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# Role of Social Media in Teaching – Learning Process

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**Abstract :** Social media are becoming the most important tools for interaction among people, where everybody can share, exchange, comment, discuss and create information and knowledge in a collaborative way. Social media tools are rapidly changing the communications landscape, their emergence has impacted significantly how students learn and the way instructors teach. In today higher education settings, instructors, students and others collaborate on the tasks of knowledge construction. The definition of social media is “the relationships that exist between network of people” The influence of social media on teaching and learning environment is growing every year and its applications can reinforce class materials, positively influenced discussions, collaborative work, etc. The educators and researchers experimenting the social media technologies to stimulate collaboration, knowledge constructions and thinking skills.

The increasingly widespread use of social network sites to expand and deepen one’s social connections is a relatively new but potentially important phenomenon that has implications for teaching and learning and teacher education in the 21st century. The main aim of the paper is to find the gap of knowledge in adoption of social network sites in teaching and learning process in formal sites that can efficiency applied in educational system and provides direction for subsequences researches and as a guideline for future research in social network sites in education.

**IndexTerms - Social Networking Sites, Social Media, Pedagogy, ICTs**

## I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of social network sites has revolutionized communication tools for facilitating teaching and learning activities. In recent years, social networking has become one of the most significant communication tools among people; in which exist through the Internet that provides accessibility for tremendous amount of people. Applying Social Networking Sites (SNSs) in teaching and learning offer a positive impact on the adoption of SNSs and open the door to the new days of learning and teaching. Social network mainly focused on identity, network infrastructure, privacy concern, technological issues, and necessitation of its use as a tool for teaching and learning (Kevin, P. B., Lori B. H., and Bethany, V. S. (2010); Kuh, G.D. (1995).

Recent years have witnessed an increased interest in using social media/social learning with courses in higher education. New technologies, most often referred to as Web 2.0 have created a growing phenomenon in public and academic use, changing the way organizations and people create, engage, and share existing or newly produced information through multi-way communication. With the use of social media interfacing through computer and mobile devices becoming more prevalent, user interaction from the platform to face to face engagement is being promoted (Teclhaimanot& Hickman, 2011). Recent attention of students to social networks brings a privacy and safety concern in educational environment (Brady, K. P., Holcomb, L. B., and Smith, B. V. 2010). The appearance of social networks that are focused on teaching and learning like Ning, Elgg and Edmodo give an opportunity to students and lecturers to minimize the privacy and safety concerns (Kevin, P. B., Lori B. H., and Bethany, V. S. 2010).

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATUR:

Social media tools created a platform for the improvement of the educational process. To enrich the learning and teaching process with text, videos, and audio materials, the social media tools are useful, also it supports learning process of students and supports teachers in addition to the evaluation process (Urista, M.A., Dong. Q, and Day. K.D. 2009). College students have great interest in social media. For the purpose of the study, social media was defined as Facebook, YouTube, Blogs, Twitter, MySpace, or LinkedIn (Wang, Qingya; Chen, Wei; and Liang, Yu. 2011).

The social media sites, mostly public web-based services allow users to develop a personal profile, read and react on the postings on the site ( Boyd. D.M. and Ellison. N.B. 2007). The individual users should restrict the information while posting on the media sites, also they should aware what information can be shared publicly. It includes favorite books, movies, birthdays, relationship status, etc. (Wheeler, S., Yeomans, P., and Wheeler, D. 2008). Students who may be reluctant to speak up in class or participating in book discussion blogs and writing for real audiences. There are new web tools emerging all the times that are enhancing learning (Brydolf, C. 2007). The relationship between Facebook and well-being appears to become positive over the college years, possibly because upper class students use Facebook to connect socially with their peers and participate in college life (Kalpidou, M., Costin, D., and Morris, J. 2011).

Educational institution believes that social media sites offer value in teaching. It is also believed that video, podcast, and wikis are valuable tools for teaching and a majority report that social media sites can be valuable tools for collaborative learning. (Mike Moron, Jeff Seaman, and Hester Tinti-Kane 2011). Social media, throughout the communication world after 2005, has brought

about the transformation of personal and social changes, with reference to youngsters between the ages of 13 to 25 who use the social media as a communication tool. Students could achieve more effective cooperation in their studies if they could make friends outside twitter groups, army friends and other traditional channels. Social media can be seen as one answer to this problem (Silius, K., Tervakari, A.M., and Miilumäki, T. (2009).

Teachers exploring this moving landscape will also be able to discover the real potential of social media to transform drastically the pedagogical basis of their teaching experience, giving them tools that they can use to create truly adapted and flexible learning experiences for students.

Many current studies suggest that the high take up of social media applications as an addition to formal educational settings offers new opportunities for innovating and modernizing education institutions and for preparing learners for the 21st century (Redecker, C. 2009); Redecker, C., and Ala-Mutka, K. 2007). A primary reason to adopt social media in the classroom is because it is familiar to almost everybody and also because it doesn't cost and requires minimal training. One of the largest surveys of social media in higher education to date shows that universities can lever social media into the classroom and ensure its used more than it is now (Qualman, E. 2009; Alexander, B. and Levine, A. 2008).

Some academic experts believe that social media can be used as an effective teaching tool in higher education because of its ease of use, ready availability, and individual affordability and network effects. Facebook has been used in university courses to facilitate teacher/student discussion, and wikis and blogs have been used to collaborate on projects and receive rapid feedback (Alexander, B. and Levine, A. 2009). Some courses have also used in YouTube as a platform for students to create and share videos for their course (Johnson, L. Levine, A., Stone, S., and Smith, R.S. 2009). In other courses, students have used Twitter to discuss course topics during class, with Tweets being displayed on a large screen to encourage cross group communication (Hamid, S. Waycott, J. Chang, S and Kurnia, S 2011).

## **BACKGROUND**

Several scholars have theorized the pedagogical potential of using social media, such as social network sites, for learning (Dede 2008; Greenhow 2011a; Halverson 2011; Manca and Ranieri 2013; Siemens 2005; Siemens and Weller 2011). They have emphasized the technology's potential for supporting collaborative knowledge construction; accessing specialized just-in-time information, contributing to the hybridization of expertise; relational development and peer/alumni support especially in times of transition; academic help-seeking; social and civic benefits; and for blurring the boundaries between learning spaces, social spaces and leisure spaces (Manca and Ranieri 2013), which can also pose challenges to learning (Halverson 2011).

## **EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL NETWORK SITES**

Many teachers and teacher educators remain uncertain about how to meaningfully integrate this technology or assess its impacts (Crook 2012). Assessing the processes and products of students' thinking in projects involving the Internet or identifying how online applications could aid them in developing their capacity for such assessment, can be especially difficult even for experienced content- and technology-using teachers (Greenhow, 2006). Web-based social networks introduce tools, people, and materials to school culture that could help to break up established routines and assist teachers and students in getting feedback on their performances (Bransford, et. al. 1999). Leveraging social networking capabilities may give teachers and students access to a different culture that helps them clarify their beliefs about teaching with technology and revise their behaviours (Greenhow, 2006).

## **RISE OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITES**

Social network sites are a form of social media defined by the following socio-technical features: 1) uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied 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 network sites is a relatively recent phenomenon beginning in 2002 with the advent of sites such as Friendster, My Space and Google's Orkut and with sites like Facebook rising to mainstream prominence around 2007 (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

The social media has become one of the most important communication means in recent times. However, social networking exists so as to provide communication among people regardless of the distance, making it open to people easily share information, files and pictures and videos, create blogs and send messages, and conduct real-time conversations. These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with buddies and co-workers so easily and effectively. In today's higher education settings, instructors, students and others collaborate on the task of knowledge construction. The favourites in the realm of internet sites are Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, Instagram, google doc and others. These websites and social forums are way of communication directly with other people socially and in the media. They are playing a large and influential role decision-making in the occasions from the global world economically, politically, socially and educationally. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, etc. connect people around the world in ways Marshall McLuhan could not have dreamed of when he popularized the term "global village" back in the 1960's.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are increasingly prevalent in our society, and consequently, they entail new conditions and opportunities for teaching and learning processes. On the one hand, the new generation of students enter university with a strong command of competencies to communicate via ICT, a situation which obviously facilitates the introduction of such resources as learning supports (Liccardi, I.; Ounnas, A.; Pau, R.; Massey, E.; Kinnunen, P.; Lewthwaite, S.; Midy, M.-A.; Sarkar, C. 2007). On the other hand, there is apparently widespread participation in different social networks and increasing evidence of their use as support for study activities. Facebook and other social networking sites (SNSs) are ubiquitous in everyday life, seeping into educational environments and leaving educators little choice but to explore how best to incorporate such tools into teaching and learning (Madge, C.; Meek, J.; Wellens, J.; Hooley, T.2009).

SNSs typically combine individual profile pages with various interaction tools, such as chat, blogs, forums, etc. This reinforces a sense of community and collaboration, which makes SNSs a viable alternative to proprietary course management systems such as Blackboard (Arnold, N.; Paulus, T. 2010). The learning process that takes place in a social network is the result of various transactions, of multiple exchanges between participants, who switch between teacher and learner roles.

## ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media in education include Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Google plus, message boards and blogging among which Facebook leads the rest. In 2008-2009 61% were of the population were using Facebook and it went up to 87% in 2009-10 and reached 98% in 2010-11. Educational institutes have been majorly using micro-blogging to update students and teachers with the latest announcements. From 0% use in 2008-09, the growth graph marked 59% in 2009-10 and finally 84% in 2011. The blogging has gained wide popularity over the years. It has had 48%, 46%, and 47% usage in years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. Like wise the message boards enjoyed a constant level of usage starting from 36% in 2008-09 to 38% in 2009-10 and 37% in 2010-11. Schools are adopting technologies for pedagogical purposes and introducing social media into the classroom. This is a trend that has garnered a lot of support as well as apprehension (Madhusudan G. Tandale, and Raghu Raman. 2016).

Over the past few years, programmes allowing interaction via virtual social networks, better known as SNSs, have brought about an authentic revolution, both in terms of their rapid assimilation but also in terms of their extension into further applications. The social networks have fast become powerful interaction spaces between diverse social groups, some of them highly specialised, and where it is possible to meet people who share the same interests or reacquaint themselves with others, as is the case with LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.

## MOOCS

A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) also works on the notion of bespoke learning which is a feature of learning via SNSs, too. In fact, a MOOC will be offered and typically spread through an online social network. A MOOC integrates the connectivity of social networking, the facilitation of an acknowledged expert in a field of study, and a collection of freely accessible online resources. The emergence of MOOCs in a continuum from open educational resources to open access to the results of scientific production provides anyone, anywhere in the world with the same content available at the most prestigious universities and by the most renowned specialists, for a more structured education and the award of degrees (Lockyer, L.; Patterson, J. 2008).

There is a similarity between MOOCs and SNSs is when a MOOC builds on the active engagement of several thousand “students” who self-organise their participation according to learning goals, prior knowledge and skills, and common interests. Therefore, SNSs are capable of boosting the opportunities for joint learning offered by MOOCs. However, despite the huge potential afforded by 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 truly acknowledges their peculiarities as a support to communication (Cormier, D.; Siemens, G. 2010). Informal learning in social networks has great potential to bridge the gap between the so-called “Digital Natives” (the students) and the “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 at real university campuses, by making a distinction between social spaces and formal learning situations, by designating class areas and chat areas within the LMS forums, in the same way that you would find student bars and classrooms in a campus. In contrast, SNSs appear to erase this distinction and seem to suggest that mixing all types of activity is something useful. It would appear that the problems and tensions faced when trying to link SNSs to formal learning arise when the network structure comes into conflict with the hierarchic structure of traditional learning. The problem lies in that the traditional learning structure is teacher-centred and the flow of content is generally one-directional, usually conducted (controlled) by the teacher.

There is currently an interesting and rigorous debate on the role that SNSs play in learning (Espuny, C.; Gonzalez, J.; Lleixà, M.; Gisbert, M. 2011). From an educational point of view, there have been many attempts by teachers and students themselves to introduce learning activities into social networks (Bingham, T.; Conner, M. 2010). One of the most delicate issues about the use

of SNS in higher education is that they attract students precisely because they are not controlled institutionally like LMSs, which most universities implement with a sole objective (namely, learning). Without ignoring current limitations and possible risks, we believe that all of us, university teachers, must remain optimistic and advocate for teaching innovations, in favour of promoting SNSs or recognising them as an additional support to the learning generated in the classrooms. Firstly, we must legitimise the social interactions and exchanges taking place in these social spaces, which attract participants mainly because of their shared interests.

### ***SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE***

Dr Islam study has identified many factors that are pre-admission qualification, time spent in studying, regular class attendance, probation status, father's education, parental support and involvement, interest in major subjects of study and the gender of the students as significant determinants of academic performance of the students (Islam, MMazharul. 2015).

### ***POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES:***

1. **Facebook:** It creates a space for students to ask and answer questions. When students get home and begin working on their homework, they can post a question to the groups so as to get it answered by the group member. It is also ideal for teachers using in flipped classroom. Post videos, photos, documents, and other resources on the group's wall and student can access before class or when they work on their assignments.
2. **Twitter:** Twitter offers a quick way to post class announcements and reminders as well as real time information on class field trips. It also helps classes track information on any topic. For instance, for a class discussing on a current event or a topic on career, twitter can provide up to date information, eliminating the need for extensive research. Many organizations offer twitter chat sessions with which students can interact.
3. **Blogs:** Instead of traditional writing projects, blogs creates opportunities for students to write and display their writings on a large scale.
4. **YouTube:** It is like a Facebook, YouTube is an excellent option of flipping classroom in that students can watch lectures and resources before entering the classroom. Again, like blogging, since the material will be seen by a wider audience, students will be more apt to do their very best in creating a video, and they will enjoy being able to express their creativity as they connect more deeply with the course material.
5. **Instagram:** "A picture is worth thousand words". Instagram can showcase student work by offering a place to feature student hard work or even interesting details about a student.
6. **Google Docs:** It is a popular technology with teachers and students. Students and teachers can use these tools to collaborate on assignments, projects, newsletters among other things. It allows more than one person to work on a particular document at the same time. Google docs can promote the team work.

### ***SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES***

The phrase "social networking sites" is an umbrella term used for social media and includes but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in, Myspace. Social Media is internet based technologies that allow more free flowing communication among its users.

### ***ADVANCED COMMUNICATION TOOLS***

New communication tools enhance this communication through audio and visual capturing string, connecting and retrieving features that include:

**Blogs** that make authors publish/post their work and invite comments on it.

**Wikis** which have capability to promote and facilitate „common creation“ through joining academic ventures.

**Social bookmarking** is used to enable users for collating, tagging, and sharing websites of their interests.

**Media Sharing Spaces** provide spaces and opportunities to the user community of posting and sharing pictures, podcasts and videos.

**Collaborative Tools** extend documents“ sharing and editing capabilities to multiple users.

**Social Networking Sites** have abilities of promoting virtual communities to interact and communicate synchronously or asynchronously (Fogel&Nehmad, 2009).

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION***

As Ferdig (2007) suggests, social networking promotes interaction between learners and potentially improves active learning as in the student-centered constructivists' environment.

In an online learning environment, a social community of learners who share knowledge, values, and goals. A sense of community in online learning is comprised of two components:

1) **Connectedness**, which refers to student's feelings of cohesion, spirit, trust and interdependence, and 2) **Learning**, which refers to the students' feelings of the extent to which their learning goals and expectations are satisfied.

### ***POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA:***

Social Media has its own Positive and Negative Impacts

#### **POSITIVE IMPACTS:**

Social media enable students to easily contact with each other with regard to their projects and assignments. Students also can work on group assignments from their home. When social media is used in pedagogy students who have difficulty in expressing their thoughts in the classroom can get involved in the learning process, it helps to build their confidence level as well. Any doubts can be clarified by posting a message through the social media. A site like Facebook, etc. help teachers to stay in touch with the parents or so to know the progress of their children. Students are learning the skill sets required for successful social networking. Social media also brings with it the freedom for learners to connect and collaborate outside of institutional boundaries as well as to gain practical experience for the workforce (Coleman, V. 2013; Minocha, S. 2009). Students are also being taught new concepts like online privacy.

#### **NEGATIVE IMPACTS**

Students have become prone to frequent fluctuations in mood and self-control. A recent study has stated whenever someone uploads a profile picture, it immediately affects the mood of students. It produces stress, anxiety or fear for them. Students neglect the studies by spending time on social networking website rather than studying or interacting with the people in person. Students prefer to chat with the friends for the hours and this leads to the waste of time that could have been used for study or learning new skills. Students use of social media regularly may lose their ability to engage in face to face communication. Even though students spend lots of time in socializing in an effective way, it should not hamper their study and academic credential. It should be kept in mind that the social networking creates the virtual world, that is drastically differ from the reality.

### ***TEACHER'S ROLE IN SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES***

Learners actively take responsibility for and regulate their own (collaborative) learning, meaning that the teacher is no longer in full control. The teacher acts as a secondary (guide) and students are encouraged to take active control. This allows them to achieve their learning goals and coordinate the process by agreeing on rules and deadlines (Lave, J.; Wenger, E. and Situated. 1991). Students actively plan their activities and assume different roles within a group, instead of simply concentrating on the learning content. As such, every member of the community may be seen as both a learner and a tutor. The students find communication with the teacher constructive and encouraging, and the teacher can support the students by setting the right tone for the discussion and contributing to developing a sense of community (Vonderwell, S. 2003).

In summary, the teacher's role in the SNSs is defined as "rich and delicate". In practice, this presupposes a balanced performance, creating a climate of openness and using pedagogical experience to create supportive structures for learning. It requires a lot of trust and sensitivity on the part of the teacher not to interfere with the activities of the learner immediately; it seems to help to build in (throughout the work) a kind of subtle support framework for the group ( DeLaat, M.; Lally, V.; Lipponen, L.; Simons, R.J. 2007, p. 280).

It is helpful to the teacher

To allow the group to be emergent in their learning. To allow the participants to seek their own rhythms and ways of working together. To keep a close watch on the group without interfering but being ready to assist. To use advanced organisers to build a pedagogical framework for participants to use when they are ready. To create specific scaffolding contexts SNSs can become an incredible tool in collaborative work; the didactic possibilities afforded by these tools are almost endless when they are intended to promote interaction between the group, between the group and the teacher, and among teachers, all of which takes place outside the time and spatial constraints of a school environment.

### III. CONCLUSION

Social networks are applications that support enthusiasm in a common space around sharing interests, collaborations, resource sharing, communications and interactions. The evidence is growing that the use of SNSs in education can be useful in blended learning. The teachers can communicate instantly and directly with the students and compare notes on education techniques, curriculum and teaching methodology and so on. Teachers, professors and academics routinely used blogs to write about the world of education and invite comments from all over the world. The impact of social media is radically changing the way education has been traditionally delivered. Students should develop the cognitive and intuitive ability to analyse how much time they spent with social media. It is up to the students to decide what really matters in their life and how much of this virtual life translates to real life. In spite of those concerns, however, the faculty believes a social media sites offer value in teaching. An overwhelming majority report that they believe that video, podcast, and wikis re valuable tools for teaching, 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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