

Developing the research strategy of the social media deployment in the university structure

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Abstract— The strategy of investigating the implementation of social media as a web based technology into the educational environment is in the focus of the paper. The paper gives a brief literature review related to the forms of e-learning and social media used for educational purposes. Social media deployment is considered at three levels within the university structure. Web related technologies as social media are used in universities at a macro level (formal) and a micro level (interpersonal and informal). It is proposed to deploy the social media at a semi formal level to show that the teacher- student interaction can take place on a less formalized basis with more students' involvement and engagement in knowledge dissemination. Effective incorporation of social media into the educational environment is accompanied with challenges to overcome. So, special conditions, algorithm or a model and recommendations should be given to facilitate this process. Special attention is paid to the objectives to set and the outcomes of the proposed research to achieve. Descriptive objectives are based on the definition of the analysed concepts, models and psycho-pedagogical conditions which are necessary to overcome possible barriers. Explicative objectives are set to develop and prove the effectiveness of the model of the process using system and holographic approaches. Normative objectives are needed to give recommendations for overcoming barriers in implementing process. The process of a multi-staged research and the methods to use at each stage are described by stages. It is hoped that the described research strategy will result in improving the process of implementing social media as a platform for teacher-student collaboration in the university.

Keywords- e-learning, social media, developing the research strategy, teacher-student interaction, psycho-pedagogical conditions

I. INTRODUCTION

In the era of e-learning the educational community is faced with the dilemma how and what tools to choose from the variety of technologies and formats that e-learning offers. E-learning is considered to be the third learning system that makes use of various electronic technologies, forms and components as its primary means of learning and teaching [1], [2], [3]. More than 100 web-based technologies and software products are being used for educational purposes by the teachers and learners worldwide. Social media are topping the annual list of the most popular tools for learning as they are

considered to be an integral part of e-learning nowadays [4], [5], [6], [7]. Many researchers point to the educational potential of social media tools [8]. Still the psycho-pedagogical potential of these technologies has not been fully researched as social media is still perceived as a communicative tool for business or entertainment. The research focuses the attention mainly on different types of social media described as institutional and non-institutional web-based tools at formal, semi-formal and informal levels of teacher-student interaction (T-S interaction). Here, the term social media is used to denote "any form of on-line technology or practices through which users create communities to convey information ideas, independent learning, entertainment, collaboration and personal messages and thus facilitates communication and interaction between individuals and groups" [9]. Web related technologies as social media are used in universities at a macro level (formal) and a micro level (interpersonal and informal) [10], [11]. We propose a semi formal level to show that the teacher student interaction can take place on a less formalized basis with more students' involvement and engagement in knowledge dissemination. At a formal level most of these types are successfully integrated into the Learning Management System (LMS) and educational products based on a Moodle platform. Moodle platform is generally used to support blended learning and includes external collaboration [13]. At a semi-formal level wiki-sites are proposed as an effective scaffolding platform to support a particular discipline. At an informal level social networking for T -S interaction is proposed to be an effective educational tool.

Effective incorporation of social media into the educational environment is accompanied with challenges to overcome. So, special conditions, algorithm or a model and recommendations should be given for this process to be facilitated. Efficient implementation of the social media in the university structure is proposed not only to improve the educational process itself, but also develop participants of the process from psycho-pedagogical aspect.

II. HYPOTHESIS

The process of implementing social media into the educational environment in the university will be effective given the following:

- Social media to be used for educational purposes are defined and classified
- Model of implementation social media is worked out and deployed
- Psycho-pedagogical conditions are identified and applied
- Methods and recommendations for deployment are worked out and confirmed

In order to solve the above mentioned issues certain objectives must be set. Descriptive objectives are based on the definition of the relevant concepts used in the research and aimed at classifying and describing social media technologies and identifying barriers and solutions for successful implementation. Giving an overall view where and how the process of integrating social media into the educational environment takes place the research is supposed to help better understand where the process needs improving. At this level the model of the process and psycho-pedagogical conditions required for the deployment are expected to be described. The research methods at this stage are literature review, online research, case study analysis.

Explicative objective are set to determine the success of the developed model and suggested psycho-pedagogical conditions. Pedagogical modeling and the system approach combined with the holographic approach will be used to develop the model. To better understand what barrier must be overcome and conditions to be created in the implementation process case studies will be analyzed. The focus is set on the effectiveness of the educational products designed with the help of social media. To understand how to facilitate the deployment it is necessary to investigate the case studies in process. The life cycle of an educational product consists of some stages: conceptual stage- implementation stage- educational outcomes –reflexion. Much attention must be paid to the implementation phases and the educational results of social media- based products in different educational environments at different levels within the university structure. The methods to be used at this investigation stage are qualitative methods, i.e. interviews and observations, method of expert analysis and pedagogical modeling.

Normative objective are set for the following research purposes:

- to give recommendations and describe psycho-pedagogical conditions in implementing social media within the university structure;
- to set up criteria for assessment and evaluation
- to handle upcoming barriers based on the descriptive objective;

to elaborate the model to help take relevant decisions regarding successful implementation of social media.

III. RESEARCH STRATEGY: PROCESS APPROACH

The process of the research can be divided into 6 stages. At the first stage the terms and concepts will be outlined through definitions. Thorough comparative analysis of the theories, concepts, existing models and conditions will be given with the help of the literature review. At the second stage the investigated social media will be classified and analyzed at three levels within the university structure underlying the importance of educational potential of these technologies. Online research and interviews, literature review will be used as the methods of investigation. At the third stage the model of implementing social media into the university structure will be worked out using the principles of pedagogical modeling. One of the approaches used will be system approach to describe the model theoretically and holographic approach to represent the process of implementation as a multi-dimensional phenomenon taking place simultaneously at different level within the university structure. At the next stage different learning environments will be analyzed identifying the barriers and challenges that are likely to arise when deploying the technologies. The analysis will be conducted using case a study method. The research will be conducted at institutional and non-institutional level. The specific characteristics of different learning environments involving social media will be analyzed from the aspect of advantages and disadvantages. The recommended solutions that will enable to overcome the barrier will be proposed. At the fifth stage an empirical study with control and test groups will be designed to examine possible solutions for the list of barriers. A list of recommendations for implementing will be developed. Through literature review, data analysis of the case studies and results of the empirical experiment success of the proposed algorithm of implementing social media in to the university structure will be deduced. The criteria for of successful implementation will be set up. Finally, the research will be completed.

It is believed that the proposed strategy will result in improving the process of implementing social media as a platform for teacher-student collaboration in the university. The experimental part and the theoretical research of the topic - related literature is sure to contribute to the validity of the expected results.

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