Social Media for Education

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Abstract

This article aimed to provide educators and students with an opportunity to engage learners in the online classroom, as well as to support development of learner skills and competencies using social media. Social media is basically a structure that consists of individuals, communities, companies, organizations or classes in universities with similar interests, attitudes, values, lifestyles, visions, friendships, and learning objectives in the field of online learning, this structure can be used in various ways and through a number of tools. This paper tries to study some of the popular social media such as Facebook, X, LinkedIn, and YouTube and see how they could be utilized in e-Learning.

Keywords: Social media; Education; e-Learning

Introduction

The introduction of new technology-assisted learning tools such as mobile devices, smartboards, MOOCs, tablets, laptops, dynamic visualizations, and simulation have altered education in schools and institutions.

Social media as a learning tool has come a long way. Large numbers of teachers and students use social media as an essential element of the overall e-learning experience. It is a critical venue for exchanging information about crucial topics these days. Aside from the ability to communicate information anywhere, at any time, social media sites are also a fantastic source of producing networking possibilities to establish social activities and possibly new jobs.

Use of social media is on the rise within education, both outside and inside the classroom Alam (2015). As more educators incorporate social media in the classroom, they have needed to seek out new and old teaching and learning theories for incorporating the technology in pedagogically meaningful ways. When incorporating any kind of media, educators must consider the construct of the course, the technologies used and the pedagogical approach to designing and delivering learning activities. With the multitude of tools and approaches available, the challenge is in finding the approach that has the most meaningful learning outcome. One approach is to encourage students to use social media actively in their

learning and research, opening up the potential for them to develop the skills they need for creating a personal learning environment (PLE) and bringing them a step closer toward becoming more self-directed learners.

According to a recent survey on the use of social media in higher education, over 80% of faculty are using social media, with 70% of faculty using social media at least once a month or more; of the faculty that use social media, 41% use media in their teaching Seaman & Tinti-Kane (2013). Active use of social media in the classroom, which has been primarily passive, or consumptive in the past (e.g., in the form of watching an online video), is on the rise. According to Seaman & Tinti-Kane (2013), the number of faculty who are actively using social media (e.g., in the form of learners interacting and creating own content in a blog or wiki) has risen to nearly 30%, as compared to 10_12% of faculty in 2010 Alam (2015). Weisberger (2010) suggests that active use of social media may be more pedagogically beneficial. Weisberger's hypothesis is supported by other research, which indicates that the active use of social media can increase learner engagement levels (student_student, student_instructor and student_content) and promote the development of cognitive and meta-cognitive learning skills, such as reflection, critical thinking, construction of knowledge and understanding of one's individual learning process Junco & Heiberger (2011). McLoughlin and Lee (2018) report on the pedagogical benefits of social media and identify specific affordances of social media connections and social rapport, collaboration (information finding and sharing), learner-generated content and accumulation of knowledge and information that contribute to the cognitive development of learners. McLoughlin and Lee also propose that the inherent design of social media supports the development of learner self-directedness, a capability that is essential in preparing lifelong learners for the complexities of today's workforce. Coleman (2013) reported that 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. In order to increase the awareness of students in the educational processes, blended entertainment and informational behavioral patterns have been proposed, (Connolly, et al., 2012). Social networks undoubtedly support such behavioral patterns and this seems to be an enjoyable and universally accepted medium in students' way of living (Przepiorka, et al., 2016].

Educating via Facebook

Several studies attempted to investigate the effectiveness of educational programs when run in Facebook-like environments (Tang and Lin, 2013), while others (Yu, et al., 2010) claimed that the adjustment to the university culture was smoothly achieved. In study (Gray, et al., 2013), the authors pointed out that the social interactions the students receive through social networks "help students feel more connected to the college, which may subsequently increase the likelihood that they will persist beyond their first year". The authors also consider Facebook as the most useful social network for supporting students in their educational activities.

The instructor can effortlessly create a closed or an open group, to share information, ideas, quizzes, questionnaires, materials, pictures, or even an entire page on a specific course or module. Students can freely talk about various course-related issues, questions they might have, post mutually interesting information and general things they want to share. Facebook can be used by the instructor to share course resources, fire up discussions, promote collaboration, improve relationships between students, incorporate an array of learning tools (such as videos, images, boards, chatting and private messaging), and use it in conjunction with

other social media platforms, like Twitter. Let's face it. Facebook has endless advantages that solidly prove its social learning value. An instructor can use Facebook in the following ways.

1. **Create closed groups**. Participants will enter only by invitation and no one else will be able to see the contents, discussions, posts etc. inside the group. It's a great and safe way to interact and bond.

2. **Create open groups** to attract a wider audience to a specific course, domain, application or even school. With over a billion FB users, the number of people that might be interested in various courses could become a large number.

3. **Create polls** to receive feedback about a course or a program, to request the opinion of the audience on a specific topic, or even to generate statistics. Possibilities and options are endless.

4. **Create questionnaires** to comprehend the likes, dislikes and interests of your current or future students and build the course around them.

5. **Upload course contents**, material and resources in your account or the closed group you created. Everything will be available 24/7, if a mistake is made, it can be corrected and re-uploaded, feedbacks are usually immediate and safe receipt confirmation, your material can be remotely accessed no matter where your students are, and you will effectively minimize classroom time.

6. Use all available **learning and communication multimedia tools** Facebook offers. There can be videos, presentations, images, pictures, discussion groups, chats, private messaging, sharing, liking, highlighting and promoting. In short, a user-friendly interface that everyone will enjoy exploring.

7. Tell your students to **connect their smartphone to Facebook**, so they can receive **instant notifications** about all new messages and activities related to your course. Facebook's notification system allows everyone to keep track of anything new that happens, new groups, requests, discussions, comments, tagging, material, links etc.

8. Tell your students to **subscribe to group update via RSS feeds** for instant notifications and current information without even logging in to the platform.

9. **Create Facebook applications** and try to generate an exciting canvas for evelopers to add new functionalities. A fun, interactive Facebook app will definitely get people involved in a New York minute.

10. **Urge your students to introduce themselves, connect and collaborate**. You can also create group assignments to further promote collaboration and improve relationships between them and you. It's true that hierarchy might be lost in the beginning, but you can always restore it, by setting the right tone, mood and style to your groups, discussions and applications. Fun is good, but let's not forget the initial goal here; learning.

11. **Key benefits**

Most students are familiar with the interface and are comfortable with using it, so it is easier to build into their routine. It encourages collaboration and communication among groups of all sizes. Extends the classroom and can assist you in helping manage your students time.Has been employed successfully for induction, assessment, feedback, time management and research management

Educating via X
As far as X (formerly Twitter) is concerned, an experimental study conducted in the Pharmacology Department of Boston University revealed that more than 60% of the

participating students use Twitter for increasing their professional awareness and academic profile (Camiel, et al., 2014).

In education, X can be used as a backchannel to connect learning communities or smaller classrooms over a specific topic or event, to share highlights, make statements, upload pictures, etc. All instructors have to do is create an account and communicate its #hashtag to their students/followers. **X** has many benefits when it comes to **reaching your learners.** There is so much information on it that is easily accessible, bite-sized and you can find virtually everything you need! An instructor can use Twitter in the following ways.

1. **Create An Informative List of Resources**
   Before beginning, create a list of things you want to provide as information to your learners. Think what will be interesting, engaging and re-tweetable. Chunk it and post regularly, so you keep the interest of your learners.
2. **Create Learning Hashtags**
   Come up with a #hash tag with the help of which learners will be able to feedback and communicate on the materials.
3. **Create Learning Topics**
   Create topics, making use of the hashtags. In X you can also create regular Twitter chat events. Don't forget to encourage your learners by liking, re-tweeting and commenting on relevant tweets they share.
4. **Create Learning Lists**
   You can create your own learning lists which basically is a curated group of Twitter users. This way you and your learners will be able to see the stream of your group's tweets.
5. **Learn How To Search**
   X has a powerful and accurate search engine that will help you get the information you need most. Get familiar with the Twitter trail.
6. **Follow The Influencers**
   Get in touch and follow interesting people from your field of study – eLearning Developers, Instructional Designers, Subject Matter Experts, Professors and other experts – see what they share and what gets re-tweeted. Think about the things your learners will find interesting and will want to re-tweet.
7. **Re-Tweet**
   Re-tweet and share everything you want your learners to know. Don't forget to encourage them by liking, re-tweeting and commenting on relevant tweets they share.
8. **Favorite**
   Show your appreciation by favorite a tweet. You will encourage the poster of the original Tweet by let him/her know that you liked the tweet. Also, by doing so you can save the Tweet for later review. Although X messages are limited to 140 (in English double) characters, it should be noted that it is used to deliver instructional content, prove information literacy ideas and formulate critical thinking that explains social and political information, and enables students to perceive themselves as active agents in the creation of knowledge and information. Other ways that X benefits students by raising their level of awareness of communication challenges accompanying social networks, enabling them to evaluate their areas of educational improvement.

Educating via Linkedin

LinkedIn has become one of the most popular and profitable social networking sites on the internet today. It was created in 2003 as a networking site for professionals to connect virtually, without having to be in the same physical location. Since going public in May 2011, LinkedIn has incorporated many new features, such as a newsfeed, user content, and the ability to follow professionals, improving user engagement and time spent on the site. The network currently has over 260 million users in over 200 countries. LinkedIn has many capabilities that facilitate the type of networking that college students must engage in to find internships, jobs and make professional connections. Users post an equivalent to a resume on the site, including specific skills they possess. The website uses statistical techniques to connect or link users with potential contacts and relevant groups (Albrecht, 2011). A new feature of the site is the original content generated by high profile business leaders, called "Infuencers", such as Richard Branson, Bill Gates and Ariana Huffington.

Linkedin is a purely professional, yet still social network, which has proven to be extremely useful in eLearning. Currently there are thousands of discussions and groups in various languages, where instructors, educators and influencers share views, problems, developments and how-to tips. It has an even higher value compared to the previous social platforms, since students/participants can actually see everyone's professional profile and accomplishments, something that usually determines the status of the discussion leader, organizer, or expert. LinkedIn is one of the most popular websites used by individuals, trainees, businessmen, and entrepreneurs. It helps many eLearners to learn various subjects. There is one more option: LinkedIn Learning for eLearning. This is good for those who want to improve their teaching skills and get a better experience in the learning field.

Educating via YouTube

Video is now a common form of media on the Web. The growth of online video is beneficial for those who teach and learn online, as access to video on a broad spectrum of topics becomes increasingly available. The exact amount of video currently hosted online is not known, but the Earthweb (https://earthweb.com/) reported YouTubers upload 9.79 million new videos or about 720,000 hours of fresh video content per day in 2024. Wikipedia reports that YouTube created YouTube EDU in 2009 as a repository for its educational content. As of 2015, over 700,000 videos were part of YouTube EDU. Content within YouTube EDU is produced by PBS, Khan Academy, Steve Spangler Science, Numberphile, and TED, among others.

Concurrent with the growing educational interest in YouTube is the emergence of YouTube scholarship appearing in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. Topics discussed in the literature include, but are not limited to, uncovering the experiences of YouTube users (Lange, 2007), how YouTube is used in politics (Carlson & Strandberg, 2008; Duman & Locher, 2008), use of YouTube videos in the medical field, (Farnan, Paro, Higa, Edelson, & Arora, 2008; Gomes, 2008), methods for harvesting and using data from YouTube (Shah, 2010), and possibilities for teaching with YouTube (Burke & Snyder, 2008).

YouTube is an excellent resource for eLearning. It has both free and paid services, and can be used to support a class, while viewers can also rate the video's content and quality, as well as comment. These videos can be part of a course, but instructors can also use it to broadcast entire tutorials or just teasers to attract the audience they want.

Compared to X, using YouTube for eLearning is more straightforward. In fact, there are tons of YouTube channels doing just that, e.g. providing foreign language lessons, cooking lessons, musical lessons, and everything in between.

This works great for material that can be taught visually, but YouTube doesn't make it easy to accompany your videos with textual content, slideshows, quizzes, etc. For this, you'll need an actual LMS platform.

One shouldn't depend on YouTube ads to monetize your lessons, as it pays around $1000 per million views, while producing compelling videos that attract as many viewers can require many times that amount. It's better to use YouTube as a complementary channel to your existing LMS portal, one that provides free or ad-sponsored teasers, free lessons and previews in order to attract people to sign-up for your pay-walled content.

If, on the other hand, you're not selling courses (e.g. you do enterprise eLearning) or you're not creating your own videos, you can still benefit from YouTube as a huge repository of ready-made content.

YouTube contains a large variety of high quality material on every subject, and modern LMS platforms, such as Blackboard or Moodle, make it easy to embed its videos in your eLeaning courses.

Learning via Instagram

Online learning using Instagram can be used for interesting learning because it has interactive or streaming functions. Today, Instagram is even the world's third best social media with a growing number of users. In Indonesia, there are about 100 million users of Instagram and dominated by adolescents and college students. Young people like using Instagram as a global social media among them (Jang et al., 2015; Kertamukti et al., 2019), Instagram for learning (Salehudin, Hamid, et al., 2020), Instagram as the most reliable visual function (Hochman & Manovich, 2013; Zappavigna, 2016), Instagram for creative learning of graphic design lesson (Salehudin et al., 2019).

Social media has also been popularly used, such as Facebook (Jumaat et al., 2019), YouTube for interesting learning (Jenkins & Dillon, 2013; Lee & Lehto, 2013; Salehudin, 2020), also for Instagram, it can also be used for interesting learning because it has interactive or streaming functions, today, Instagram is even the world's thirdbest social media with a growing number of users. In Indonesia, there are about 100 million users of Instagram and dominated by adolescents and college students. Young people like using Instagram as a global social media among them (Jang et al., 2015; Kertamukti et al., 2019), Instagram for learning (Salehudin, Hamid, et al., 2020.

Instagram is one of the popular social media that provides users an instantaneous way to capture and share their life moments with friends through a series of pictures and videos". It's popular with the younger demographic, and being based on photography and video, quite fun to use. You can leverage this by incorporating it in your assignments as a light research tool (asking your learners to gather images related to what they're studying, e.g. examples of buildings in various styles for an architectural course, etc.). Instagram has been used for teaching languages and few more subjects successfully.

Conclusion

We had a look at the 5 of the most popular social networks, Facebook, X, YouTube, LinkedIn and Instagram. While not all social media platforms are equally serve for education purposes, a successful online learning program should take a good look in incorporating one or more of the major social media in its offering.

Keep in mind though that each social media platform has its own strengths and weaknesses and it's own peculiar take on the concept of "social" that you should respect and try to work within its bounds. It has also been shown that all these 5 social media have been used in solo or in combination with classroom studies with good results in various fields of study.

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