SOCIAL NETWORK TECHNOLOGY AND HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR: A QUALITY ENRICHING RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract:

In India, Educationsector has also been affected by the use of social media sites like, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, instagram, twitter, Youtube etc. Many universities and education service providers have reportedly increased use of social media marketing to promote their courses and attract students. Educators are becoming aware of the potential benefits of social media in education. Many faculties had realized the fact that 75-80% of students are on social media. Social media has made available a platform where people can discuss and widen their knowledge base.

This paper highlights the benefits of using social network platform for students, faculty and institutions. It also highlights different social network strategies could be opted by education sector.

Keywords: Social media technology, Social Media Strategies, Virtual Teaching

EDUCATION SECTOR IN INDIA:

Education institute in India form a part of public and private sector. India has made progress in increasing primary education. The literacy rate has also improved and this is considered a major contributor to economic development. There has been a steady increase in higher education enrolment but there still exists huge gap with other developed nation. With huge population, India poses opportunity to education sector players. Government of India has supported the cause and increased its investment in the education sector. This has enabled low cost high quality education at all levels. The road to progress has witnessed intensive use of technology in education to stand at par with its counter parts.A latest report by Ernest & Young, states that the number of institutes offering higher education in India is 44668 of that 33668 offers various degrees and the rest offering diplomas. The private sector education is booming and India is one such player that has witnessed a shift to private sector institutes. India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world. The number has increased but there is lot of scope of improvement and India is striving to get there. 'Skill India Initiative' has been launched for that purpose. The initiative targets to train 400 million citizen by 2020. Government of India has launched, 'Digital Employment Exchange' that will help place jobseekers with right employer. Education sector have started focusing on e-learning and applying other techniques to make education interesting and profitable as well. Online presence is benefitting

education business. Communication through facebook, twitter, instagram, linkedinetc helps in creating connectivity and is a major source of information sharing.In the digital era, social media helps in promoting and branding institutes.

SMT:

Social media generally refer to media used to enable social interaction. The term social media technology (SMT) refers to web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share new user-generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication. For education sector, these platform promises connectivity with students, teachers, parents, alumni and other stakeholders. Social media refers to web-based networking and interaction over an increasing array of websites and networking platforms. Social media helps in getting the attention of, and engaging audience. Colleges and universities are facing major changes as they navigate the 21st century and make decisions that will not only impact higher education but will also contribute to our country's future competitiveness in the global marketplace. This article identifies and evaluates outcomes from efforts to modify quality standards in higher education. While change is unavoidable and higher learning faces difficult choices, we can choose to make proactive decisions and become agents of change. Today, institutions rely on increasingly large numbers of students to help balance expenditures.

NEED FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The quality assurance of higher education has become an important global trend. Nearly half of all countries worldwide have created quality assurance mechanisms, of one type or another, during the last decade or two. The following factors help explain this trend:

- Due to the rapid expansion of higher education systems, there is now a more diverse range of providers of higher education, comprising public and private institutions, cross-border institutions and distance education organizations.

- Globalization has brought with it an increasing level of academic fraud, or fake credentials. This increases the demand for trustworthy organizations that can establish confidence using quality assurance methods.

- The quality of public higher education institutions has suffered in many countries due to economic constraints and a shift in priorities from advanced levels to basic education.

- There are strong expectations that quality assurance mechanisms will ensure continuous quality control and improvement. Quality assurance is linked to professional mobility, and a growing number of regional and international integration processes. This raises the need for more effective mechanisms for the professional recognition of higher education credentials.

- Opportunities to use of social networking in education - In the field of education, social-networking sites offer a student the opportunity toconnect with other students, educators, administrators, alumni, both within and outside his current institution. Scholars praise social-networking tools for their capability to attract, motivate and engage students in meaningful communicative practice, content exchange.

OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage low cost and speedy education system through Social Media

- To highlight use of Social Media in Education impartment.
- To strengthen the relationship between students and teachers.
- To develop rural institutes and to provide quality education to one and all without distinguish between whether rural or urban institutes.
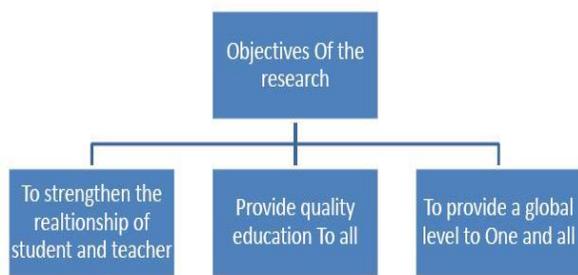
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research Is a descriptive research based on secondary data. The Variable under the study are Students, Teachers, Institutions and Virtual Teaching. The Purpose Of the study to analyze the Use of Social media to enhance quality management in Higher education institutes. Researchers also sought to understand how students use social media outside the traditional meeting and learning space and how they perceive the use of social media for educational purpose. Social media technologies offer the capability to both receive and create content with the hope that a collective intelligence emerges. The goal is to improve students' learning experiences to prepare them to enter a workforce that is not geographically constrained and expects them to have highly developed online collaboration skills.

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

- Smaller in size and/or scope group projects are best, as social media allows students to receive timely feedback from a number of sources.

Students need to experience the beginning, middle, and end of a project.

- Student presentations distributed via the Internet can be viewed by a much wider audience on an on-demand basis.
- Students have different academic strengths and skill sets, and working together allows students opportunities to develop them to their project's advantage
- Incorporating social media approaches in the course contributed to extending student learning to outside the classroom, as it was especially easy for students to form study groups.
- Students are to use social media as an academic resource only and therefore behave as in the classroom.
- Smaller in size and/or scope group projects are best, as social media allows students to receive timely feedback from a number of sources. Students need to experience the beginning, middle, and end of a project.

BENEFITS TO FACULTY:

This early use of social media approaches in a traditional college course changed the classroom behaviour of both the instructor and students. We noticed that role evolved from primarily a presenter of knowledge to more of a facilitator and mentor. This role change was also accompanied by changes in the pedagogy followed in the course as we had to learn how to set up and effectively use several social media approaches. Equally important, students grew from being passive to active learners. Lessons learned from these early attempts include the following:

- Instructors must design time and opportunities for the use of social media activities into their course syllabi. Though this may initially be viewed as taking time away from important course topics, these opportunities are alternative

ways to cover these topics and even a means for introducing additional topics.

- Both instructors and students need to realize their roles in the course and behaviour in the classroom will change significantly. The complexity and number of student questions rose significantly, resulting in a much more dynamic learning environment.

- Both instructors and students must be open to learning and using new social media classroom approaches that extend and enhance instructor-student interactions.

- Instructors must realize that not all students will embrace every element of all social media approaches. Some students will initially feel more comfortable using just one or two approaches and will need time to expand their skill set.

- Incorporating social media approaches allows guest lecturers to participate remotely if necessary. Also, it allows instructors to incorporate.

BENEFITS TO INSTITUTION:

- Reaching out to prospective student through these social media sites is easier and faster; Enriching relationship with present students and alumni;

- Creating network with professionals and industry experts; Getting the best talent in regard to faculty members;

- Highlighting student's achievements and teacher's professional experiences;

- Informing stakeholders about upcoming events and happenings and also recording past events;

- Connecting with international students.

VIRTUAL TEACHING

Social media tools are rapidly changing the communications landscape. Their emergence has impacted significantly how students learn and the way instructors teach.In today higher education settings, instructors, students, and others collaborate on the tasks of knowledge construction. The influence of social media on learning and teaching environments is growing more each year. Social media applications can reinforce class material and positively influence discussions, collaborative work, and authoring.Educators and researchers are constantly experimenting with social media technologies hoping to stimulate critical thinking skills, collaboration, and knowledge construction. With social media becoming an everyday communication method for individuals and organizations, it's logical to incorporate its use into instructional approaches. Social media technologies offer the capability to both receive and create content with the hope that a collective intelligence emerges. The goal is to improve students' learning experiences to prepare them to enter a workforce that is not geographically constrained and expects them to have highly developed online collaboration skills.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO CHANGE THE WAY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING.

- *Wikis* - A wiki is a collaborative web space whereanyone can add or edit content that has already been published.

- *Really simple syndication (RSS)* - RSS allows usersto subscribe to news feeds originating either from blogs or more traditional web spaces like newspapers and magazines.

- *Social bookmarking* - Bookmarking sites allowusers to save and archive entire web pages. This enables users to produce a searchable, personalized. Internet.

- *Audio/video casting (AVC)* - AVC makes it easy toproduce digital voice and video files and publish and distribute them over the Internet.

- *Twitter* - Twitter is a powerful tool for connectingwith others and sharing content

easily

CURRENT SCENARIO OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM: *Rural Area vs. Urban Area*

Rural Area	Urban Area
1.No Video Conferencing And lecture through audio system.	1. Group classes aretaken by using videoand audio conferencing in urban institutes
2. No facilities are provided to the teachers and students of rural area such as laptop, internet facility etc.	2. The teachers are given tools like laptops, printers to provide notes and other important notices to the children in urban institutes
3. Apart from the course curriculum rural institutes are not able to involve youngsters in other activities like sports, co-curricular activities and competitions.	3. Urban colleges help the student for overall development rather than course circular.
5.Not even a Quality education is provided to the students of Rural Institutes.	5. Institutes education is more advanced especially since there is a lot of computer aided teaching

Regulatory Framework Of Higher Education In India

- *Social networking sites (SNS)* - In addition tosupporting wide area communication in both audio and video formats, SNSs help teach the network literacy that is required to navigate this new connection.
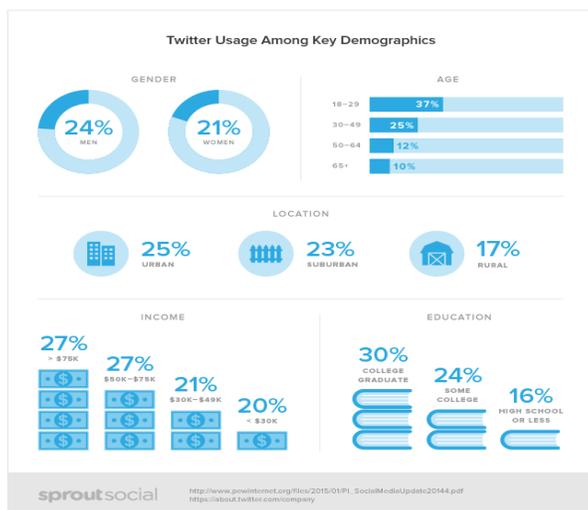
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PROMOTING EDUCATION SECTOR

- Social networking allows reaching out to potential customers
- Converting potential customers to new customers
- Staying in touch with current customers
- Social networking sites are cost effective Wide reach in the market
- Helps in branding product/service

- Creating awareness about the product/service

STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Quality of Network Presence Over Quantity:
One key in deciding which of the social networks we should spend a bulk of your time on is to look at our audience demographics. We have to figure out the key demographics and to find out which social networks they spend the majority of our time on and establish a robust presence on those sites.

7. Leverage Timely Content:

How far in advance do we plan your social media calendar? The answer is it depends on what kind of events we have come up, so there really isn't a universally correct answer. Some of the answers ranged from two months out to working within the same week. Creating stuff for holidays and calendar events are great for engaging with students at times that are important to them.

8. Utilize Social to Promote Institutional Research:

How can organizations promote their institutional research? A lot of times organizations without massive sports teams rely on their research to drive students to their institutions, so sharing this type of information is crucial.

9. Pull Data on a Weekly, Monthly & Semester Basis:

It's a good idea to pull data based on the specific content you share. It's important to know how those posts perform so we can utilize that data to dictate your content strategy moving forward.

10. Audience Growth & Engagement Are Solid KPIs:

The major KPIs to look at seem to be audience growth rate and engagement, since universities have a high turnover rate.

11. Tips for New Higher Education Social Professionals:

- Don't be afraid to engage with a student if they're complaining or if something is going wrong. You can really reverse those poor experiences and get good feedback. Reach out to other campus communicators to develop a community.

- Find a social media checklist. with daily, weekly and monthly that you like. Try and follow through with the tasks on that list, and set reminders on your phone to let you know when you need to finish those tasks. Find a social media tool that you like as well.

- Establish yourself as a social media communications professional and never as a guru. Social media gives you the ability to

2. The Best Social Network Depends on Audience:

It is where we can reach ouraudience most effectively and we would like to get across.

3. Make Sure to Test Newer Networks:

Not every organization has the resources and means to build a robust presence for these new networks as they arise.

4. Deciding Who Owns Social Media:

It would be great if we could centralize our organization's social media to one team, and some places do that, but it's not a very realistic goal. There is so much going on within each department, team and organization that one team won't be able to speak to those messages as well as the specific departments. Instead of trying to control every single page, sometimes it's better to trust the other departments to manage them.

5. Educate Other Departments on Social:

If you are going to trust separate departments with their own social presence, it's key to teach them the best practices. It's a great way to keep the lines of communications open so that an organization maintains a cohesive voice.

6. How to Tell If a Department Needs a Social Presence:

When deciding if a group deserves a social presence, it's key to consider whether or not that department has the staffing to maintain it. The role of the University's page is to support each department.

connect with your primary stakeholders across the world, so get your game together and show everyone what you have to offer.

- Focus on your work and focus on the strategy for what you're doing with your social accounts.

CONCLUSION:

Social platform has revolutionized the traditional approach. It is used as a publicity tool to connect to its audience. Basically promoting an education institute is through outbound marketing. The ultimate outcome of inbound strategy is creating a brand name in the market and positioning itself in the minds of the target audience. The trend is that of going for content marketing which promotes an institution through content that speaks for itself. It takes the form of articles, posts, stories and reference. Businesses are finding out ways to harness social media and using it productively. Social media can be used as a platform to share information, brand its product, encourage word of mouth publicity, encourages customer engagement and interaction.

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