

Impact of Social Media Tools on Higher Education: A Case Study

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Abstract

The main use of Social media is being swiftly increasing during last few years. It works as a medium of communication with each other to create, edit and share new forms of textual, visual and audio contents with one to another for sharing their experiences and information regarding their interest, and also helps to build up longtime relationship between individuals and groups. In the field of LIS services, it may help to promote the services of LIC (Library and Information Centers). This study provides an efficient way of using Social media tools and how it affects the Library User Community.

Keywords: Social Media Tools, LIS Services, ICT, Library Users, Higher Education

1. Introduction

‘Social Media’ is ‘web-based and mobile based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organizations, communities and individuals’. It is easier and convenient to access information, provide information and communicate via social media. Teachers and students are also connected to each other and can make a good use of these platforms for the working of their education. Teacher can use social media as a way of teaching by creating groups and accounts for students where the information can be accessed. Social media tools are not only for communicate or interact with other people globally but, this is also one effective way for promoting new ideas interest.

2. Literature Review

The present study belongs to the field of social media for acquiring knowledge in higher

education. Therefore, authors in literature has been placed from different authors, as follows:

Bulu and Maharana, (2008), in their study “New Avatar Academic Libraries with web2.0 Application” explained how Web 2.0 tools could be applied in academic libraries to convert them as A-Lib 2.0 or Academic Library 2.0.

Mike, Jeff, Hester & Babson Survey Research Group (Apr 2011), conducted a study on the topic of “Teaching, Learning, and Sharing: How Today’s Higher Education Faculty Use Social Media” where they strongly pointed out that faculties are big users and believers of social media.

Andrew Fiore (January 2012) conducted a study on this topic “Serious social media: On the use of social media for improving students’ adjustment to college” A considerable body of research indicates that social support plays an integral role in determining students’ successful adjustment to college.

Jayshree, Subooh, Swati, (March 2012), focused the study on, “Cutting-edge Library Services Right Away Using Social Networking



Tools”, which depicted about various open source tools available for social networking service to the library community, usage and implementation.

Devi, Krishna, Verma (2016), in their study on “Perception and Use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the Students of Mizoram University (MZU): A Survey.” revealed that the majority of the students are aware of SNSs and using one or more than one social networking sites, where Facebook and YouTube are found as the most commonly used SNSs by the students of MZU.

3. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study has been conducted under the title of “Impact of Social Media Tools on Higher Education: A Case Study”.

At that time of preparing our paper, we have faced some problems during the survey

- ❖ Study has been limited to one university Library only;
- ❖ Face to face interaction was not possible with all the users of the library; and
- ❖ Some students were reluctant to provide data.

4. Objectives of the study

- ❖ To gain knowledge about the importance of social media;
- ❖ Find out awareness of social media tools;
- ❖ Assess impact of the social media in higher education; and
- ❖ To study the advantages and disadvantages of the daily use of social media.

5. Methodology

While conducting to study following method methods have been used to collect necessary information.

- ❖ Questionnaire Method.
- ❖ Observation Method.

70 sets of questionnaires, has been prepared for users for collecting pertinent data and distributed accordingly. During the time of collecting questionnaire, interview method was also applied.

6. Benefits and Uses of SocialMedia in LIS Platforms

Social mediatools are for searching, accessing, organizing, creating, disseminating and analyzing the information. Social media tools are basically a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

The availability of a range of different social media tools for a wide variety of purposes that includes – communication, collaborative content building, multimedia sharing, reviewing & expressing opinions, monitoring etc., have collectively contributed to operate a Library and cooperation of Library Users. Facebook, Twitter, Drupal, MySpace, Library Thing, YouTube, and so on are some of the tools extensively used by libraries. Having knowledge of how to use these tools to design and build a library website, OPAC, provide reference services, alert services and for interacting with users in a more effective and elegant way.

Libraries should spend time on social media applications. To work with the tools available in

social media to respond to library users, to interact, to upload the content, to share and to disseminate is not very difficult. Since the user has the privilege to allocate or share the activity among different persons, it helps to distribute the workload among the library staff. The rich features in social media demands that librarians understand and learn the features; connect to the users for discussion, conversation, and community participation, adopt to different communication modes of choice like telephone, Skype, Instant Messaging (IM), Short Message System (SMS), texting, email, virtual reference, tweets, postings, etc. use of user-driven and user-developed content and commentary and, to understand the activity of the social media crowd. This demands librarians to know about the technology, its application, and user behavior. Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcast, pictures, video, rating and social book marking.

7. Data Analysis & its Interpretation

Analysis of data is an important part in any research work. This study focuses on impact of social media tools in higher education and users of the library of University of Science & Technology, Meghalaya. The study reveals the impacts of social media tools among the library users.

The data collected through questionnaires have been tabulated and analyzed for result and discussion. The graphical representation includes line, pie diagram, bar diagrams. The following section provides an analysis of the respondents received from the responses of the surveyed area.

7.1. Distribution of Questionnaires among the Respondents of Different Discipline

Data shows that amongst the various disciplines 53 respondents have given their responses out of 70 on daily uses of social media in terms of academic matters. Out of disciplines the Applied Biology, Earth science and Library Science has the highest respondents of 100%, then both the department Computer Science and Electronics having 80% respondents while department of Economics has given 60% and from Physics has got 50% of respondents. At the same time students from disciplines of Zoology has only 1 respondent out of 5 questionnaires. So, as per survey and observation, most of the respondents made sincerely put their positive view and they are highly interested to share their experiences with social networking sites to have academic information.

7.2. Daily-basis use of Social Media Tools

While assessing how many hours a student uses the social networking sites daily from the data, it revealed that. Less than 1 hour have got 5.66% respondents, 1-2 hours have got 24.66%, 2-3 hours have got 20.75%, 3-4 hours have got 13.27%, 4-5 hours have got 11.32 % and lastly more than 5 hours have got 24.66% respondents respectively. The maximum respondents use social media 5 hours in a day for academic needs. So, it defined that there is a fundamental role of social media in terms of higher education.

7.3. Purpose of Use

Based on the concerned purpose of use of social media, it can be viewed that, the students of the various disciplines shared the social media in their daily life. Students are using social media to have

important information for various purposes particularly to be aware about recent trends, keeping close contact with family, friends and relatives. As per their comments this kind of communication matters provides necessary benefits in time and save expense to have a proper decision on some events.

7.4. Positive effect of Social Media

Expecting positive effect of social media on library user’s community figure 1 shows percentage of respondent’s separate view.

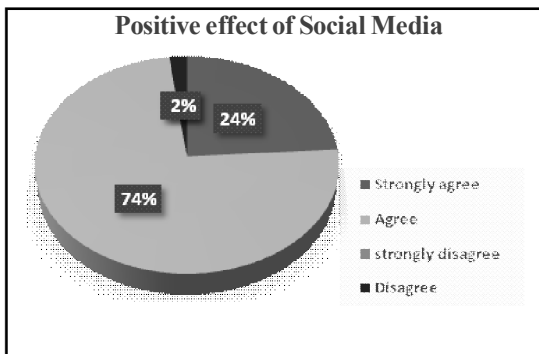


Figure1

7.5. Negative effect of Social Media Tools

Based different view on social media, respondents opined individual negative opinion as follows and the figure 2 reveals its share.

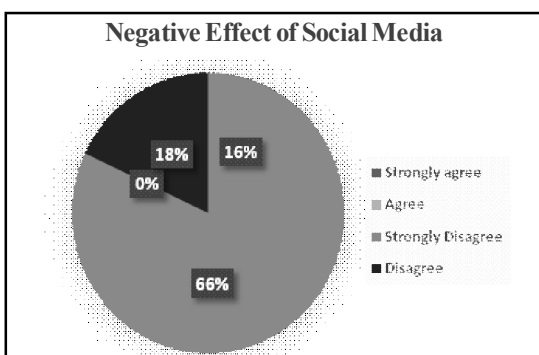


Figure 2

7.6. Problems of Social Media Tools

It has been observed that social media has certain problems which are inseparable at the present social atmosphere.

While trying to point out several problems of social media generated when communicate with different web sites through data, it was observed that,these kinds of problems unaware by 13.51% respondents while 56.29 % respondents never care of such problems though certain trouble create in its application.

7.7. Use of Social Media Tools in Higher Education

Information and communication technology is one of the vital systems in present generation particularly in higher education.

It is observed that respondents have been opined their opinion regarding uses of social media in connection with higher education. Data reveals 47.18% of respondents agree with use of social media to have necessary academic resources, 18.48% remained neutral in terms of higher education information and 6.03% disagree to use social media with reference to higher education

8. Findings

The analyzed data comes up with some findings of the study. These findings would certainly help the researcher’s as well as others to know well about the research topic.:

Among various disciplines the students and faculty members of USTM have given their opinion on daily use of social media in academic life for various purposes. Basically, users are using social media tools to communicate or interact with each other.

Students use their social media accounts for many purposes, the use of social media in education provides students with the ability to get more useful information, to connect with learning groups and other educational systems that make education convenient. Most of the students use their accounts more than 5 hours per day for their academic needs like for study materials, interact with research person, for job variance, workshop and training for various study related aspects as well as for entertainment purpose.

Social media tools also have a dark side. Spending too much of time can also affect on students negatively and it often lead to social media addiction. It has also lead to affect on students' ability to develop strong interpersonal relationships. This survey focused on both positive and negative view of the students and finally it was found that most students positively take the services of social media.

There are also some challenges issues such as safety, privacy, professionalism and setting boundaries are areas of consideration when discussing the opportunities and challenges inherent in a social online setting. Nowadays bullying is also a new kind of trends to harassment.

There are many benefits, advantages or simply it plays important role to implement social media on higher education. The creation of Facebook and WhatsApp groups are recommended for teachers and researchers for good guidance, suggestion and adequate training purpose. students' view from this survey revealed that they clearly focused on to implement social media on academic life, even some of them demanded for some special networking sites for higher education.

9. Recommendations

The findings summarized above and the conclusion drawn thereof lead to the following recommendations of study.

- ❖ To sustain the utility of social media, user should maintain the ethics that might always help the harmony and stability among different section of society. Better uses of social media positively acquire knowledge building and information to make ideal personality.
- ❖ There is a need to support the social media tools, provided users should always aware about its merit and demerit that can drive rational utilization.
- ❖ It is also highly necessary to take measure for awareness on right usage of social media. It may be established a common platform for solidarity and cooperation that can be achieved the nation into zenith of civilization and development at the present century.

10. Conclusion

It is clear from the study that use of social media has been rapidly emerging as a major tool for various purpose among the users' community. Most of the library users are aware of the different social media tools as well as the positive and negative impact of it. The outcome of the research, which has been conducted on the library users community of USTM has come out with both negative and positive effect of the social media tools in the day to day life where negative effects seems greater in terms of positive impacts. Social media is being used mostly for non-academic purpose. Issues like safety, privacy, professionalism and setting boundaries are areas of consideration when discussing the opportunities

and challenges inherent in a social online setting. Social media helps the student to get better at communication and encourages freedom of self-expression, learn new things, exchange ideas and extend contacts, though there are certain disadvantages. As per the response, shared by the students, maximum users spending 5/6 hours in social media in a day which can affect on students' mind and often lead to the addiction. Social media have both negative and positive impact therefore Social media are not the problem- the problem is the specific use and purpose of social media activities that make the difference.

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Note:

Online version of this paper, associated data, files and other supplementary materials are available on Institutional Repository of INFLIBNET Centre. It can be accessed online by scanning QR Code or using following URI:
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