Analysing the contribution of Social Media towards Management Research in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT: Social media has transformed the communication landscape for higher education institutions with students being the key driver of change. Higher education institutions understand that they need to keep up and embrace social media. Over 90 percentages of institutions now use social media to market to, and recruit, top talent. The present study aims to understand the importance of social media in higher education. The study also attempts to define the drivers of social media adoption among students. Social Media has contributed significantly towards the management research in higher education. It has the "Insert Citation" button to add citations to this document. As aided the students towards strategic decision making with regard to their career objectives and has been a dynamic source for streamlining the choices in their area of interest. The study has been proposed to disclose the current state of penetration of social media among students of higher education institutions and analyse its contribution towards management research.

Key Words: Education, Social Media, Adoption, Strategic decision making

Introduction:
The importance of the Internet as commercial platform is by now universally recognized, and businesses increasingly adopt online marketing channels at the cost of traditional ones. The social media, being second generation (Web 2.0) internet applications, allow interaction, one-to-one communication, customer engagement, and user generated content.

Recent research has signposted that recently social media has stabbed all sort of organizations across the world. Higher Educational Institutions have adopted Social Media platform globally to make them recognised amongst students with the help of Social networking sites, blogs, messengers and virtual communities. With the rise of social media platforms, users in the form of students and different stakeholders got updated with the recent happenings and numerous possibilities for establishing their learning and teaching environment. The omnipresence behaviour of social media makes it suitable for different level of stakeholders like administrators, managers, learners as well as teachers in higher education.
A report by "We are Social" and "HOOTSUIT" states that more than 3.8 billion people around the world use the internet today, up 38 million since January 2017. This one percent increase takes global internet penetration to 51 percent. 110 million people started using social media over the past three months, taking the global total to more than 2.9 billion users. This means that social media users are still increasing at a rate of more than one million per day – that’s 14 new users every second. (Statcounter 2017). According to the study, much of that growth came from India, where 22 million people joined Facebook in the past three months alone. What’s more, with almost 250,000 new users in the country every day, there’s a good chance that India will overtake the US to become Facebook’s most active market within the next two months. By that time, Facebook should be very close to passing the staggering two billion global MAU milestone too.

Social media, a term describing a wide range of a new generation internet applications, has been the issue of intense debate and commercial interest. Central themes in this debate are the effects of the social media on human behavior (Barker, 2009; Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006), their aptitude as educational environments (Augustsson, 2010; Kabilan, Ahmad, & Abidin, 2010), and their potential as marketing instruments (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; Ghauri, Lutz, & Tesfom, 2003; Kim, Jeong, & Lee, 2010; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Spaulding, 2010).

**Objectives:**

- To study the growth of social media platforms for strategic decision making in Higher Education
- To study the Adoption of Social media Driversunder students fraternity in Higher Education.

**Role of Social Media in Higher education**

It is commonly known to the students of Higher Education in India that several educational institutions across country are brilliantly using social media platform for establishing networks and peer relationships with the students of different streams and locations to bring them together on a single platform.
The social networking site Facebook is primarily like a clear winner because of its large number of members. It allows its users/members for content creation, sharing of their contents, building relationships and enabling collaborations as well as global connectivity irrespective of their geographical locations. It was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and was designed as a closed online social network, available only for Harvard University staff and students which further extended to other universities and companies like Apple and Microsoft.

The key attraction which recommends Facebook as a valuable tool in the field of education are:

- Around 96% University / College Students are now using Facebook.
- Around 79% Students won’t believe that multitasking i.e. checking facebook while studying negatively affects their Grades.
- Around 20% of students that uses Social Media accepted that they are deeply connected with their institution on FB Page.
- Around 75% College students reported that they wish to Join their Alma Mater on its FB Official Page.
**Highlights of Facebook**

- With the help of Facebook, teachers may build custom list of students as well as managing different groups of students on conventional topics related to their courses.
- They use Facebook for Information Exchange through photos, multimedia content, web-links i.e. related to specific subjects;
- They use Facebook for Creating Surveys and Enumerating the Feedback.
- Facebook is used for online chat so as to establish direct communication between students and teachers.
- Facebook is also used for broadcasting news for tests, exams or face to face meetings, pleasure, pride, grievances etc.
- Facebook is sometimes used for integrating services like Google Docs, SurveyMonkey and similar more as an integrated eLearning platform.

**Twitter**

Now a day, higher education requires students to get engaged in self-regulated learning process which is somehow most difficult learning process (Oliver, 2001). This issues may lead to disengagement and higher drop-out rates amongst several students because of non-maintenance of proper student and teacher relationship (Veletsians and Navarrete, 2012). Herrington et al. (2005) found that online courses which were published on social media platform for information dissemination were held responsible for emphasizing on courses and their learning outcomes.

Actually, Twitter is considered as a micro blogging service based on WEB 2.0 technology which is American online news and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Tweets were originally restricted to 140 characters, but since November 7, 2017, this limit was doubled for all languages except Japanese, Korean, and Chinese. Twitter offers some advantages that can be emphasized in the educational processes:

- **Exploration Tool for students:** Student can quickly search for specific phrases, topics over different forums, key figures etc. Students can easily find out dozens of related blogs and figures as well as appropriate websites as per their need.
- **Information Broadcasting Centre:** Students can easily get update about scheduled meetings, date of tests and examinations and even update for different seminars and conferences on time.
- **Collaborative Assignment:** With this feature of Twitter, now teachers can inspire their students to use Twitter as a platform to work in collaboration with their classmates. So sharing some interesting links, helping others on different topics can be an easy task with Twitter.
- **Classroom Hashtags:** Students may create unique hashtags for their classrooms so that it may be treated as virtual classroom for both teachers and students so that they can share something amongst all.
- **Facilitate Research:** Students may receive some ideas, Typing keywords into Twitter’s search engine yields every microblog entry on the subject, providing an excellent way for students to research ideas, opinions and movements as they happen.
- **Helps in Tracking News:** Students may came to know about new arrivals like books, magazines, journals, tabloids etc.
- **Teachers can set also up surveys** and collect feedback information.
Lee and McLoughlin (2008) has coined social networking sites as an informative gears and now learners can take advantage of exploring innovative information and communication of such knowledge to others too. Such acceptability may lead to exclude professor's disinclination and obviously to validate their social networking links for obtaining basic solutions and maintaining a consistent tad with their students (Roblyer et al., 2010) which ultimately encourages collective expansion of knowledge.

**Contribution of Social Media:**

**In Effective Research**

With the use of Google Trends to "predict the present" we can make a prediction i.e. what public is thinking and what is its potential on specific stuff. It's a crucial matter and only social media has capability to predict about what's going on in the audience mind and thus can surely fill the gap.

The reasons behind giving an importance to quantify the contribution of social media activities because social media data are deemed precious for Organisations to assess performance (Senior, 2015) and off coarse to support individual (El-Sayed and Westrup, 2011).

**Social Media Influence in College Selection**

College Selection for students are the most terrific job for them because of their expectations and encountered reality. Somehow, social media is now trying to bridge this gap honestly with User Generated Content (UGC). So that students can easily understand the reality of institutions and their depths in connection with academics and corporates.

**Social media as a tool for student recruitment**

Students selection are always considered as a major challenge for institutions i.e. right students for right course and in recent years, several factors have spiked this pressure. Facing competitions from new online providers, more classy selection procedure by students and waning applicants pool, institutions must apply innovative tactics to attract students into their sanctified mansions.

**Social media as a tool to promote innovation & research**

Scholarly journals and faculties talking about opportunities can do an unbelievable job of reaching researchers. Thus to upkeep these old-fashioned promotional efforts, now institutions should employ social media to help and to elevate consciousness about their research innovations amongst the community of students.

**Proposed Model for Strategic Decision making using Social Media**

The social media model for educational use of social networking is proposed to develop the efficacy of social networking sites that can be used for learning and teaching.

The proposed framework is comprised of four main elements:

1. Expansion of Cognizance Metrics which may refer to the key indicators i.e. used to quantify social media contributions
2. Expansion of Commitment Metrics which may refer to the number of persons who are interacting with the contents
3. Adaptation Metrics which may ultimately demonstrate the effectiveness of Social Engagements
4. Consumer Metrics which ultimately replicates the thinking of active customers about the said brand

![Fig 3 Proposed model of social media contribution in higher education](image)

**Cognizance Metrics:** This may focus on existing as well as budding researchers to which an organisation can trust upon. It comprises of following entities which are need to be focused individually:

- **Brand:** Brand awareness for a specific span of time which may generates relevant information about the authenticity of content source.
- **Audience:** The audience growth rate which must be increased in progressive manner as it plays a vital role in social media inflation.
- **Potential Reach:** Social marketer should always work to expand their audience so that the post can be viewed in proper span of time.

**Commitment Metrics:** Individuals are intermingling with users content, so that necessary actions can be taken appropriately. It comprises of following entities which are need to be focused individually:

- **Approval Actions:** Results in number of approval actions i.e. reactions, likes, smileys etc. over a post from the followers where they acknowledges values in the content user posts.
- **Engagement Rate:** Shares and comments over posts which represents higher engagement rates from audience.
- **Amplification Rate:** Higher amplification rate represents more willingness of followers who wish to associate them with users brand.
- **Virality Rate:** Irrespective of number of likes, social media evangelists should take care of number of unique views which ultimately creates sensation towards virality of content.

**Adaptation Metrics:** This establishes usefulness of social engagements that turns into real consumer base.

**Conversion Rate:** Those who were taking action against their post views

**Bounce Rate:** Least bothered about the contents and posts and quickly left the page as soon as they get into the content. Lower of Social media bounce rate proves that social media campaigns are aiming at right audience.

**Consumer Metrics:** Represents how consumers are feeling about the Institution i.e. their likes and dislikes

- **Recommendation:** Results of customer’s happiness in the form of comments, endorsements, reviews, assessment etc.
- **Satisfaction Score:** Generates scores for happy customers where they rate their satisfaction on a linear scale, either numerically (e.g., one to 10) or sentimentally (e.g., Poor, Fair, Good, Great, Excellent).

**Conclusion**

Since, digital marketing are now considered to be a weapon today, which has lots of potential and obviously holding competitive edge with their users. Thus, its unique selling proposition i.e. USP is providing toughest competition to its users who are directly or indirectly associated with their institutions. Specially, when it comes to education system, many of the institutions are now on its way. Therefore need to tell public, why it is different from the rest and what are its values? Irrespective of its anonymous cons, changing Social Media dynamics are now ready to play significant role in the advancement of Education System and their associates in research contributions with social media platforms. With the help of proposed models, it's now
giving clear indication that, acceptability and user engagements are two major parameters which plays a significant role in its adaptability. Finally, recommendations and satisfaction scores has given ample amount of heat to the budding researchers about their content’s background. Lastly we can say that, social media has resulted informed students and in higher educational institutions must embrace this budding technology for penetrating further.

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