

Role of Social Networking Sites in Education

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Abstract

On just having a look at the changing scenario aided by the INTERNET, social media and online courses such as MOOC i.e., Massive Open Online Courses, open educational recourses etc. it can be found that today, informal learning offers an excess of learning recourses in numerous formats to various types of learners. Enthusiasts from different fields, share the information with best practices on Facebook, YouTube, Slide share, Twitter, blog etc. There are being organized free seminars on Udemy and Wiz IQ. There are informal online learning communities. Thus, the use of communication tools has modified the whole teaching-learning scenario in a marvelous way.

Keywords: Communication Tools, Education.

UTILIZATION OF TOOLS IN EDUCATION:

Communication Tools: It is a group of internet based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) observed, "Social media consists of technologies, like, blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text), slide share, Rss, sharing tools, Facebook and virtual worlds. Thus, social media facilitates social interaction, make easy collaborations across stakeholders.

Ghosh and Thakurta(2013): opined, " Social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create a highly interactive platform through which individuals and communities distribute, co-create, argue, and modify user-generated content. It introduces extensive and persistent changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals,"

TOOLS AND THEIR UTILISATION:

All these **SYNCHRONOUS TOOLS** are as follows:

Facebook: Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in February 2004 with his college roommates and fellow students. It is, in fact, the informal name of the book given to the students at the beginning of an academic session by some university administrator to help students get to know each other. In this way, Facebook is an online social networking service. Any individual who is at least 13 years old can become a registered user of the site, after which one can create a personal profile, add other users and friends. They can exchange messages, notifications when they update their profile.

Users may even join common interest user groups at school, college workplace level and can characterize their friends into lists e.g., 'people from work, 'close friends' etc.



Twitter: Created by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass in March 2006, it is an online social networking site. Being a micro-blogging system, it allows an individual to compose short messages of 140 characters, which are known as “tweets.”

While registered users can read and post tweets but unregistered users can only read them. It uses hashtags to reach a larger audience.

LinkedIn: Its a business and professional networking. In addition, it not only allows the publishing of curriculum vitae but also allows users to connect groups, use applications, post business references and search for any type of business contact. This social network is a great help for the officers to search for a larger pool of potential employees.

YouTube: A video –sharing website, which was created by three Pay pal employees in Feb. 2005, allows viewing, sharing, downloading, uploading and commenting on and liking and disliking the videos. With the help of Adobe Flash Video and HTML technology to display a large variety of user-generated video or audio contents.

Google +: It is one of the latest social networks. It helps to stay in touch with friends and acquaintances and discover new and interesting people around. After getting registered on Google+, one can fill all the important personal information, upload people picture and add his or her photo albums from Google Picasa web albums. One can connect his Google+ profile with Twitter people and much more.

Slide Share: This site was initiated on October 4, 2006. It is considered like YouTube but for

slideshows. It is a web 2.0 based slide hosting service. The files whether private or public in PowerPoint, PDF, Open document and Keynote, Presentation format can be uploaded to it.

Pinterest: This site was founded by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra, and Even Sharp and initiated in March 2010. It is like earlier social image bookmarking systems. Helps users to save images, categorize them on different boards. One can follow other user’s board, in case, they have the same taste. On a virtual pinboard, one can create, manage and share images, related to a particular topic, hobbies, interests etc.

Udemy: This site is an online learning platform that allows instructors to host courses, to build online courses on any topic. One can upload video, PowerPoint Presentation, PDFs, audio, zip file, live classes and so on. It allows online discussions with the help of discussion boards. It contains both paid and free courses in various categories. The social media gives assurance of new, Socially engaged educational experiences for students in undergraduate, self –directed and various educational sectors.

This site was launched by Evan Bali, Oktay Caglar and Gagan Biyani in 2010.

ASYNCHRONOUS TOOLS:

Wikipedia: By using a simple markup language and web browser, the site enables communities to write documents collaboratively.

Gmail: It is a communication technology that is used to transfer a message through internet. The other important email platform like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo! Mail, Outlook etc.



Blog: It is a site for discussion or publication of information over the Internet. Presently, multi-author logs have been introduced for large group access.

Rss: It is used for ordinary web feed format in order to publish frequently updated information from blogs, news, audio, video etc.

Positive Side of Social Media:

The positive aspects of social media are:

- Improves the ability of users to access, analyze, retain and share information.
- Provides an efficient platform for developing the power of reasoning and expression with the help of conversations, discussions and debates done on the discussion forum along with the comments posted under the nugget of learning content, like, YouTube videos or slide share presentations.
- It is a great help to teachers and students to explore co-creation and collaborations.
- A better assessment and deep understanding is possible with the help of communication tools which facilitates application of knowledge in novel context.
- Even the games have the potential for positive influence, provided one doesn't get addicted to it.
- It has a low-cost structure to address the 'Education for All' for a high population country like India.

To conclude, communication tools in education outweigh the drawback. There is need to integrate communication tools into education.

Communication tools are also having the potential to become a bane or boon that, intern, depends upon how it is used.

As the Internet has made access to knowledge and wisdom as easily accessible as pornography, a communication tool will also influence the educational scenario, in India and abroad, in a varied way. It is the need of the hour to address the problems which may mar the use and deployment of communication tool in education.

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