

**SOCIAL NETWORKING AND EDUCATION****Rajshree vaishnav, Ph.D.** AssociateProfessor, PG Department of Education,
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Education, Nagpur (M.S.) India**Abstract**

Nowadays the social networking websites are increasingly attracting the attention of all possible users around the world. Social networking sites are helpful not only to stay in touch with friends but also beneficial for educational purposes in many ways. The present paper describes the features of various social networking sites which are useful to enhance the learning and teaching processes. The social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Myspace, Ning, Google +, Tumlr, etc. provide incredibly rich communication, pictures, audio recordings, video recordings and can be freely shared by anyone with a connection to the internet.

Keywords: - Social networking sites, learning and teaching processes

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INTRODUCTION

Social networking websites have become increasingly integrated into the way many people today act, think, and relate to each other. Social networking has a multitude of implications in the field of education and these impact students, educators, administrators, and parents alike. Various social networking sites can be utilized to further students' academic and personal development, particularly in the context of an ever-changing globalized society. The hundreds of people around world are using various networking sites for the educational purposes. Social networking services usually means an individual-centred service and allow users to share ideas, pictures, posts, activities, events, interests with people in their network.

MEANING OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

There are various meaning and definitions of social networking sites, some of them are:

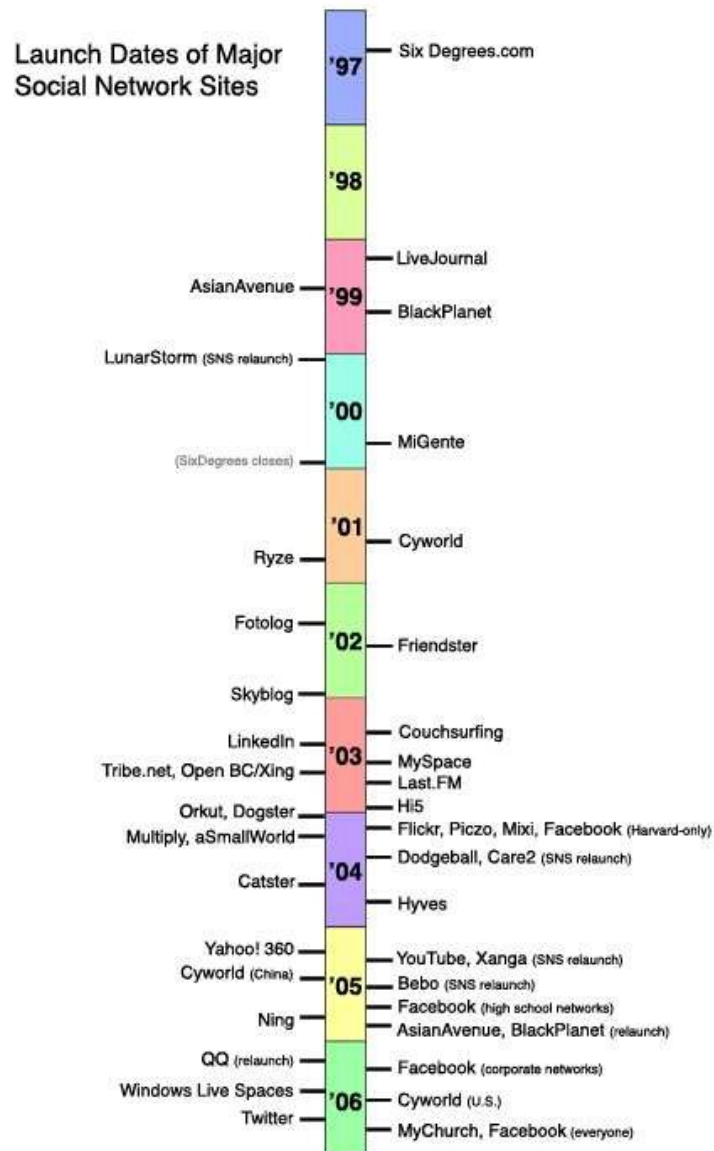
- A social network site focuses on building and reflecting of social networks or social relations among people
- Social networking sites are interactive communication in which participants in online communities such as Facebook, blog, share thoughts, photos, etc. with members of their own personal networks in a controlled way
- The process of building online communities, often accomplished both through 'groups' and 'friends lists' that allow greater interaction on websites.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking is the biggest industry of present time it has come a long way to reach the present status. Geocities was among the first social networking sites on the internet, launching its website in 1994. Its aim was to allow users to create their own websites, dividing them into “cities” based on the website’s content. Some of the first popular sites were TheGlobe.com and classmates.com was launched in 1995, offering users the ability to interact with people who held the same interests and publish their own content. In 1997 after 2 years sixdegrees.com and AOL messenger were launched.

Some other websites like frienster, Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, Ning, Google + e.t.c. started to popup. Social networking has come a long way since 1978, and we will all witness its evolution for years to come, forever changing the way people connect with one

Social networking presents a huge opportunity for schools, universities and other educational organisations to reach out and connect with students and prospective students. Social networking benefits not only students but also provides new opportunities for communication amongst teachers and educators.



DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

SOME FAMOUS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking has a multitude of implications for the field of education and these impact students, educators, administrators, and parents alike. We can see the challenges and opportunities offered by these sites and analyze how social networking sites can be utilized to further students' academic and personal development, particularly in the context of an ever-changing globalized society. Social networking could become a vital part of the education environment if implemented effectively.

Some famous social networking sites such as Face-book, Google+, Ning ,Twitter, Tumblr, Foursquare, Myspace and Youtube can be used effectively for the educational purpose.

Facebook

The facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, 23, while studying psychology at Harvard University. He had developed several social networking sites for his fellow students. The Facebook name was taken from the sheets of papers distributed to , profiling students ,freshmen and staff. Within 24 hours, 1,200 Harvard students had signed up, and after one month, over half of the undergraduate population had a profile. After the address was purchased for \$200,000, in August 2005 it became facebook.com.

As of September 2006, the network was extended beyond educational institutions to anyone with a registered email address. The site remains free to join, and makes a profit through advertising revenue. During 2007, the site's features have continued to develop. Facebook users employ a number of features including notes (blog), Share pictures or educational videos, chat with teachers, joining informative pages, starting groups,, and writing on other's walls. Through these experiences, users develop their self-concept and affiliate identities to create their image.

Twitter

Twitter is an online social networking service and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters, known as "tweets". It was founded by Jack Dorsey Evan Williams, Biz Stone and Noah Glass and launched in 6th July 2006. With the help of the twitter teacher and students can Tweet and Re-tweet, there is also a facility of Direct Messaging, we can also Follow People & any educational Topics, they can share educational Links, Photos and Videos. Registered users can read and post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. In twitter teachers or students can upload photo or video related to the topic, able to make groups and can send instant messages to the group or private messages to the group members.

Myspace

In 2003 myspace was founded by Chris DeWolfe and Tom Anderson, and was later acquired by News Corporation in July 2005. Myspace is one of the popular social networking sites. Its headquarters are in Beverly Hills, California, US, where it shares an office building with its immediate owner, Fox Interactive Media, owned by News In the beginning, MySpace was more popular with high school students. The main features in MySpace include the ability to modify and build a user profile according to already made themes. The regular features are Bulletins, that are posts on the users' page for students and teachers ; Group feature that allows users to share a common board; MySpace IM, which is an instant messaging feature;

MySpace TV which is a video-sharing feature for teachers and students; MySpace Mobile, and News which allows access to users' mobile and news respectively; Classified section to post ads; Karaoke section; Polls and forums that can be shared with other users. MySpace launched an email service in July 2009 where users could get an @myspace.com email address with unlimited file storage.

Ning

Ning is also one of the popular social networking sites. It was launched in October 2005. It enables communities to organize around interests and passions and fully express what makes them unique. Ning offers a fairly wide degree of flexibility in customizing the look and feel of your site.

Ning is a platform which allows teachers and students to network through the different technical features available on the site, including sharing content and threaded conversations. Educators can customize to a larger extent than on some other platforms, and pay for some services. Educators can integrate your social network into your external website. On Ning, Teachers choose which features they want on their social network and set them up exactly the way they want. Teachers can choose to put their network in any language they would like. On Ning, an educator has full access to their member data. The network comes with branded embeddable widgets for photos slideshows, videos, music and podcasts, as well as network badges that teachers and students can embed anywhere on the web and that send new visitors back to the network.

Tumblr

Tumblr is a social networking website founded by David Karp and owned by Yahoo! Inc and launched in 2007. Tumblr allows users to post content and see content posted by other users they follow. Tumblr is the combination of blogging platform and social network. It is the site as a kind of combination of Facebook and Twitter, to share photos and other Internet "memes." The service allows teachers to post multimedia and other content related to the topic to a short-form blog. Students can follow other students' blogs, as well as make their blogs private. Much of the website's features are accessed from the "dashboard" interface, where the option to post content and posts of followed blogs appear. Another feature is Queue in which teachers are able to set up a schedule to delay posts that they make. Another important feature is HTML editing where an educator can edit their blog's theme HTML coding to control the appearance of their blog. Users are also able to use a custom domain name for their blog.

Youtube

On February 14 2005 the Youtube was Founded by Chad Hurley, Steven Chen, and Jawed Karim.The domain name "YouTube.com" was activated on February 14, 2005, and the website was developed over the subsequent months. The creators offered the public a preview of the site in May 2005, six months before YouTube made its official debut. The site allows the educator and learner to upload,view and share the videos.and it makes use of Adobe Flash Video and HTML5 technology to display a wide variety of user generated and corporate media video. Available content includes video clips, TV clips, music videos, and other content such as video blogging, short original videos, and educational videos.Unregistered users can watch videos, and registered users can upload an unlimited number of videos.All youtube users can upload the videos from 15 minutes to the 12 hours in length.

Google +

This application is owned and operated by Google.In January 2013, they surpassed Twitter as the second largest social networking site in the world.Amongst other websites like Facebook, it stands out because it also combines aspects of Twitter. The social platform is the same in the sense that students can find their friends and teachers, share pictures, post educational videos and make comments. In addition, just like Twitter, students can follow other users, Unlike Twitter, however, there are no word limits to posts the information. The best part of all is that users can include different groups of students and teachers, known as “circles” and post to them all separately.

MERITS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

1. Social networking sites spread information faster than any other media.
2. Social networking sites help students do better at school.
3. Social networking sites allow people to improve their relationships
4. Social media helps empower an educator
5. Being a part of a social networking site can increase a schools outcome
6. Social networking sites facilitate face-to-face interaction.
7. Social media facilitates educational change
8. Social networking sites help students who are socially isolated or shy connect with teachers and students
9. Social media allows for quick, easy dissemination of useful information.

10. Social networking provides academic research to a wider audience, allowing many people access to previously unavailable educational resources
11. Social networking sites offer teachers a platform for collaboration with other teachers and communication with students outside the classroom.
12. Colleges and universities use social media to recruit and retain students

DEMERITS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING

1. Social media enables the spread of unreliable and false information.
2. Students who are heavy social media users tend to have lower grades.
3. Social networking sites entice students to waste time.
4. The use of social networking sites is correlated with personality and brain disorders, such as the inability to have in-person conversations, a need for instant gratification, ADHD, and
5. Self-centered personalities, as well as addictive behaviors.
6. Social media causes students to spend less time interacting face-to-face
7. Social networking sites facilitate cyberbullying.
8. Students who use social networking sites are prone to social isolation.
9. Children may endanger themselves by not understanding the public and viral nature of social networking sites.
10. Social networking enables cheating on school assignments.
11. Social networking sites' advertising practices may constitute an invasion of privacy.
12. Social media can facilitate inappropriate student-teacher relationships.
13. Using social media can harm students' chances for college admissions.
14. Social networking site users are vulnerable to security attacks such as hacking, identity theft, and viruses.

CONCLUSION

Social networking sites come in many variety with different features. Social networking sites allow the user to connect with other people of similar interest and background. Some of the social networking sites such as Facebook, Google+, Ning ,Twitter ,Tumblr, Foursquare, Myspace and Youtube can use for the educational purpose. These social networking websites have unique or similar features with the help of which a teacher can upload and share the various documents, information and photos or videos which will help to enhance the teaching learning process. As a reflection of this, we have identified some of the potentials and pitfalls from our use of different social networking sites in the education which warrant serious consideration prior to adoption. It is also recommended that further researches into the use of

different social networking sites and its application as a tool to the education in order to guide the establishment of such policy for the benefit of staff, students, and academia at large.

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