

Social Networking & Learning with Technology: Modern Approaches in Educational Field

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ABSTRACT

Modern approaches in education are manifold in nature and with the explosion of knowledge and expansion of technology, these approaches are breaking the traditional norms and patterns. As there is a thrust for learning all over the world, the domain of education is being adorned with new and new approaches. But as it is very difficult to focus on many of them in a very short span of writing, I delimit my ideas and discussion on basically two approaches. They are- social networking and Learning with technology. The term social networking is nothing but extension of the theory of socialization which is the ultimate goal of educating one self. Through this one can attract and invite thousands of learners, scholars and lovers of education in a common domain. It has been found that the researches, scholars, analytical thinkers and even professional teachers can explore this approach for lifting the level of knowledge through interactive process. Learning with technology – the said approach, is expanding like a snowball every moment in our era. One can demonstrate, focus, enlarge, pin point, and emphasis with the help of technological devices. Today we see online teaching and learning. It can go a long way in spreading education among the adult learners specially the women, wage earners and other deprived person. The present study aims to focus on the above approaches for spreading education in a democratic set up like ours.

Keywords: Modern Education, Social Networking, Learning with Technology

Introduction

In today's world, it isn't that what you know but what you want to know and how fast you can grasp something new. Technology is a non-negotiable tool in the process of gaining knowledge and a competitive advantage in terms of the speed, at which we access that which is new.

In this way, technology brings new opportunities to access information, to create rich technology-based environments where students experience new and challenging things, and to connect students with new and different people, places, and things. Technology can take us to places we have never been or wish to ever go. Technology can connect us with people around the world, who offer different perspectives and experiences. These opportunities result in many types of learning. It is up to classroom teachers, instructional designers, and program developers — essentially every individual involved in education —to ensure that these technology-facilitated opportunities benefit learning and every child's future. Much evidence is a taste of the rich and compelling research studies that demonstrate students learning from technology. Regardless of the means—be it television or computer, or even computer-delivered streaming video—when content is presented with purpose, students can experience the content and attach the new information to that which is already known. This process of creating associations and making meaning is a part of learning. Educational technologies expand our access to new information and support our efforts to make meaning.

The primary goal of this paper is to stimulate research into technology & socially integration enabled assessments that make a joyful relationship building learning and appropriate for the full range of the student population through enhancing accessibility. We explore the concept of accessibility in modern educational approach. In this context, two major themes related to access are emphasized. We have begun with a description of the two approaches which gives importance on preserving construct-related validity when developing methods for increasing access. The study focuses on how technology can be used to provide access to the target knowledge, skills, and abilities. Modern approaches in education are manifold in nature and the explosion of knowledge and expansion of technological approaches are breaking the traditional norms and patterns. They are embracing new & new ideas, attitudes, views and techniques along with their modalities for the sake of better learning of the students. As there is a thrust for learning all over the world, the domain of education is being adorned with and newer approaches. But, as it is very difficult to focus on many of them in a very short span of writing, the researcher has delimited his ideas and

discussion on basically two approaches. They are (a) Social Networking and (b) Learning with technology. The term social networking is nothing but extension of the theory of socialization which is the ultimate goal of educating one self. As the fundamental objective of education is emancipation of all sort of bondage to active all round development, making contact with others have become a very vital and significant approach. Through this one can attract and invite thousands of learners, scholars and lovers of education in a common domain through modern technologies of communication. Through this process, it becomes easy and convenient to interact with others in order to exchange the art & craft of education where skill and experience matter most. In order to make the knowledge more updated, enriched, connected and meaningful to the children, this process becomes highly effective. Through this process, one can enjoy the opportunity of enhancing the boundaries of knowledge, and at the same time disseminate it to others. It has been found that the researches, scholars, analytical thinkers and even professional teachers can explore this approach for lifting the level of knowledge through interactive process. Learning with technology – the said approach, is an essential device for the expansion and reception of knowledge and at the same time assimilation of that knowledge which is expanding like a snowball every moment in our era. Technology is no more confined to the material world dominated by machines for productivity. Different types of technological device, such as – Computer, projector, teaching machine, Mobile, Television etc are very much effective in clarifying the critical areas. One can demonstrate, focus, enlarge, pin point, and emphasize any topic with the help of these technological devices. As they are much more attractive having more than one dimension, they can reach the learner in no time. These serve the purpose of promoting learning amongst students. A teacher alone cannot serve the purpose of reaching thousands of students at a time, but technological device- both video and audio mode can promote learning to a great extent. The scientifically developed country has started online teaching and learning, online evaluations which have removed lots of hurdles from the path of smooth imparting of education to the masses. It can go a long way in spreading education among the adult learners, specially the women, wage earners and other deprived person, bonding the precinct of education by making it more democratic. Over the last few years technological devices in common use have become more diverse to educational field. Today e-learning have very higher expectations on efficiency and effectiveness than before. So this study is trying to find out some applications and development of learning process with our technological, social networking era.

Social Networking

With social networking growing to the point that Technocratic last tracked about 70 million updated blogs, using social networking to teach any subject and catapult students into a realm other than stagnant learning, means blending the traditional education with modern communication, many educators believe that, this is the route to engage students in learning all the basic skills they need.

The use of social media in schools is no longer a head turner, and while some teachers worry that it may be a distraction, many are also finding it to be increasingly useful as a way to connect with other educators, share information on a larger scale and enable students to learn more interactively.

The study, which was carried out by researchers from Bijoy Pal Memorial B.Ed College, Burnpur, Paschim Burdwan, India and Jharkhand Rai University, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India found that social networking sites can help students to become academically and socially integrated, and may even improve learning outcomes.

The researchers held discussions with college students and other research scholars in order to gain an insight into their online social networking experiences and attitude towards using social media for education. They have found that networking websites are used for both social and educational purposes.

Students reported that social media enhanced their relationships, helped them to maintain friendships and enabled them to build and establish virtual relationships.

On the learning side, they reported that social networks allowed them to connect with faculty, share knowledge and commentary, and collaborate with other students through discussions, course scheduling, project management, and educational applications to organize learning activities.

The educational benefits of social networking sites have also been documented in a study conducted by the researchers from Jharkhand Rai University & Bijoy Pal Memorial B.Ed College. The study, which collected data from students aged between 20 to 38 over a period of six months, found that social networking sites helped students to practice their technology skills, develop creativity and communication skills, and be more open to diverse views.

Christine Greenhow, a researcher of learning technologies from the University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development, commented that social networking sites enable students to practice and develop the kinds of 21st century skills that will help them be successful.

“Students are developing a positive attitude towards using technology systems, editing and customizing content and thinking about online design and layout,” she said. “They’re also sharing creative original work like poetry and film and practicing safe and responsible use of information and technology. The websites offer tremendous educational potential.”

Greenhow also pointed out that the study’s results have implications for educators, who now have the opportunity to support what their students are learning through social media.

“As educators, we always want to know where our students are coming from and what they’re interested in, so that we can build on that in our teaching. By understanding how students may positively use these networking technologies in their daily lives and where the unrecognized educational opportunities are, we can help make schools even more relevant, connected and meaningful to kids.”

The study also found that many students are still unaware of the academic and professional opportunities that social media can offer; highlighting to the need for teachers to spend more time on social media and working with students to enhance their experiences on social networking sites.

Researchers have found that excessive use of internet may result in greater impulsivity, less patience, less tenacity and weaker critical thinking skills, which may result from the habit to shift attention rapidly from object to object online, which can weaken an individual’s ability to control their focus.

It is important to help students learn how to use social media in an instrumental way, learn how to think deliberately about their use, and consider the sorts of outcomes for which using social media are proper.

Learning with Technology

Another view found all around the world as well as in India emphasizes on the use of technologies as the key to students improving their learning abilities and their marketability. Within the realm of technologies, teachers encourage students to innovate, bringing them full-circle into the 21st century where survival and stability rule.

In her presentation, Miss Rima talked about how emphasized active learning exercises in flipping her two classes. College students would view video lessons outside of class, and then come into class for guest speakers and hands-on exercises. Students also did role-playing to practice what they learned outside of the class through the videos.

According to the presentation, some students said the flipped classroom pushed them to study the course material more and helped increase their exam scores. Other students said the podcasts gave them a better understanding of the course content.

According to Sumanta, not only course retention improved significantly, but students also reported that they felt less pressured and stressed in the course. Sumanta’s students scored significantly higher on the first two of four essay exams after the classroom had been flipped.

According to the experiment, students formed groups, which included an interviewer, person being interviewed, and a cameraperson. Completed videos, which were created using Media Commons equipment, were shared with the students. Mock interviews were evaluated based on the students’ professional appearance, personality, communication skills, body language, articulation, vocal pitch, and the rate of their speech.

Assignments of research papers and in-class PowerPoint presentations are certainly valuable and are commonly required in various classes. The Power Point of topic is promoting the concise, effective organization of the student’s ideas into the technological presentation.

A course was delivered to online students via Adobe Connect using a microphone headset and two microphones. In this preparation such course delivery is very important, and faculty needs to make sure that all materials, such as YouTube videos, PowerPoint presentations, and websites, are queued up beforehand.

The online learning, E-Assessment is very important part of learning with technology:

Electronic assessment (e-assessment) can be defined as a method where information technology is used for any assessment-related activity.

Electronic examination (e-examination) is intended to serve as summative (final) assessment – e-exam – in order to define the evaluation – grade – for a course. Electronic examination can be defined as ‘a system that involves the conduct of examinations through the web or the intranet’.

E-assessment types are typically categorized into three groups:

- **Diagnostic assessment:** assessment at the beginning of a course to gauge the knowledge levels of students

- **Formative assessment:** assessment during the implementation of the course to clarify the learning so far and to identify needs for additional teaching
- **Summative assessment:** assessment at the end of the course in order to define grades for students

In this era, the researcher found that those types of assessments are very helpful & errorless for learning with technology.

Dr. Sabyasachi gave updates on ETS, which focused on the future of technology, from 3-D printing to virtual reality. It helps folks understand and in some cases, already being applied in the classroom.

All the above mentioned examples are evidence of the study for formulating the decision about learning with technology. The next part is presented highlighting the uses & implementations of technology on learning-teaching process.

Technology: A Tool for Teachers

Teachers have always used tools to help them present the material to be learned. Some of these tools we classify today as "low tech"---such things as chalk and chalkboards, magic markers and poster paper; others by comparison have been more "high tech"---tape recorders, 8 mm movie projectors, film strip projectors, slide projectors, overhead projectors, VCRs, and laser disc players.

Today's newest "high tech" educational tools include computers and interactive software. From a teaching perspective, they offer many advantages ranging from classroom management, recordkeeping, assessment, lesson planning, and lesson presentation. Computer software exists that enables a teacher to accomplish all these tasks and more in less time than traditional methods.

The time saving features of databases, spreadsheets, desk top publishing, and word processing software allow teachers to organize their lessons, their classroom budgets, their communication with parents, and children's IEPs, assessment portfolios, and personal records. Once created and stored on hard drive, the files containing these materials are accessible and available for modifying and updating.

Calendar making programs, graphic programs, and such programs provide teachers with tools for creating posters, classroom calendars (weekly, monthly, yearly), banners, invitations, name tags, and labels. Using authoring software, such as Roger Wagner's *HyperStudio*, teachers can even create their own software that enhances a curricular activity or is individualized for a particular student.

Technology plays an especially essential role for teachers of children with disabilities. Not only does it make some of the routine teaching tasks easier, but technology also allows a teacher to create learning activities and set up inclusive learning environments that enable the child with disabilities to learn and play along with the other children. In addition, special education teachers can take advantage of the plethora of information about disabilities and assistive technology that is posted on various web sites. Resources, chat rooms, and articles can be accessed to provide current, important information to any teacher, no matter how remote or rural her classroom is. Contact can be made with consultants, well-known professionals, and other early childhood colleagues through e-mail for sharing curriculum ideas and gaining resource information. The potential for future uses grows daily as new technologies are created and as inventive teachers realize the power computers have as teaching tools and begin to take advantage of their capabilities.

Computers are extremely patient and uncritical when children make mistakes---marvelous characteristics which make them quite effective for young children's learning. Not only that, the newer interactive software allows young children to explore and experiment in a safe environment where there is no wrong answer and where a child may experience success, sometimes for the first time.

Assistive technologies, including computers and adaptive devices (e.g., switches, alternative keyboards, touch tablets) provide children with disabilities a variety of tools that encourage autonomous behavior and increase the probability that they will interact with their environment (Hutinger, 1996). Both verbal and nonverbal children can use the computer as a communication tool. Software provides both subjects and purpose for conversations for those who are able, and willing, to speak. Social interactions among children using the computer occur spontaneously and should be encouraged. Children for whom verbal communication and/or social interaction is difficult, are motivated to increase skill in these areas through their interactions with the computer.

The potential technology for all children is beyond anything in past educational experiences. But in and of itself technology is no magic wand. To be effective, it must be used and used appropriately. Simply having technologies available for children is not enough.

Technology Integration

Effective technology integration means teachers must change teaching strategies and move from teacher-centered activities to those that are learner centered; that they must become facilitators and collaborators; and that instruction must move from memorization to problem solving.

The teacher's role involves arranging the classroom environment (both the physical environment and the learning environment) to give children access to the technology. In addition, the teacher must plan appropriate developing activities that are available to the children throughout the day. Computer software can be used to introduce a new concept or to reinforce a concept that has been introduced through various traditional methods. An effective teacher drops the 'expert' role and becomes a 'facilitator' to the children's learning by setting up an appropriate environment and designing curriculum activities that reinforce key concepts both on and off computer.

Ideally, classrooms have a technology center in addition to the traditional block center, writing center, art center, housekeeping center, and so on. They may work individually or gather around the technology in small groups. The teachers also use the technology with both large and small groups, depending on the activity. Children with physical disabilities or language impairments may access to their assistive technology throughout the day.

Over the years Technological Projects has been involved with young children, teachers, and assistive technology. But we have witnessed many teachers practicing the negative impact of technology, which include using computers for drill and practice, allowing only one child to sit at the computer at a time, limiting children's turns on the computer to no more than 5 minutes, and using the computer as a reward. Teachers using these practices typically do so because they haven't been exposed to alternatives. They've simply made gut-reaction decisions about technology use in their classrooms.

Technology training is critical. Without training, without the opportunities to learn to use the equipment for themselves, teachers may have difficulty being motivated or comfortable using the technology in their classroom environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the two modern approaches in educational field we've outlined, may improve how we build up social relationship, deliver and manage learning material. This research, however, suggests that many students are more willing to have their access to technology due to its manifold features that are helping them in their study. In this writing, development of educational process to learn and implement innovative assessments through various modern approach, basically Social networking & learning with technology are given importance. The study continues to emphasize on the importance of educating all students well and accounting for all students' learning. The possibility of improving what we assess and how we assess it with technology is real. Extensive research into learning with technology provides conclusive evidence that people can, and do, learn from educational technologies. We take advantage of technology in our modern educational approach, a principled program of research is needed for proper development and use of technology-enabled universally designed assessments. At some point, it may be that, access features are so thoroughly understood and commonly used that building accessible socially integrated, and may even improve learning outcomes. So, this study is very significant for time and quality improvement, which do more user-interfaces, manage text adjustments, many different translation, voiceover in different languages and content updates.

At the same time, learning is not a guaranteed outcome. Lack of purpose in the design of instructional content and the strategies employed to present that content in a technology-based environment can cause programs to fail. And in the classroom, even a well-designed program can fail. With ever increasing choices for both technology (i.e., films, video, multimedia, or Internet) and content, the need is unprecedented for thoughtful, purposeful use, carefully aligned with complementary classroom instruction and desired learning outcomes. Thoughtful attention to the content that is developed and the availability of that content to students via technology & social networking will enable educators to ensure that such opportunities benefit the learning of children in their charge.

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