

Student Collaboration Using Web 2.0 Technologies

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Abstract

Application of Web2.0 in teaching-learning process has now enhanced the student collaboration in sharing of knowledge. It's no more a question of technology substituting the teachers but whether teachers can equip themselves and their students to collaborate on effectively using internet services such as social networking sites, wikis, communication tools, mashups and folksonomies to transform the process of education. (Levy & Hyder, 2010)

The potential of web 2.0 to collect and disseminate the information is immense. The available tools that crowd the web space make it pertinent for the teachers to guide the students to understand the utility, methods and purpose of Web 2.0 to make it useful and motivate them to adopt them.

Most of the educational theories favor the utilization of web 2.0 principles because the tools promote social learning and active participation. It also stimulates the students towards hands-on learning experiences. (Levy & Hyder, 2010)

Learning Experiences

The need for student collaboration using web 2.0 was felt as the traditional mediums such as emails, kindle and other web services were found to be inadequate to meet the challenge of internet revolution. The students many times were disinterested in knowing the content of emails due to sheer information overload reaching to them.

Web 2.0 conceptually changed the process of information sharing. It was based on three main principles: 1. Interconnectivity 2. Information coming to the user 3. User generated content (Kidwell, 2010).

In November 2007, when FaceBook decided to allow organizations to share the platform a new beginning was made towards forwarding new content to the individual's home page as a news feed. (Kidwell, 2010). This was a revolutionary point in pushing the information rather than pulling the information strategy giving a new dimension to knowledge sharing and collaboration in the field of education.

Open System of Education

As the information in the form of free data, reusing of data and innovation guided the web 2.0 users the participatory form of education brought in decentralized and collaborative knowledge on various internet platforms. (Levy & Hyder, 2010)

Methods of Social Networking

As we integrate web 2.0 in formal learning processes, the need to develop methodology to test the facilitation of knowledge and acceptability of the experience using social networking tools. Gunawardena, Lowe and Anderson have developed a model consisting of five stages (as cited in Lockyer & Patterson, 2008)

1. Sharing/Comparing
2. Dissonance
3. Negotiation/Co-construction
4. Testing Tentative Constructions

5. Statement/Application of Newly-Constructed, which seeks to explain the outcome of the educationally focused social interaction.

The analysis helps us to know online behavior and perception of the students sharing formal learning exercises. Each aspect tends to focus upon qualitatively higher level of mental function making the model useful to analyze the role of ICT in education.

Pedagogy and Web 2.0

It has been observed that technical expertise of teachers plays a major role in determining utilization of web 2.0 technologies by children in the field of education. In this the teachers training by the technologist and framing of user friendly pedagogical instructions by the institutions can go long way in helping students collaborate in utilizing web 2.0 applications. (Capobianco & Lehman J, 2006)

Conclusion: Learning Communities

Students' role in redefining the web 2.0 technology has given rise to new innovative learning communities in the classroom. (Murphy & Lebars, 2008). Being professionals teachers have to accept the learner collaboration to expand the role of ICT in classrooms. Web2.0 is giving access to hitherto hidden educational resources; many teachers surveyed and evaluated by Wideman (cited in Murphy & Lebars, 2008) say the collaborative student projects will help in transacting the curriculum in a better manner.

References

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