



Social Media Usage in Engaging Pedagogy

Devaki T C

Research Scholar, Department of Education, Bangalore University, Bangalore- 560056

Dr. Umme Kulsum

UGC Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Professor & Chairperson, Department of Education, Bangalore University, Bangalore- 560056

ABSTRACT

Today it has to be accepted that students are far ahead of their teachers with regard to the social media usage. It is challenging for teachers to engage such techno savvy students in academic activities without themselves having ample knowledge and expertise in social media usage in engaging pedagogy. It is high time now that teachers have to not only develop awareness about social media usage by students, but also know the ways of social media usage for engaging their pedagogy and integrate them in their classroom practices along with the awareness of the potential danger and problems associated with its usage. This article attempts to give a brief introduction about social media, the need for it in engaging pedagogy and possible ways a teacher can use it in engaging pedagogy, the benefits and guidelines for its usage in engaging pedagogy.

KEYWORDS

Social Media Usage, Social Networking, Engaging Pedagogy.

Introduction:

It is evident from many researches and surveys that students have already adopted social media in their daily life and are quite comfortable with its usage. It may be for communication or collecting information. So, teacher or books has not remained as the sole source of knowledge and information for these students who are active on social media.

Rather than treating social media usage by students as a distraction and trying to keep students away from these new forms of technology, it would be beneficial if students are encouraged to use it for academic purposes under supervision and guidance from parents and teachers.

It is challenging for school teachers and regular college teachers to engage students in academic activities on social media via social networks without themselves having ample knowledge and expertise in social media usage in engaging pedagogy. Although many teachers are using it as a form of communication between teachers, parent communities, and students, not many are confident in adopting social media for engaging pedagogy.

Social Media

Social media as defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2008) is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, that allow the creation and exchanges of user-generated content."

The terms "social media" and "social networking" are often used interchangeably (Perryman, 2011). But, social media is an online media where people interconnect and communicate with each other using different online technology tools to share information and resources in the form of text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications.

Need for Social Media Usage in Engaging Pedagogy

Social media usage in engaging pedagogy via social networks is particularly relevant to the Millennial Generation of students who are digital natives coming to higher education with extensive experience in social media (Wankel, 2009).

Cain and Policastri (2011) has stated that the immense popularity of social networking sites such as facebook, twitter among the students along with their benefits like openness, collaboration and user generated content has attracted researchers and educators.

Researchers have also found that social media in the classroom often result in positive psychological effects (Jackson, 2011). For example, the student who is too shy to participate in a face-to-face class is more likely to participate through social media (Rankin, 2009).

So, it is high time now that teachers have to not only develop awareness about social media usage by students, but also know the ways of social media usage for engaging their pedagogy and integrate them in their classroom practices along with the awareness of the potential danger and problems associated with the social media usage.

Different ways of Social Media Usage by teachers in foreign countries

1. To tweet or post status updates as a class for absentees, parents and others to view.
2. To write blog posts on assignments poems or about what students are learning in class room.
3. To connect to other classrooms via social media networking and to share and adopt best class room practices.
4. Are using facebook to co-create science projects with the peer group on the social networks and get feedback for students' online science projects.
5. Are using youtube for students to host a show on science quiz or a pod cast.
6. To create twitter accounts for a special interest projects.
7. Are sharing the knowledge through wikis.
8. To send reminders to students to complete certain tasks given in the classroom via instant messaging clients.
9. To enrich class-room experience by connecting to peers across the globe.

Strategies of SMU in Engaging Pedagogy

E-learning/online learning using social media:

Best suited for adult learners who are matured, self motivated and goal oriented learners. This strategy is mainly adopted by

the distance learners, as they can control and pace their own learning procedures.

Apart from the study materials provided by the institution, learners can search for more related resources from the social media such as videos of lectures in YouTube; gain knowledge by going through blogs; use twitter to tweet about subject related queries and even can create a facebook group with course mates to discuss activities related to their course. They can even take online tests and exams if their institution is offering distance programme completely through online mode.

Blended learning/Hybrid learning using social media:

Best suited for all learners as there is scope for both campus-based learning and personal learning where the learner is open to receive knowledge and information from the community through social media under the guidance of the teacher.

In this strategy the teacher shall create a facebook group of all students of that class and asks all those students to create a profile and sign in to the group as student. Plan and design a range of learning experiences to be provided both in face-to-face mode as well as via social media usage.

The class is taught in face-to-face mode first followed by academic activities like posting updates for absentees, other class to view, carrying out collaborative projects on social networking sites, tweeting discussions, writing assignments in blogs and much more under the guidance of the class teacher.

Process involved in Social Media Usage in Engaging Pedagogy

- Selection of the appropriate social networking platform on social media to be used in engaging pedagogy.
- Posting specific content and getting the responses on facebook.
- Use a classroom session to discuss or even tweet about assignments, club activities or action plans etc., using twitter accounts.
- Share videos of lectures by subject experts through youtube.
- Collaboration of unique ideas through social networks.
- Using pinterest as an online notice board can be used to pin images.
- The video clips of lessons taught in class posted on youtube can be used by students for revision or even by the absentees of that class.
- Assessment of performance through assignments, tests and exams along with plagiarism check of students' works.

Benefits of Social Media Usage in Engaging Pedagogy

1. It is possible to give firsthand experience for students to work in collaborative projects.
2. It enables educators to share videos of others lessons, distribute notes and assignments easily.
3. It helps in capturing students' attention and encourages active student participation.
4. It encourages reflective practices by both the teachers and students.
5. It provides rich and varied knowledge due to sharing and collaboration.
6. It is one of the easiest ways of engaging pedagogy using varied digital media and simultaneously to connect with different subject experts.
7. SNS helps to bind together the so formed online community with common interests and activities.
8. The contents uploaded on social media can be conveniently accessed and repeated as many times as required by the teacher or student.
9. Develops individual's creative ability and team spirit through group activities.

Guidelines for the social media usage by teachers

Along with the benefits of social media usage in engaging pedagogy, it also offers great challenges as the bounda-

ry between teacher and pupil can quickly become blurred. A teacher can be vulnerable to unintended misuses for electronic communication. E-mail, texting and social media encourage casual dialogue and very often, very innocent actions can easily be misconstrued or manipulated.

Teachers therefore need to be alert to the potential risks by following these guidelines:

1. It should be noted that social media sites archive content posted, even when deleted from online profiles. Once information is placed on line, the author relinquishes control of it.
2. A teacher should never share information with students in any environment that they would not willingly or appropriately share in a school or school-related setting or in the community.
3. Unwise behavior online can also result in criminal action or in some cases, civil action brought by others and therefore requires caution.
4. Should always maintain a formal and courteous and professional tone in communicating with pupils and ensure that professional boundaries are maintained.
5. Should use official channels of communication only and should be aware of and comply with employer's policies and guidance.
6. Should not exchange private text, phone numbers, personal e-mail addresses or photos of a personal nature with pupils.
7. Should firmly decline student-initiated 'friend' requests from pupils. The friend requests from parents should also be declined and parents should be reminded of more formal channels where they can discuss their child's education.
8. Pupils will be naturally curious about their teacher's personal life outside school and may try to find out more about the teacher. So teacher should manage privacy setting and keep them under review especially in regard to photos, as no privacy mechanism is 100% guaranteed.
9. The settings should prohibit others from tagging the teachers in any photos or updates without their permission and one can ask others to remove any undesirable content related to them.
10. Should use strong passwords and change them regularly. The mobile phone/smart phone/tablet computer should be secured with a PIN, especially when in school to protect access to its content and potential misuse.
11. Should bring the matter to the attention of the employer using the proper procedures, in case of any inappropriate use of electronic communication or social networking by a pupil or concerning a pupil.
12. Should alert and encourage the students about the appropriate use and safe online behavior.

Conclusion:

Often we tend to forget that computers don't teach but teachers do and schools are not smart but students are. Also we forget that information has meaning and significance only within a framework of interpretation.

These conceptual frameworks are not downloaded from the internet but smart students create them by learning to surf the recesses of their own minds (Adi Setia, 2002). Hence we need to engage pedagogy via social networking making use of those social media that are most popular among student community along with those which have potential educational benefits.

From future research works more age appropriate and content appropriate strategies of engaging pedagogy using social media has to be designed. Also, in-service training on integration of these strategies of social media usage for engaging pedagogy by teachers along with upgrading their knowledge and acquaint them with the online privacy and other potential dangers and ways to overcome them is the present need of

the hour.

REFERENCES

1. Ashraf Jalal Yousef Zaidieh (2012) The Use of Social Networking in Education: Challenges and Opportunities *World of Computer Science and Information Technology Journal (WCSIT)* ISSN: 2221-0741 Vol. 2, No. 1, 18-21, 2012.
2. Cain, J & Policastri, A. (2011). Using Facebook as an informal learning environment. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 75(10), 1-8.
3. Kaplan, A., Haenlein, M. & Mason, R. (2008). *E-learning and social networking handbook: Resources for higher education*. New York: Routledge.
4. Maribel Beltran-Cruz and Shannen Belle B. Cruz (2013) – The Use of Internet-Based Social Media as a Tool in Enhancing Student's Learning Experiences in Biological Sciences. *Higher Learning Research Communications Vol 3, Number 4*, p(68-80). <http://www.hljrcjournal.com/index.php/HLRC/article/viewFile/170/131>
5. Perryman, B.E. (2011). Use of social networking as an instructional aide in higher education.
6. Rankin, M. (2009). Twitter Experiment <http://www.utdallas.edu/~mrankin/usweb/twitterconclusions.htm>
7. <http://iisit.org/Vol110/ISITv10p449-460Ralph0097.pdf>
8. <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/teacher-regulation/professional-guidance-ecomms-social-media.pdf>
9. <https://www.youtube.com/user/riskbites>
10. <http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-39-spring-2011>
11. <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/guidebook-social-media-in-classroom-vicki-davis>