



E- LEARNING AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Social media is an integral part of our modern lives. This study seeks to examine the social media usage trends among S. D. College students and understand the interaction between social media usage and their academic performance. Social media and E- Learning have one to one relationship to enrich learning experience regarding academic purposes and behaviour-related issues. Through a quantitative approach data was collected from students of S.D. College Barnala using a survey. Questionnaires were distributed among 110 students of various classes. The key findings indicate that the main reason S D College students use social media for socializing, as well as for study and E-Learning purposes. The respondents showed some signs of addiction to social media tools such as Facebook, Mobile and Twitter. Differences in social media use by gender were found, with female students showing increased social media use for privacy and socializing, interest in brand and trends, as well as signs of addiction. Social media platforms provide informal learning. The findings could prove beneficial to educationists, website developers, college teachers, parents, and researchers exploring social media addiction and usage pattern in a developing country such as India.

INTRODUCTION

No one can deny the impact of social media has had on the everyday internet user. It has become a part of our daily lives. It has influenced us and has connected us to the rest of the world. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google plus, LinkedIn are among the social media platforms that everybody accesses today. Social media gives us an opportunity to communicate without borders, a means to look into other people's lives, and serve as a means of entertainment. Social media is a way to transmit, or share information with a broad



audience. All you really need is an internet connection. It is defined by Kaplin and Haenlein (10) as ‘internet based applications that allow the creation and exchange of content which is user generated.’

As an educational tool, social media enriches the learning experience by allowing students and teachers to connect and interact in new, exciting ways. Websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter provide a platform where users can chat, exchange ideas and find answers to questions. Free or inexpensive apps distributed through app stores have given rise to a social media focused culture that is shaping how we should communicate, teach, and learn. Today social media is contributing a lot in gathering information and making aware with latest updates.

Social media platforms provide informal learning. It is widely used as supplemental material for study purposes such as visual aids, exercises and discussions and interactive lectures. The scope and reach of E- Learning through social media is vast and now easily accessible to most. Using social media in E- Learning also saves time and is very efficient. Quick delivery of information is the need of today. E- Learning using social media reduces learning time by from 25% to 60% versus traditional learning. It does not take long to start and wrap up sessions and classes. Since classes are held online, it saves one’s time to get to commute or drive to classes and seminars. Learners have the option to just focus on specific topics or modules of a course or program that they need to learn and skip those that they already know. Another benefit of E- Learning using social media, there is no limit to the number of classrooms or candidates compared to regular classes where seats and actual capacity should be taken into consideration.

Review of Literature

Johnson and others (6) mentioned that the rapid development of mobile devices, apps and tablet computing is revolutionizing the concept of socializing as well as mobile computing and learning. Graphing mathematical equations, creating and sharing notes, electronic publishing and employing location- aware technologies are among the few educational uses for mobile devices that can provide numerous potential opportunities for the academic world. Bradley (2) labours on the point that recognition of higher education and promoting the huge potential brought by web technologies to improve student engagement and college experiences and has been advocating innovations and changes to stay with current with the changed education market. Yang and Chang (14) summed up that university students’ show more positive attitudes toward peer interaction and academic achievement through interactive blogs. Junco (7) in his study found that time spent on Facebook was negatively related to college students’ GPA and was weakly related to time spent preparing for classes. Majority of studies indicate that social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus innovations

in education and E- Learning. Social media technologies can make a powerful ally in furthering the goals of formal learning. Educational institutions, teachers, students and instructors have started to rely on the use of social media in formal learning, to share opinions, views and comments, to share practices, promote information and educational materials. As a result learning has become learner- centric and not teacher- centric, which is the way it should have been all along.

Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted the qualitative method of research. Data is being collected through survey method. Questionnaire is distributed among students of various under- graduate and post- graduate courses because it collects information that is more systematic from all respondents.

The students of S. D. College, Barnala for the session 2017-18 were the sources of data for this specific study. All students from under- graduate and post- graduate classes were invited to participate in the survey. A close ended and print questionnaire was distributed among 110 students. The questionnaire was structured in two parts. Part-I covered demographic details of respondents. Part- II contained the questions regarding the perception of respondents in the use of social media in education specifically the academic use and non- academic use and acceptability of social media.

Results

The population of this study was students of S. D. College, Barnala. The print questionnaire was distributed among 110 students. Only 95 respondents filled up the questionnaire out of which 61.3% were female and 38.6% were male respondents. Most of the respondents were from computer applications department i. e. 69% while the rest were from M. A. (Eng.), M. Com., M.Sc. (Maths) and B. Lib. & Inf. Sc. The demographic background of the respondents shows that 58.6% students were from rural area and 38% were from urban area.

Table I: Gender wise distribution

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	60	61.3%
Male	35	38.6%
Total	95	100%

Table 2: Area wise distribution

Demographic Area	Urban	Rural	Total
Frequency	37	58	95
Percentage	38%	58%	100%

Perception of students in the Usefulness of social media

The result is divided into two perceptions; the first one is the perception of students in the usefulness of social media in academic usage, whereas the second one is non-academic usage. The majority of students admit it that social media is useful in academic related activities.

Table 3: Usefulness of Social Media in Academic Activities

Activity	Percentage
General Discussion	48%
Taking home assignments	79%
Student interaction for collaborative learning	85%
Student interaction for peer tutoring	76%
Projects and activities per group	84%
Individual projects and activities	82%
Examination	59%
Student-teacher interaction	66%

Usage and Acceptability

Total students are having their Facebook account i.e. 100%, the second one is YouTube having 72% and 68% for Google Plus. Facebook was the most frequent used social media among the students. Their major reason behind having an account is for social networking 87%, news update for 78% and 47% for video streaming and downloading. A large number of students' i. e. 95.4% use social media accounts for education related activities such as for downloading study material, sharing assignments and reports and other class related activities. 48% students agreed that social media is a platform for general discussion. Most respondents admit it that social media facilitate communication and builds connection with fellows and friends. It is observed that use of new technologies, especially social media is



becoming a part and parcel of students' daily lives. Free or inexpensive apps distributed through app stores have given rise to a social media- focused culture that is shaping how we should communicate, teach, learn, etc. Social media is contributing a lot in gathering information and making aware with latest updates.

Disadvantages of Social Media

Major complaint among teachers is that social media is distracting in the classroom. Tools like Facebook and Twitter divert students' attention away from what's happening in class and are disruptive to the learning process. 86.7% students agreed that social media distracts the focus of students on doing class assignments and projects. 49.5% students admit it that many Twitter writers and bloggers post wrong information on social media sites which might lead to confusion for the students. The learners are required to have a high ICT experience and background. The applications to be realised through only social network – based education tools are under the control of the learner. As the number of the sources is high, it is difficult to find and use the best and the most reliable one. Even if many filtrations are done, there are many data sets causing confusion. A lot of time spent to reach advantageous content. Posting inappropriate content can also be a significant problem. This can damage the reputation of an educational institute and likely one of the reasons that many educational institutes have not embraced social media. Some educators are concerned that while real-time digital stream may create a safe harbour for students who are uncomfortable expressing themselves, students are missing valuable lessons in real- life social skills. Relying too much on social media for communication can stifle a student's ability to interact in person. This is a problem throughout society and not just limited to education. 62.6% students are satisfied with the use of social media in education. While 94.2% respondents are facing a low internet connectivity. Results of this study depict that there is no doubt that social media is playing a vital role in education and E-Learning. It saves time and cost of user by providing best computing power for faster communication. Social media and its various educational applications help students and teachers to achieve their academic goals. There are just a few of the advantages of social media in E- Learning and education and also some of the potential disadvantages. Social media can be a powerful enhancement to the way students learn. It does take some planning and some thought process before implementation. The young generation conducts much of their life through social media channels. They are already using social media tools for collaboration and E- Learning. They expect that their campuses will follow suit. With this keeping in mind, it seems prudent for today's institutions to get on the social media train and find ways to successfully integrate these tools into the classroom. Social media can be a powerful enhancement to the way students learn. It does take some planning and thought process before implementation.



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