



Social Media as an Enabler in Extending Higher Education Services in India

Dr. Anuradha Seth¹, Tanya Sharma²

¹Librarian, GCOE, Jammu (India)

²AVP, Barclays Bank, London (United Kingdom)

ABSTRACT

In the present age of extreme disconnectedness and distractions in the physical world, social networking sites in the virtual world have become indispensable channels for human interactions. While the physical world imposes worldly boundaries of acquaintance, location and time and on us, the online virtual world disposes the same by giving us the power to connect with anyone, anywhere and anytime.

Communication via the social media platforms in the virtual world is far more instant and cost effective than in the physical world. Around three billion people across the globe are actively using online social networking sites to connect, communicate and collaborate.

With more and more adults linking to social media every passing day, the online platform has morphed into the omnipotent way the 21st century interconnects and communicates. Quite expectedly, higher education institutions around the world have also started acknowledging the power of social media in disseminating knowledge and quality services to their patrons. The current usage of social media in educational space, however, remains more or less partial, ad hoc and experimental. To bridge the divide between urban educational centres of excellence and remotely located students in India, it is necessary that tapping into students' social media addiction be considered in an objective manner to create value for students and stakeholders.

Through extensive review of existing literature on the use of social media in international higher education universe, this paper attempts to –

- a. *Create a better understanding of social media tools available today*
- b. *Present a conceptual framework for optimal social media usage in higher education institutions in India to maximize learner participation and institutional success*

Keywords – Higher Education, Social Media, Social Networking, Accessible Education, Virtual Libraries