An analysis of students' attitudes towards the use of social media for the purpose of learning with special reference to Vidyasagar University

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Abstract

Examining the social networking habits of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students was the goal of the study. The ongoing advancement of the online era has permanently transformed how students interact and communicate. focused on a descriptive, analytical approach. In order to create best practices for its application in EFL teaching and learning in Indian contexts, the report presents suggestions for additional research in this field. The majority of poll respondents are upbeat about social networking's effect on their English language learning.

Keywords: Social network, academic purpose, students attitude

1.Introduction

The ongoing development of the internet era has permanently altered how students interact and communicate. An crucial factor in this growth is the creation of so-called social networking websites on the Internet, which have grown into virtual communities where people can connect, share information, and—possibly most importantly—form and cultivate lifelong connections. Nowadays, the majority of college-level students regularly use social networking websites like Facebook and My Space, which could have a big impact on their learning and study habits. The emergence of social media changed both the landscape of communication and interpersonal relationships. In addition to simply enjoying it, one can also create their own digital material. Social media use promotes user interaction and teamwork to support a learner-centered environment. Social media technology have significantly changed how individuals learn, exchange knowledge, and come up with new ideas, in addition to how businesses, communities, and people engage and socialize. These new technologies are being used by students of today more frequently. The reason why Web 2.0 social media technologies are so prevalent in students' social life is because the internet generation, often known as the "digital natives," has grown up with them.

Through social media

"Media," or "media" (plural), is another word with several definitions. I will argue that it has two distinct meanings that are relevant to teaching and learning and that neither of them should be confused with definitions of technology. The word "medium" has a Latin root that both denotes something that is "in the middle" (a median) and "that which intermediates or interprets." Actively creating content and/or communicating is necessary for media, as is receiving and comprehending communication and the technologies that are used to transmit the medium. According to the definition of social media provided by Kaplan and Haenlin (2010),Social media platforms allow the use of text, music, video, photographs, podcasts, and other multimedia messages. Social media is undoubtedly one of the most effective sources of news and information in today's social climate thanks to websites like Twitter, Facebook, and wikis. Ralph & Ralph, 2013, p. 451. Therefore, social media refers to any of the numerous technological tools available online that let people easily communicate and share resources.

According to Prensky (2006), our students are no longer "little versions of us," as they formerly may have been. In fact, kids are so unlike us that neither our 20th century knowledge nor our training can help us decide what is best for their educational growth. Since our students are digital natives, we won't be able to keep up with their ongoing evolution and transformation (p. 9).

Today's students frequently use social technology, as they have done in prior years. Despite initially being perceived as a technology type utilized largely for social and entertainment purposes, it has slowly being changed for use in education (Top, 2012).

There are several accessible and cost-free apps available in app stores that could benefit the academic community. The use of these programs helps to create a culture that is centered on social media, which affects how individuals communicate, share information, and learn (Mao, 2014). Lau (2012) asserts that online social networks motivate students to begin their academic pursuits. Students that use social networking websites online have extensive contact and knowledge exchange opportunities at their disposal, which can aid in their knowledge expansion. Mao (2014) examined social media's advantages for high school students, as well as their views and beliefs toward contemporary technologies, as well as the difficulties and worries that come with using social media. The findings indicated that students' attitudes and opinions towards the use of social media in the classroom are positive. Students specifically mentioned that they loved utilizing social media for homework or personal study after school and that it may improve their learning. Many students, however, thought that social media was a time-waster and a distraction.

Teachers are now using these online tools into their courses because they see how social media might completely change the way that learning is done. Social media tools improve the educational philosophy that encourages students to create, work on, and share knowledge with audiences around the globe outside of the classroom (Seo, 2013). Nevertheless, many institutions are still confused of how to transform education using social media technologies (Barnes & Tynan, 2007).

Students utilize these websites to interact and communicate with friends and other people. Students also utilize it to share knowledge, look for information, and look for answers to problems related to their academic interests. Therefore, students are actively using social networking sites for a variety of projects and activities in an effort to better their learning. It's crucial to introduce new technologies to education cautiously and wisely. Such an area encourages in-depth study, where the conclusions of several academic studies are discussed. Before social networking sites can be utilized as a teaching tool and integrated into the learning process, more study must be done to determine its worth as a learning environment [21, 4]. This study's goal is to understand how students feel about using social networking sites for studying.

2.Literature Review

According to the Indian Gazette website, a study has been released recently on social media in the Arab world. "According to the report, Indians are the most active social media users in the Arab region, with an estimated 393,000 using Twitter and nearly four million using Facebook" (Fatany, 2012, p. 1).

Asiri and Alqarni (2015) explored the main advantages of using Twitter for EFL. The study presented the potential benefits of using Twitter as an educational tool among high school students in Jeddah, inside and outside their schools. The study showed a positive effect of Twitter in the learning and educational process especially on English language learning process.

Kutbi (2015) conducted a study on how undergraduate female students in the Kingdom of Indian Arabia Perceive the social media website Twitter as an educational Tool. The results of the study found that high percentage of the participants, 84%, prefer the use of Twitter as a learning tool. This high percentage proves that youth has a huge growing interest in technology. According to the Internet World Stats, 53% of Twitter users around the world are females and 77 % of them are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five (Internet World Stats, 2013).

3. Research Method

This study used a quantitative research design based on a survey method through questionnaires. The analytical, descriptive method has been used. The survey method employed in this research because it is an efficient way of collecting information from a large number of respondents.

4. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

i. To investigate students' perception on social media.

ii. To discover students' perception towards adopting social network as an learning platform.

iii. To identify the differences on students' perception attitudes on social media as tool for language learning.

iv. To determine the perception of social networking used in academic purposes. In what ways do Indian students use social networking in learning activities?

5. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study stems from the fact of the great role that played by social media in language learning

6. Research Questions

This study examined the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of Indians students towards the use of social media in the EFL learning the language?

2. For what did the students make use of social media?

3. How did the students prefer to access the social media?

7. Population of the Study

The population of the study was the final year undergraduate students in Vidyasagar University, they were 30 in number.

8. Instruments

The primary data for this research study was collected through a questionnaire; the data of the questionnaire was collected from30 respondents. In addition, this collected data lead this research study to the exploration of the attitudes of social media on student's learning performance.

9. Data Analysis and Discussions

Table 1- I have social network accounts, such as WhatsApp, Facebook or Twitter accounts

	F	P
Agree	29	96
Disagree	1	4
Not sure		
		100

From Table above, it is evident that 96% of the respondents in this survey seem to believe that they have social network accounts, such as WhatsApp, Facebook or Twitter accounts. Whereas 4% have not.

Table 2- I believe social networks such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter could be used in a classroom setting

	F	P
Agree	19	64
Disagree	8	26
Not sure	3	10
		100

As the above table shown 64% believe that social media tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter could be used in a classroom setting. While 26% do not believe so. And only 10 % were not sure.

Table 3- Social media have enhanced my FL learning

	F	P
Agree	24	80
Disagree	6	20
Not sure		
		100

80% of the respondents have strong believe that social media have enhanced their FL learning. While 20% disagree with the statement.

Table4- Social media have changed my FL learning culture

	F	P
Agree	16	54
Disagree	6	20
Not sure	8	26
		100

As for the notion 'Social media have changed my FL learning culture' 54% come to be in favour. In addition 20% were against the idea, whereas 26% were not sure.

Table 5- Make my learning, interesting and more convenient

	F	P
Agree	17	57
Disagree	6	20
Not sure	7	23
		100

The above table illustrated that 57% of the respondents seen that social media have made their learning more interesting, and convenient. While 20% disagreed with the very same idea. And 23% were not sure.

Table 6- Social media providing the chances of learning English language

	F	P
Agree	25	84
Disagree	2	6
Not sure	3	10
		100

As shown in the above table 84% seen that social media providing better chances of learning English language. 6% disagreed with the same statement, while only 10% were not sure.

Table7- Social media is a good place to have discussions with "guest speakers" both from inside and outside the Kingdom.

	F	P
Agree	23	74
Disagree	4	13
Not sure	4	13
		100

74% of the respondents and as above table shown with idea that social media consider a good platform of having discussion with guest speakers from inside and outside the Kingdom. In addition 13% were in disagreement with the very statement. While 13% were not sure.

Table8- Improve my communication with teachers and classmate

	F	P
Agree	22	74
Disagree	2	6
Not sure	6	20
		100

As for the statement 'Social media improve my communication with teachers and classmates' 74% were in agreement with idea. While only 6% in disagreement. And 20% were not sure.

Table 9- Social media negatively affects my attention span

	F	P
Agree	2	7
Disagree	8	26
Not sure	20	67
		100

Only 7% of the respondents seen that social media negatively has affect their attention span. 26% disagreed, whereas 67 % which represented the majority were not sure.

Table10- Help me become an independent learner

	F	P
Agree	20	67
Disagree	4	13
Not sure	6	20
		100

'Help me become an independent learner' as for this statement the majority of the respondent with 67% were believed that social media has helped them to be independent learners. Only 13% were in disagreement. In addition 20% were not sure.

Table 11- Assist gaining more information on different subjects

	F	P
Agree	26	84
Disagree	2	6
Not sure	2	6
		100

The bulk of the respondents with 84% assured that social media assisted them to gain more information on different subjects. Whereas only 6% were in disagreement. In addition 6% were not sure.

Table12- Improve my language skills

	F	P
Agree	28	94
Disagree	2	6
Not sure		
		100

As the above table displayed 94% of the respondents come to agree with idea that social media greatly have improved their language skills. While only 6% were disagree with the very same idea.

Table 13- Social media help me to contact as well interact with classmates

	F	P
Agree	28	94
Disagree	2	6
Not sure		
		100

94% of the respondents come to show their agreement with the statement that social media magnificently have helped them to contact as well interact with their classmates. While only 6% were disagree with the very same notion.

Table 14- Using social media to me is time consuming

	F	P
Agree	12	40
Disagree	14	4
Not sure		46
		100

'Using social media to me is time consuming' for this notion 40% of the respondents believed that the usage of social media is time consuming. While only 4% were in disagreement with idea. And 46% which were the majority were not sure.

Table 15- I do not think social media offers any benefit to me professionally

	F	P
Agree	4	13
Disagree	16	54
Not sure	10	33

100

As shown in the above table only 13% of the respondents did not think that social media offers them any chances or benefits to them professionally. 54% were in disagreement with same idea. And 33% of them were not sure.

Conclusion

The major objective of this study was to investigate students' perceptions of social media-supported language learning. According to the findings, social media can be a highly powerful teaching tool. The findings of this study clearly show that the current generation of English language students at Vidyasagar University prefer to use social media for both social and educational objectives. There aren't many kids who don't have positive attitudes about using social media, but there aren't many of them either. According to the corpus of research, social media can be a helpful learning tool and has positive effects on education. In order to completely comprehend how experienced EFL students use social media in their lectures and to develop best practices for incorporating social media into EFL teaching and learning in Indian contexts, more study is required in this area, according to the paper.

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