how organizations and people create, engage and share existing or newly produced information through multi-way communication. The increasing use of social media interfaces through computers and mobile devices encourages user interaction from platform to personal engagement (Teclehaimanot & Hickman, 2011). The latest interest in social networking sites by pupils raises concerns about privacy and security in educational settings (Brady, K. P., Holcomb, L. B., and Smith, B. V. 2010). The advent of social networks that focus on teaching and learning, like Ning, Elgg and Edmodo, offers students and teachers the opportunity to address privacy and security concerns (Kevin, P. B., Lori B. H. and Bethany, V. S. 2010).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

Social media tools have created a platform for improving the educational process. (Urista, M.A., Dong. Q, and Day. K.D. 2009) Social media tools are useful to enrich the learning and teaching process with text, video, and audio materials, also it supports the learning process of students and supports teachers in addition to the evaluation process. Students have a great interest in social media.



The social media sites, which are mostly public web-based services, allow users to set up a personal profile and to read and react to the posts on the site (Boyd. D.M. and Ellison. N.B. 2007). Individuals should limit the information posted on media sites, knowing what is appropriate for public consumption. This includes favorite books, films, birth dates, relationship status and so on (Wheeler, S., Yeoman's, P. and Wheeler, D. 2008). Students can blog and write for a real audience if they are reluctant to speak up in class or take part in book discussions. (Brydolf, C. 2007) New web tools that enhance learning are constantly emerging. Facebook's association with happiness seems to be more positive during college, perhaps because it is used by upperclassmen to socialize and participate in the college experience (Kalpidou, M., Costin, D., and Morris, J. 2011).

Institutions believe social media sites have value in education. In addition, a majority of respondents said social media sites were a valuable tool for collaborative learning. (Mike Moron, Jeff Seaman and Hester Tinti-Kane 2011). Social media, in the world of communication since 2005, has brought with it personal and social transformation, with reference to young people aged 13-25 using social media as a communication tool. If students could make friends outside of Twitter groups, army buddies and other traditional channels, they could collaborate more effectively in their studies. Social media can be considered the answer to this (Silius, Kari, Tervakari, Alain and Miilumäki, Tari (2009).

For educators who explore this changing landscape, they can discover the real potential of social media to fundamentally change the way they teach, giving themselves the tools to create truly personal and flexible learning environments for students.

A number of recent studies suggest that the high take-up of social media applications as a complement to formal educational settings offers new opportunities for the innovation and modernization of educational institutions and the preparation of learners for the 21st century (Redeker, C. 2009); Redeker. C., and Ala-Mutka. K. 2007). The fact that social media is familiar to almost everyone; it's free and requires minimal training is one of the main reasons for using it in the classroom. According to one of the largest surveys of social media in higher education ever conducted, universities have the potential to bring social media into the classroom and increase its use (Qualman, E. 2009; Alexander, B. and Levine, A. 2008).

3. Back Ground :

A number of scholars have developed theories on the educational potential of the use of social media, such as social networking sites, for learning (Dede 2008; Greenhow 2011a; Halverson 2011); The research highlights the potential of technology to support collaborative knowledge building; access to professional information in real time, contributing to the hybridization of professional knowledge; relationship development and peer and alumni support, especially in times of change; academic help-seeking; social and civic benefits; and the blurred boundaries between learning, social and leisure areas (Manca and Ranieri 2013).

4. Sites for Education and Social Networking :

How to integrate this technology in a meaningful way, or how to assess its impact, is still uncertain for many teachers and teacher educators (Crook 2012). It can be particularly challenging, even for experienced content and technology teachers, to assess the processes and products of students' thinking in projects that involve the Internet, or to identify how online applications might help them to develop their capacity for such assessment (Greenhow. 2006). Web-based social networks bring tools, people and materials into the school culture that can help disrupt existing routines and help teachers and students get feedback on their performance (Bransford, et. al. 1999). Using social networking can give teachers and students access to a different culture that can help them clarify beliefs and revise behaviors about teaching with technology (Greenhow. 2006).

Social Network Sites

Social Network Sites are a social media form defined by the following socio-technical features: 1) uniquely identifiable profiles consisting of user-provided content and/or system-provided data; 2) (semi-)public display of connections that can be traversed by others; and 3) features that allow users to consume, produce and/or interact with user-generated content provided by their connections on the site (Ellison and Boyd 2013, p. 7). The popularity of social networking sites is a relatively recent phenomenon, beginning in 2002 with the emergence of sites such as Friendster, My Space, and Google's Orkut, and with sites such as Facebook entering the mainstream around 2007 (Boyd and Ellison. 2007).



Social media has become a major way to communicate lately. However, social networks exist to enable communication between people regardless of distance, allowing people to easily share information, files, pictures and videos, create blogs, send messages and engage in real-time conversations. These systems are called social simply because they make it so easy and effective to communicate with friends and colleagues. In today's higher education environments, faculty, students and others collaborate to build knowledge. Popular web sites include Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Instagram, Google doc and more. These websites and social forums are ways of communicating directly with other people socially and in the media. They play a big and influential role in decision making in the global world economically, politically, socially and educationally. Social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, and so on, connect people around the world in ways that Marshall McLuhan could not have dreamed of when he popularized the term "global village" in the 1960s.

5. Information and communication technologies (IcTs) :

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are becoming increasingly widespread in our society, thus creating new conditions and opportunities for teaching and learning processes. On the one hand, the new generation of students enters university with a high level of competence in communicating via ICT, a situation that obviously facilitates the introduction of resources such as learning aids (Liccardi, I.; Ounnas, A.; Pau, R.; Massey, E.; Kinnunen, P.; Lewthwaite, S.; Midy, M.-A.; Sarkar, C. 2007). On the other hand, there appears to be widespread participation in various social networks and increasing evidence of their use to support study activities. With the pervasiveness of social networking sites in everyday life and their infiltration into educational settings, educators need to explore how best to integrate these resources into teaching and learning.

Social networking sites typically combine individual profile pages with various interaction tools such as chat, blogs, forums, etc. This fosters a sense of community and collaboration, making SNSs a viable alternative to proprietary course management systems such as Blackboard (Arnold, N.; Paulus, T. 2010). Learning in a social network is the result of various transactions, of multiple exchanges between participants. It involves switching between the roles of teacher and student.

6. Roles of Social Media :

Social media in education comprise Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Google plus, message boards and blogs, with Facebook leading the pack. In 2008-2009, 61% of the population used Facebook and this rose to 87% in 2009-10 and 98% in 2010-11. Micro-blogging has been widely used by educational institutions to keep students and teachers up to date with the latest announcements. From 0% use in 2008-09, the growth graph marked 59% in 2009-10 and finally 84% in 2011. The popularity of blogging has been increasing over the years. It had 48%, 46% and 47% usage in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. Similarly, the use of bulletin boards has remained constant from 36% in 2008-09 to 38% in 2009-10 and 37% in 2010-11. Schools are adopting technology for educational purposes and introducing social media into the classroom. This is a trend that has attracted much support and apprehension (Madhusudan G. Tandale, and Raghu Raman. 2016).

In recent years, programs that allow interaction via virtual social networks, better known as SNS, have caused a real revolution, both in terms of their rapid adoption and their expansion into other applications. Social networks have quickly become powerful spaces for interaction between different social groups, some of which are highly specialized, and where it is possible to meet people who share the same interests or to get reacquainted with others, as is the case with LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.

7. MOOCS :

A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) also works with the notion of customized learning, which is also a feature of learning via SNSs. In fact, a MOOC is offered and typically distributed through an online social network. MOOCs are part of a continuum from open educational resources to open access to academic output, offering everyone, everywhere access to content from prestigious universities and experts.

A similarity between MOOCs and SNSs is that a MOOC relies on the active engagement of several thousand 'students' who self-organize their participation according to learning goals, prior knowledge and skills, and common interests. As such, SNSs have the potential to enhance the collaborative learning opportunities offered by MOOCs. However, despite the huge potential of these communication resources among young people, their use as a learning support remains



deficient. We seem to know rather little about how to introduce them to learning in a way that really takes into account their specificities as communication tools (Cormier, D.; Siemens, G. 2010). Non-formal learning in social networks has great potential to bridge the gap between 'digital natives' (the students) and 'digital immigrants' (the teachers) (Seely Brown, J.; Adler, R.P. Minds on fire. 2008).

Interestingly, many Learning Management Systems (LMS) seem to replicate the status quo on real university campuses by making a distinction between social spaces and formal learning situations, designating classrooms and chat areas within LMS forums in the same way that you would find student bars and classrooms on a campus. In contrast, SNS seem to erase this distinction, suggesting that mixing all kinds of activities is something useful. It seems that the problems and tensions in trying to link SNSs to formal learning arise when the network structure comes into conflict with the hierarchical structure of traditional learning. The traditional approach to learning tends to be instructor-centered and the flow of content tends to be unidirectional

8. Social factors in relation to school performance :

In his study, Dr. Islam identified many factors such as prior schooling, time in school, regular attendance, and probationary status, education of father, parental support and involvement, interest in major subjects and gender of students as significant determinants of academic performance of students (Islam, Mazharul. 2015).

The most popular social media sites

1. Facebook: Provides an area for students to ask and answer questions. Students can post a question to the groups when they get home and start working on their homework for the group members to answer. It is also a great tool for teachers to use in a flipped classroom setting. You can post videos, photos, documents and other resources on the group wall and students can access them before class or when they are working on their assignments.

2. Twitter: Class announcements and reminders, as well as real-time information about class trips, can be posted quickly using Twitter. It is also a way for classes to keep track of information on any topic. For example, if a class is discussing a current event or a career topic, Twitter can provide up-to-date information without the need for extensive research. For students to interact, many organizations offer Twitter chat sessions.

3. Blogs: Blogs give students the opportunity to write and showcase their writing on a large scale instead of traditional writing projects.

4. YouTube: Like Facebook, YouTube is an excellent flipped classroom option, allowing students to view lectures and resources before class. Again, as with blogging, as the material is seen by a wider audience, students are more likely to put their best foot forward in creating a video and enjoy expressing their creativity as they connect more deeply with the course material.

5. Instagram: "Images speak louder than words. By providing a place to showcase students' hard work or even interesting details about a student, Instagram can showcase student work.

6. Google Docs: This is a popular technology for both teaching and learning. It allows pupils and teachers to work together on assignments, projects, newsletters and so on. It allows more than one person to work on a document simultaneously. Google docs can encourage teamwork.

Advanced communication tools

New communication tools enhance communication by capturing, linking and retrieving audio and visual strings.

Blogs: where authors publish their work and invite comments.

Wikis: which can encourage and facilitate 'collaborative creation' by sharing academic projects?

Social bookmarking: allows users to collect, tag and share websites of interest.

Media repositories: provide spaces and opportunities for the user community to post and share images, podcasts and videos.



Collaborative tools: Document sharing and editing capabilities are extended to multiple users through collaborative tools.

Positive and negative consequences of social media

Positive Impacts

The use of social media makes it easy for students to communicate with each other about their projects and assignments. Students can also work on group assignments from home. When social media is used in a pedagogical way, students who find it difficult to express their thoughts in the classroom can be involved in the learning process and it also helps to build up their self-confidence. By posting a message on social media, any doubts can be clarified. A site like Facebook etc. helps teachers to keep in touch with parents or to know the progress of their children. Pupils learn the skills needed for successful social networking. Social media also offer learners the freedom to connect and collaborate beyond institutional boundaries and gain workplace experience (Coleman, V. 2013; Minocha, S. 2009). Students are also taught new concepts such as online privacy.

Amid growing concern over social media's impact and influence on today's youth, a **New Pew Research Center survey** of U.S. teens finds that many young people acknowledge the unique challenges and benefits of growing up in the digital age. Today, social media use is nearly universal among teens. 1 While notable shares say they at times feel overwhelmed by the drama on social media and pressure to construct only positive images of themselves, they simultaneously credit these online platforms with several positive outcomes- including strengthening friendships, exposing them to different viewpoints and helping people their age support causes they care about.

Negative impacts

Students have become susceptible to having frequent mood swings and lacking self-control. A recent study found: "Every time someone uploads a profile picture, it immediately affects students' mood. It causes them stress, anxiety or fear. Instead of studying or interacting with people in person, students neglect their studies by spending time on social networking sites. Student's waste time that could be spent studying or learning new skills, preferring to spend hours chatting with their friends. Students may lose the ability to communicate face-to-face if they use social media regularly. This should not interfere with their studies and academic qualifications, even if students spend a lot of time socializing in an effective way. It should be borne in mind that social networking is the creation of a virtual world that is drastically different from reality.

About two-thirds of Americans (64%) say social media have a mostly negative effect on the way things are going in the country today, according to a **Pew Research Center survey** of U.S. adults conducted July 13-19, 2020. Just one-in-ten Americans say social media sites have a mostly positive effect on the way things are going and one-quarter say these platforms have a neither positive nor negative effect.

Social networking: Role of the teacher

The teacher is no longer in full control, but learners actively take responsibility for and regulate their own (collaborative) learning. Learners are encouraged to take active control, with the teacher acting as a secondary guide. Thus, they can reach their learning goals and coordinate the procedure through the agreement of rules and deadlines (Lave, J.; Wenger, E. and Situated. 1991). Rather than simply concentrating on learning content, students actively plan their activities and take on different roles within the group. This means that each member of the community can be seen as both learning and teaching. Pupils find communication with the teacher constructive and encouraging, and the teacher can support pupils by setting the right tone for discussion and helping to develop a sense of community (Vonderwell, S. 2003).

9. Conclusion :

Social networks are applications that support enthusiasm in a common space to share interests, collaborate, share resources, communicate and interact. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that the use of social networking in education can be useful in blended learning. Teachers can exchange ideas on teaching techniques, curriculum and methodology, etc. with students instantly and directly. Teachers, professors and academics use blogs on a regular basis to write about the world of education and to invite comments from all over the world. The way education has traditionally been delivered is being radically transformed by the impact of social media. Students should develop cognitive and intuitive skills to analyses time spent on social media. It is up to students to decide what is really important in their lives



and how much of this virtual life translates into real life. Despite these concerns, however, teachers believe that social media sites are valuable in the classroom. The vast majority report that videos, podcasts and wikis are valuable classroom tools, and a majority report that social media sites can be valuable tools for collaborative learning (Madhusudan G. Tandale, and Raghu Raman. 2016).

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