



A review on using social media in informal learning

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Abstract

This paper is about the impact of social media in informal learning. It explains about different method used in informal learning. Knowledge can be gained from both formal and informal learning. The knowledge gained by an individual is depending on that individual's capacity to understand the knowledge gained by that individual either from formal learning or informal learning.

Keywords: informal learning, social media, individual, knowledge

Introduction

Informal learning is a natural activity which continues at all times. It is highly individualized contextualised and always concrete, limited to immediate need; it is always embedded within some other activity. It is our own individual way of making sense of life's experiences and using that for dealing with new experiences. Learning using hand held devices like smart phones and PDAs one can learn in a formal way or informal way. In formal learning, learners are engaged with materials developed by a teacher to be used during a program of instructions in an educational environment which are highly structured, institutionally sponsored. This type of learning is generally recognized in terms of certificate or a credit upon completion. Whereas in informal learning learning's results from daily work-related, family or leisure activities. These types are unstructured and contextualized even if its intentional. Informal learning can be unanticipated,

unrecognized, and often unacknowledged by the learner (Jubas, 2010, p. 229)

As per Eraut's (2000) typology of informal learning, in implicit learning knowledge is selected from past memories enters episodic memory due to unconscious expectations. In reactive learning knowledge is gained from brief observation on reflection on past episodes, incidents, impressions, events, noting facts, asking questions, effects of actions, recognitions of possible future learning opportunities. Where as in deliberative learning knowledge is gained experiences in decision making, problem solving, and planned informal learning by discussing or reviewing past actions, communications and events.). In both informal and formal learning an individual can access knowledge trough mobile computing devices for research, to investigate or to collect information.

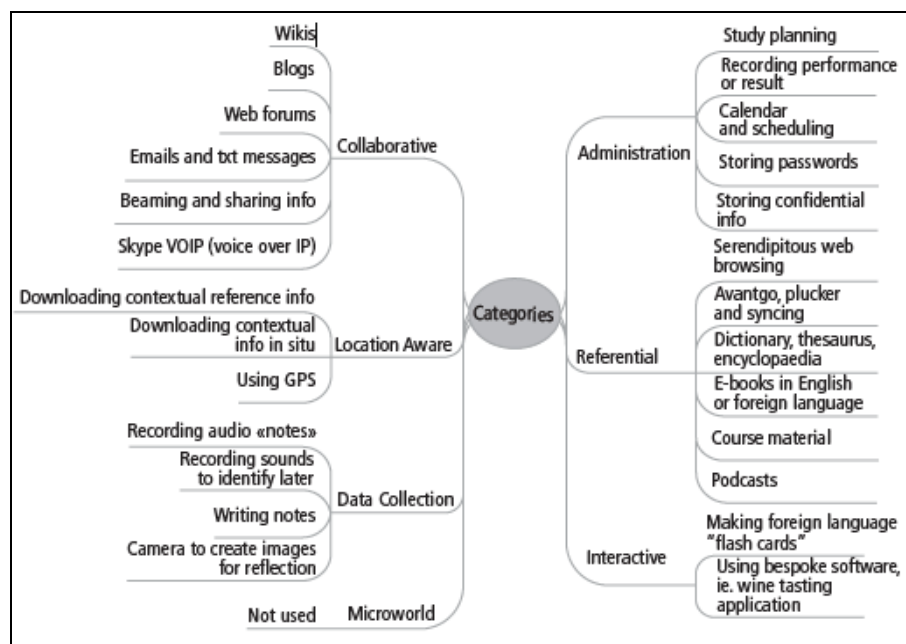


Fig 1: Informal Learning Activities

Smart phones and PDAs are used for communication via weblogs, wikis and virtual learning environments. As per recent years researches handheld devices is used to support collaborative learning. Using smart phones and PDAs one can communicate with wide range of users using web forums .Web forums are internet based, asynchronous discussion group of peoples. there are so many learning applications are available which can be used to get knowledge from different mobile users .These learning applications are categorised into collaborative applications, location aware applications, data collection applications, referential applications, interactive applications administrative applications and micro world applications (Figure 1).

In online settings, the platform and community sets the context based on a topic or task or functionalities. This environment encourages collaboration by asking and sharing advice with others and providing plenty of peers with whom it is possible to connect through shared issues. Unlike classroom situations, online communities gather amateur and experts knowledge in large numbers in the same context. In this not only amateur but also experts can learn. Learning with practitioners leads to situated up-to-date knowledge and skills. Interactions with practitioners are mainly depending on concrete problems in the task or topic.

In formal learning the knowledge can be measured by the structure of the materials .whereas in informal learning knowledge can be measured by the information an individual can get from different sources.

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