

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AMONG THE NET GENERATION STUDENTS AND DIGITAL IMMIGRANT TEACHERS USING SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT: *This paper attempted to look at how social media could be used to bridging the digital divide among the net generation students and the digital immigrant teachers. The social media are internet-based tools which the net generation students use to collaborate and share information that can be used in academics to promote students engagements and facilitate their learning potentials. The most popular social media sites and the number of active users were highlighted. The affordances of social media to both the net generation students and the digital immigrant teachers were discussed. The theoretical backings to the use of social medial like theory of connectivism, situated cognition, distributed cognition and engagement theory were discussed with their implications for the 21st century skills. There were clarifications of these concepts; digital divide, net generation, millennial generation and the digital immigrants. The various strategies to bridging the digital divide among the net generation students and the digital immigrant teachers were x-rayed. The obstacles to the use of social media in closing the gaps were fully identified. There were also expectations from the digital immigrant teachers which would help them to effectively, teach the net generation students were also stated. At this juncture, the ways forward were also proffered.*

KEYWORDS: Social medial, net generation students, digital immigrant teachers and digital divide.

INTRODUCTION

Technological changes and rapid spread therein has made the world a global village. The root change is the brain child of information and communication technology which has affected every family all over the world in one way or the other. The advancement in information and communication technology in this new era known as net generation is a function of computer technology which has expanded knowledge in children and adults together. It paved way to increased use, affordability of internet services and the rapid growth of information technology (Said and Ibrahim, 2012). Consequently, the new wave of computer technologies has impacted positively in our school system by replacing abacus, counting sticks, seeds, shells, slates, books and other forms of learning materials such as radio, television and others with internet connectivity and computer related gadgets.

It is not far-fetched to say that the advent of ICT through internet has changed the face of the world in that communication among the people is not limited by space or distance. Information can now be accessed any where at any time through the use of social network. Social net work could be defined as a website which gives the users the opportunity to interact with relations, family members, friends and acquaintances, school mates, institutions by posting information,

reacting to issues, sending messages and images. Boyd and Ellison (2007) termed social networking sites as web based services that allow individuals to; (1) Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bonded system, and articulate users with whom they share connection with the system. In other words social networks allow individuals to interact freely in every aspect of their desire using words, pictures, video and audio connectivity. Heesslbring and William (2011) opine that, social media are internet-based tools which the net generation students use to collaborate and share information that can be used in academics to promote students engagements and facilitate their learning potentials.

Social networks are diverse in nature with various operational formats. But one common factor they have is that they have one operational online. The online could appear in various forms like blogs, micro blogs, forum, wikis, social books marketing, data sites such as face book, LinkedIn, my space, You Tube, twitter, wordpress, wikipedia, google and others. These social media pose great challenges to teachers who are digital immigrants who are not conversant with the use of social media in teaching the digital natives. Digital natives are children born from 1980 and above who operate technological gadgets from childhood and the digital immigrants are older people who were born before 1980 who had no access to computer technological gadgets. The older people (digital immigrants) who teach using teacher-centered approach (face-to-face) method of teaching waste the time of digital natives who are computer literate and are itching to benefit from learning under the 21st century learning method. This is why constructivists approach to learning is gaining more grounds in today's teaching and learning in that the students are given the opportunity to construct their own meaning out of a given lesson situation. Consequently, the students in the long run become inventors as they work collaboratively in a given task where they develop and construct meaning with the supervision of the teacher.

However, in support of the above, the writer is of the view that it is the responsibility of our educational system to provide graduates with the necessary skills that would help them excel in the job markets and fields of endeavour. Based on the above fact, schools would teach students the way of effective interaction and collaboration in this 21st century world of technology. It is through networking that students should be able to navigate the world in search of information for personal improvement and national growth. This calls for skill development and knowledge of ICT through computer applications to meet up with the net generation itching for knowledge acquisition through major social network sites around the globe.

Therefore, this paper will follow this sequential pattern; first, it looks at the definition of social media and the most popular sites of social networking. Next, the affordances of social media to both the net generation students and the digital immigrant teachers will be discussed. Also, the adverse effects of social media use will be revealed. The paper will also look at the theoretical backings to the use of social media in education. There will be clarifications of concepts like; digital divide, digital natives, net generation and digital immigrants. Various strategies on how to bridge the digital divide will be highlighted and the obstacles to the use of social media in closing the identified digital gaps will be x-raged.

Social Media Defined

Social media are classified as computer mediated technologies that give individuals, companies, NGOs, governments and other organizations the opportunity to view, create and share information, ideas, career and interest through various forms of interactions and

communications with virtual communities and networks (Obar and Wildman, 2015). Merriam (2016) defined social media as “forms of electronic communication (such as web sites) through which people create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, etc. Some other authors defined social media as having different forms. Aichner and Jacob (2015) defined it as blogs, business networks, enterprise social networks, microblogs, photo sharing, and virtual worlds.

Social media have special characteristics. They use web-based and mobile technologies on gadgets such as smart phones and tablet computers to facilitate a desired platform where individuals communities and different organizations can share, create together, discuss ideas as well as the contents posted online. In other words, social media redesign the way people think and interact which results in a better inter-relationship of one another and the communities in general.

Social media are very unique in their functions. They provide quality services, reach the consumer for immediate usability and stability when in demand. Popular among the social media are Face book, Baidu Tieba, Pinterest, linkedIn, Gab. Others are Google+, You Tube, Viber and Snapchart. They all attract a lot of users all over the globe.

Social Networking Sites

The global technological expansion has multiplied into small numbers of networks that have been developed to meet various needs of individuals. Now, individuals of all categories have got themselves attached to one internet webs based tool or the other to be able to receive or disseminate information. It could be information on resources, social affairs, economic, educational, political or other issues among the internet users. There are up to fifteen major social network sites in the world today. Others could be in the pipeline.

However, a few of them will be briefly outlined and discussed below.

- **Facebook:** This network site is owned by Facebook Inc. In This site, users are given the opportunity to create personal profiles, add friends and they exchange messages based on common interest. Facebook attracts a great number of uses as will be shown in the given table below from the web.
- **LinkedIn:** This is a business networking site for professionals. It gives professional information and encourages users to create professional linkage in their professions for mutual interaction and benefits. Judd & Philips (2011) affirmed that LinkedIn allows its members to fill out applications, search for jobs, look at profiles for advertised vacancies for possible employment.
- **Myspace:** This social network site acts like a communication channel for news, games, videos, photos and music. It allows members the opportunity to uphold information in the created profiles together with pictures and video content. It add features that the users demand and also it popularizes the user’s pages. Smith (2009) affirmed that it offers avenue for competition. Students make popular this network site because they use it to work towards their degree.
- **Twitter:** This is a micro – blogging service provider. Bala (2013) stressed that twitter unlike almost online social network sites, such as Facebook or Myspace that the relationship of following and being followed requires no reciprocation. That a user can follow any other user or vice versa without any implication. Millions consequently tweet daily as it promotes social connections among students.

- YouTube: This social network is a public video sharing social network site. There, different people are experiencing varying degrees of engagement with videos ranging from casual viewing to sharing videos in order to maintain social relationship.

The Most Popular Sites of Social Networking

The leading global social networks (2016), listed the leading social networks and their users. They are presented below in their degree of usage as at April, 2016.

S/NO	NETWORK SITES	NUMBER OF ACTIVE USERS APRIL 2016
1.	Facebook	1,650,000,000
2	WhatsApp	1,000,000,000
3.	Facebook Messenger	900,000,000
4.	QQ	853,000,000
5.	Wechat	706,000,000
6.	Q Zone	653,000,000
7	Tumblr	555,000,000
8	Instagram	400,000,000
9	Twitter	320,000,000
10	Baidu Tieba	300,000,000
11.	Skype	300,000,000
12.	Viber	280,000,000
13	Sina Weibo	222,000,000
14	Line	215,000,000
15	Snapchart	200,000,000

Source: Leading global social networks 2016/Statistic” Statista. Retrieved 2016-04-29

From the statistics above, Facebook, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger top the list of customer demand and usage. This is an indication that the global media use is increasing unprecedented all over the world

Affordance of Social Media

Social media is synonymous with modern society and education. In some schools, the use of mobile phones and other mobile devices are barred. But as digital natives are multiplying each day, it will be out of place to deny this group of students the opportunity to learn with digital components which they are used to from birth. Therefore, the affordances of social media to the students, teachers and education will be looked into below:

Affordance to the Students

- **Connections and interaction:** Social media networks are intended to stimulate communal connection in knowledge gathering among the students. Students are exposed to social media platform to access information in facebook, twitter and even instagram. They interact and engage themselves through the web without even seeing each other as they learn.
- **It increases students collaboration:** Social media sites form the avenue for students to contact with one another for the given projects, group assignments including homework assignments and other assignments for knowledge exploration.
- **More participation is encouraged:** Effective participation of students in social media use can induce the weak ones who are shy to express their thoughts in class to use the class

participation in building self confidence in themselves. By so doing they would be able to change their status for good.

- Helps to solve students, personal problems in academics: When a student has challenges academically, without help, he can easily post a message requesting for help. He can post it to the teacher or on the wall for other students to see. When the teacher will be treating the subject, the whole class will have access to the feedback.
- Trains students for entrepreneurship: Social media prepare young students to become great business entrepreneurs. As the social media is permeating every nook and cranny of the society, many net generation students of the work forces are moving up with speed with many forms of social media. Once they get the right social media business strategy, they become employers of labour (Baker, 2013)

Affordances of Social Media to Teachers

- Video conferencing in the classroom: The use of video conferencing such as google plus would allow to set up class sections where every student can collaborate through video at the same time. Google Hangouts can be saved in case some students could miss the lessons, they will be helped out.
- Rich experience provider: The teacher could provide richer experience for resources in social media. He can share videos, websites, and other tutorials very fast to the students by placing the button. It will eliminate handouts and the risk of miss typing of materials.
- Provides classroom Facebook group: There is need to create a Facebook group for each class. There, the teacher posts assignments and important information for the students to view. Parents could as well access the site to evaluate their children's preparedness for lessons. In effect, Facebook is very ideal for flipped classroom because it extends the classroom discussion beyond the classroom environment like the home.
- It offers the opportunity for the teachers to maintain good relationship with their students. The teacher and the students interact in a mutual way in problem solving and interpersonal relationships
- The process helps teachers to inform parents of their children's strengths and weaknesses in the class.
- Teachers are more exposed to the use of technology in teaching and learning consequently they acquire new skills in communication.
- New skills acquired in technology increase the abilities of teachers in their group research works.
- Teachers professional development is enhanced in that they are exposed to various conferences, seminars and workshops for self development. Hence their professional goals are attained.
- Technological knowledge acquired by teachers enable them to interact and partner with other schools globally and nationally (Butikofer, 2010).

Despite the fact that social media have come to stay all over the world, there are many negative influences associated with it. Such negative influences are discussed below:

Negative Influences of Social Media Use

1. Decreased focus on learning: Many students in social media are operating the system without paying attention to learning. A lot of their precious time is spent on chatting and discussing irrelevances with little or no attention to their education.
2. Many students in the social media generally suffer from distractions. They search for various information from one net work to another without focusing on their academic work at hand. It affects their academic achievement.
3. Much time is devoted to social sites. When students are consumed in social networking operation, they do not have any time to effective personal interaction with peers. Social media are popular because of fast information transmission process involved that occupy students time (Armstrong, 2012).
4. Students in social media have very poor communication style on one to one bases. This is because they are used to web technical languages which they have acquired during their learning process
5. **Use of Abbreviations in Writing:** Most students in social media operations like using abbreviations in writing. At times they make serious grammatical errors which lead them to the use of computer dictionary for correction.
6. Many of them are used to anonymity in posting of information in social media. They do not filter their uploaded information and many of them are misleading to the consumers. This has made the employers of labour to check the submitted information before acceptance for usage.
7. **Health Problems:** Students who are addicted to social media are prone to health problems, psychological problems and aggressive tendencies.
8. **Cyber Bullying:** Cyber bullying is a factor that affects many people these days. People are injured in spirit through this cyberbullying syndrome in the social media. The reason is that the bullying is unregulated and unsupervised and people take advantage of it to harm others in negative ways.
9. **Immorality:** Immorality and infidelity are associated with social media. Pornographic films are shot in the media where children view them and practice the acts. Consequently, they become victims of sexual assault and violence. It results in illness and unwanted pregnancies and sexual addiction.

Theoretical Backings to the Use of Social Media in Education

Students nowadays and the residents are predominantly members of the demographic group that is called millennial learners; these learners have been called generation Y, the net generation; and 'digital natives'. This group of learners are the first generation that have used and made popular the V. 2.0. This term was formerly used by Reilly to describe network technologies that actualized the services that gave rise to functionality of the platform.

The net generation could be seen as a cohort that is endowed with digital literacy, constantly connected to others, immediate in nature, and are experimental learners and socially centered beings. This group of students expect that their teachers would use information technologies to boost their learning potentials. Again, the students' education community and its related literature increasingly hold the same view that the teachers should use the information technologies to empower the students. Besides, it is identified that with the nature of the learners every where, and their mending use of social media, social media should be incorporated into teaching and learning in our school systems.

Notwithstanding, the recognition of this new generation of learners and the inclination to meet their learning needs, there is only very few information on how the teachers should appropriate

or incorporate social media in their teaching. Indeed, the probability regarding the benefits remain unclear despite the fact that the use of social media in education has increased substantially. “its utility for enhancing learning remains poorly understood”. In respect of the review of the published literature on social media use in education, there are some deduced facts from the literature which concluded that lack of high quality evidence, infrequent assessment of skill or behaviour-based outcomes have resulted in no assessment of students based on their inputs in the studies. More concerned is the finding that without structure, social media can negatively impact student learning, and yet it would be the instructor who will lead the way to effective implementation in learning.

However, there are some emerging theories that back the authentic learning environments in this digital dispensation. They are to be discussed below. They include among others the following:

- **Connectivism:** Connectivism theory asserts that knowledge is disperse and not static; the distribution is through network of interaction and experience with known community. This community is made up of a set of new generation of empowered learners who think and interact in a new way called e-learning using games or work flows. Connectivism is a learning theory that is used to place through the process of learner connecting to and feeding information into the learning community. Here knowledge is distributed to the community through variety of digital formats. For effectiveness, the ability to seek out current information and the ability to filter secondary and extraneous information are paramount to the connectivism (Seimens, 2008).

- **Situated Cognition:** This is a learning theory that supports the fact that learning occurs only when situated within specific content. Learners learn when they participate and interact within the new situation at hand. Cognition is interwoven with the actions learners take in the community (Myers and Wilison, 2000). In effect, there must be action that takes place before cognition will occur. The action must take place in the community where the learning is involved or a learning community. The learning must be involved with tools which would assist, induce or motivate the learning process. Such tools are technological in nature which helps to bring about cognition.

Therefore when learners are placed in this type of situation learning environment, they would use their acquired knowledge and skills to think critically, make application of the knowledge to new situations seen, analyze information, understand new ideas, interact, collaborate, solve problems and make decisions. This is what 21st century technology is all about in providing new skills (Honey, et al, 2003).

- **Distributed Cognition:** The distributed cognition emphasizes on student centered approach to learning. Here the students approach system supports the construction of knowledge in an environment connected with the cognitive actions taken by the participants in the process of learning (Bell & Winn, 2000). It is a theory that promotes learning among the group of learners in the process, interact with one another which results in cognition. This cognition is distributed among the participants using artifacts. Nevertheless, in this theory the technological artifacts or tools are used to distribute their knowledge. A child in the system could be energized to use manipulative in early development of mathematical addition skills (Bell & Winn 2000). By using the skills the problem becomes very easy because he can visualize the mathematical representation which represent his thinking and he will use the tool to solve the problem. This learning theory actually supports the very skills needed in this 21st century. This is because the learners in this environment will be applying their acquired knowledge in their new situation through critical thinking, analyzing information,

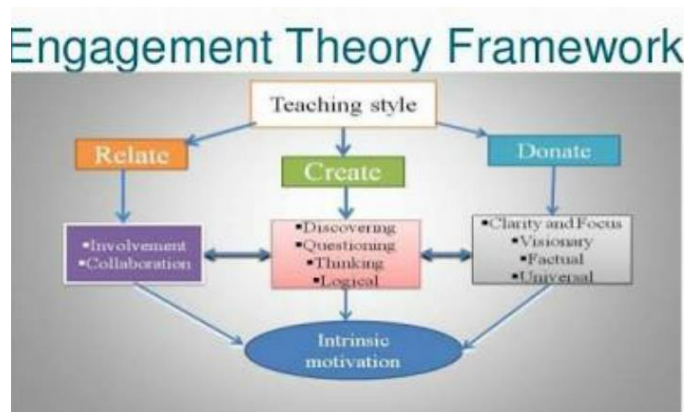
understanding new fact, communicating ideas, collaborating, solving problems and decision making (Honey, et al)

Engagement Theory

Engagement theory is the theory that emphasized the way technology should be used to enable participants to achieve results in a given task. It is a concept that is not restricted to technology-based learning activities. Kearsley & Schneiderman (1999) stressed that students must be meaningfully engaged in learning activities through interaction with others and worthwhile tasks. In principle, they believe that technology can facilitate engagement in ways which are difficult to achieve .In the engagement process, it is that the students should be meaningfully involved in their learning through collaboration and interaction in a worth while task. That when learners are meaningfully engaged, they are motivated to participate fully in the learning process. Consequently, they will be able to retain what they are taught and at the same time use it to solve other problems that might affect them in life.

This theory operates on three basic principles which include the following:

1. **Relate:** This involves team work. The team learn together through collaboration. They share ideas, thoughts, knowledge together with skills, this increases the motivation in students (Kearsley & Schineiderman, 1999).
2. **Create:** The function of learning is to create, innovate and to bring about purposeful work on projects. This spirit of creativity is seen in project based learning. To achieve the aim is to engage the students to work on their projects. It will create in them the sense of belonging which give them internal joy and ability to work hard (Kearsley & Scheiderman 1999).
3. **Donate:** learning can only get learners attention when they are engaged in experimenting on an authentic tasks that have outside consumption demand. Such demand could be institutions of various sorts such as schools, churches, government agencies, business and individuals (Kearlsley & Schneiderman 1999).



Source: (Kearlsley & Schneiderman 1999).

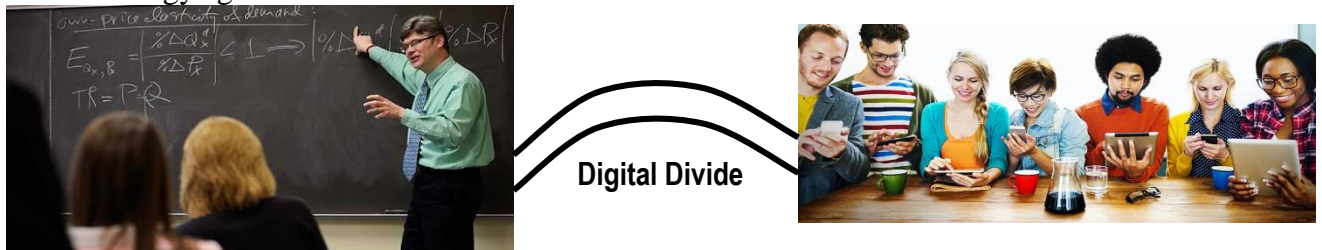
The above theories are what are needed in this 21st century because they effectively support the use of media in teaching and learning of the digital immigrant teachers and the next generation.

Conceptual Clarifications – Digital Divide

This is a concept used to show the differences that exist between individuals who have both the access and wherewithal in information and communication technology especially in

internet usage and those who do not have access and opportunity to use modern technological devices like computers and internet. These two groups are always in classes together having lectures in the universities. But there is a gap between their learning strategies.

However, the gap exists between the people who are opportuned to access the modern technological gadgets, those that are skilled and knowledgeable in them and have what it takes to harness the benefits accruable from those technological tools especially the internet and those who do not have access to those technological tools. But both of them learn under one umbrella. The difference is clear in that in urban areas people have access to technological tools but in the rural areas there are no such learning facilities. The differences are very clear among those who are born in the technological age and those people who are born before the advent of technology age.



The above diagram shows the digital divide between the net generation and the digital immigrants.

Digital Natives Defined

Prensky (2001) defined digital natives as a generation of young people who were born from 1982 and above. He affirmed that this generation of young people was born into the world interwoven with networked and digital technologies. Their behaviours are quite different from previous generations. This group of students according to him think differently, learn differently, exhibit different social characteristics and have different meanings about life. Prensky, (2001) argued that they spent their lives surrounded by different programmes, toys and tools of digital age. They all speak their native language of computer and video games, mp3 players and internet. This group of students prefer receiving quick information through communication technologies. They generally have low tolerance for lectures and they prefer active rather than passive learning activities. There are other groups which are known as the Net generation, Millennial generation and the digital immigrants.

Net Generation

Tapscott (1998) described Net generation as young people who have grown up surrounded by digital media. This generation is categorized as those born between January 1977 and December 1997. The significant change that affected this generation is the rise in computer, the internet and other digital media. He identified the new generation as exceptionally smart, curious, self-reliant, focused, and able to adapt, high in self esteem, and have global integration. They prefer learner centered approach. These groups of learners are agents of radical change in higher education.

Millennial Generation

Howe and Strauss (2000) defined millennial generation as those born between 1982 – 2000. This group is described as optimistic, team-oriented, high achieving and rule-followers. They

are cast in internet technology. Consequently universities, colleges and other higher institutions should understand and design curriculum to accommodate them in the teaching and learning process.

The Digital Immigrants

Digital immigrants, Prensky (2001a) categorized them as people born before 1982, before the advent of the new technology.

This group of people is hesitant in picking up new technologies. They generally rely on newspaper; radios usually like to print out documents to allow them access information. They are not conversant to modern technological devices like, computers, internet, twitter, iPad and other related gadgets. They prefer the traditional method of teaching and learning.

Digital Divide in Networked World:

The digital divide in the network world has been a great concern to nations because of inequality existing between the net generation and digital immigrant all over the globe. The inequalities could be seen among the digital immigrants as lack of media literacies; critical thinking and communication skills for purpose of navigating online data; lack of information, knowledge gap, collaboration and participatory inequality (Danica, 2011). Besides, it triggered off among the digital immigrants lack of awareness and promotion; digital illiteracy, lack of motivation to work hard; information gate keepers, human and economic challenges which result in social inequality.

Social inequality in this digital era has great impact in the lives of digital immigrants and the society. It influences their media literacy. They cannot engage favourably in political, social, educational life and using the web in interacting and collaborating in an online public sphere. Poverty in digital knowledge creates marginalized groups who cannot access the internet which could give them leverage to be effectively absorbed in social, economic and political life of the society.

Having discussed above on digital divide, the next section looks at how social media could bring together the differences between the net generation and digital immigrants.

How to Bridge the Digital Divide using Social Media

The ideas discussed below could help to bridge the digital divide if followed religiously

:

- Identify the causes and nature of the digital divide
- Employ technological based staff to conduct development and training sessions for all teachers weekly.
- There would be a compulsory mentor programme for the digital immigrants to follow.
- The professional growth guideline should be introduced to train the teachers identified as non-proficient on teaching technology in class.
- Pair teachers up, those who can teach technology with those who cannot so that one with knowledge can coach the other without knowledge. They can arrange on when to meet for re-enforcement

The Mentor Method Techniques:

1. Staff members to share the best practices of technology use and how to use them
2. Educate the staff members on how to use technology in the classroom.
3. Guide the staff members on how to handle their technological incompetencies.

4. Direct the digital immigrants on the comfortable approach to use technology.
5. Intimate the digital immigrants on the best methods to handle some technological resources.

Bridging the digital Divide Among the Net Generation and Digital immigrants.

The influence of technology in teaching and learning has created a wide gap between the net age and digital immigrants. The digital immigrants who are not technological imbued in teaching and learning prefer traditional methods of teaching while the digital natives who speak the 'native' language want to be taught with computers and internet. This technological divide that exists in the school system that separates the two groups should be bridged to accommodate the two in order to make them effective co-partakers of knowledge in this modern dispensation.

Logistical and Instructional Challenges Affecting the Educational Profession

6. Institute healthy relationship with technology for digital immigrants.
7. Use tutorial approach to intimate the immigrants on software application in the classroom.
8. All year round staff training programme to help digital immigrants should be given serious attention.
9. Changing methods of instruction to match the two groups through integration of social media in university courses through blending learning process.
10. Introducing Face book into the university classroom where students use tweets to share, collaborate, brainstorm, engage in problem-solving and create (Dunlap and Lowenthal, 2009).
11. Effective student engagement in activities for moral and ethical development, psychological development and self-esteem.

Obstacles to the use of Social Media in Closing the Digital gap

There are some basic obstacles associated with the use of social media in closing the gap. They are:

- a. **Time:** Teachers are pressed with time during the work week and the schools year. They find it difficult to learn a new information and to come to the class to implement it. Teachers prefer to use their time in preparing their lesson plans, work on their paper work such as progress reports and others. Consequently, they have no time for learning social media.
- b. **Teachers' Attitude:** Many teachers are not gifted to change. Some do not want to discuss about the use of technology in teaching because many of them are digital immigrants. To many of them that are ignorant of technology, they look at technology as difficult and unattainable task.
- c. **High Cost of Internet Connectivity:** The high cost of internet connectivity in developing nations and especially in Nigeria should not be argued especially now the nation is experiencing recession. The value of dollar to Naira is currently very high which may have accounted for the high cost of connecting to the internet. The effect is that some digital immigrant teachers are finding it difficult to connect and maintain the internet facilities.
- d. **Lack of Steady Electricity Supply:** Our nation is still experiencing poor electricity supply most of the time. At times, the electricity supplied will be so epileptic that no meaningful technological works are done with them during school hours. This is very serious challenge to the use of social media in teaching and learning.
- e. **Lack of Wherewithal in Social Media Usage:** The truth is that some immigrant digital teachers do not have the wherewithal in the use of social media devices. If this is so, the use of

social media in teaching and learning will be a dream. Therefore, it is imperative that the digital immigrant teachers must be handy in the operations of social media so as to be able to prepare our learners for the challenges of the 21st century global workforce.

f. **High Cost of Social Media Devices:** Social media gadgets are currently very costly in Nigerian market today. The effect is that most digital immigrant teachers cannot afford to buy those modern devices for themselves. Instead, they prefer to buy for their children who were born in this digital era. Again, this attitude seems to be one of the reasons why most teachers are still using traditional approach in lesson delivery.

g. **High Maintenance Cost of Social Media Devices:** Presently, the cost of maintaining the social media gadgets is very high and as such, many adult teachers do not go for them due to their high cost of maintenance. The fear of this also contributes to why most digital immigrant teachers do not integrate social media in their lesson delivery.

Expectations from the Digital Immigrant Teachers in Teaching the NET Generation.

The digital discrepancies that exists between the digital immigrants and the net generations demand urgent closure so as to imbibe in students the 21st century skills needed in the field of works today. In order to achieve this goal, the digital immigrant teachers should avail themselves of constant practice and use of social media so as to be able to integrate them in their classroom teachings. Practice they say makes perfect. Therefore, the digital immigrant teachers could use the ideas discuss below in integrating social media in their various classes as suggested in the web by Davis (2015) thus:

- Create a class account on twitter: let every class member be connected to this. Prepare the class assignment every day and tweet to all the class members.
- The class assignments should also be posted to the parents for them to read what has been given to their children by their class teachers.
- The digital immigrant teachers could write a blog which should be posted to show what the net generations are learning every week
- Encourage your students to write for the world to see. For instance, Linda Yollis, is a platform where students do reflect on what students learn and their happenings in the classrooms.
- The net generation students should be connected to other classrooms through various social media. For instance, Joli Barker explained how she has connected her teaching and learning environment through diverse social media.
- The digital immigrant teachers could also use Facebook to collect information from their digital native students
- To further attempt closing the gap, the digital immigrant teachers could uphold video presentations in Vimeo YouTube to engage their students in interactive class session. Again, this will need serious practice in order to avoid poor quality video. The works on YouTube could be shared on a podcast for others to learn from them.
- The immigrant educators could spend a little time and practice how to create WhatsApp account for the class and use it in sending messages, class works and answers to given assignments.
- Through instagram, the educators can guide their students to participate in “Scavenger hunts” by taking photo shots of their course-related contents.

In addition to the above discussions which stated that the digital immigrant teachers have great role to play in closing the identified technological gaps, there is also need for a change of attitude and also resistance to innovations and change should also be destroyed. This fact was noted in Mangal and Mangal (2009:704) who stressed that, “teachers do not want to have

transition to new methodologies and ways of teaching-learning. They still stick over the broadcast model of teaching instead of interactive model designed through the use of ICT”.

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed how social media could be used to bridge the digital divide which exists between the net generation students and the digital immigrant teachers. The digital networks of various types were discussed. The affordances of the social media to teachers and students were outlined. The negative influences of social media use to students were highlighted. The theoretical backings of the social media use in education were looked into. The digital divide among the digital natives, digital immigrants, net generations and millennial generations were expanded. The different techniques to bridging the gaps in the digital divide were outlined. The challenges in closing the gaps were equally given proper attention. The way forward to maximize the actualization of bridging the digital differences between the digital immigrants and the net generations was advocated. The paper concluded that the social media have the potentials to bridge the gaps.

Way Forward

The underlisted will help if followed to bridge the digital gaps:

- 1) Following the fact that digital immigrants are not comfortable with the use of technology in their daily lesson plans because they lack the knowledge, they are reluctant to try new things. The easier way to come out of this mess is to provide the digital immigrants with workshops. Each immigrant is assigned to a net generation teacher. During the process of interaction and tutoring, the immigrant teacher will easily be transformed as they work together. The net generation teacher could gradually change the orientation of the digital process. This will make the digital immigrant to gain confidence in himself. He will grow professionally and develop self worth. Consequently, he will learn to be effective in instruction using technological inputs.
- 2) When in the long run, the outlined techniques for bridging the digital divide are carried out judiciously in the school system, the digital immigrants can now operate with the net generation in conducive platform without fear or intimidation. There would be mutual understanding. There would be an atmosphere of symbiosis where the net generation would learn from the digital immigrants and the digital immigrants would learn from the net generation. The process would induce a healthy school climate for effective teaching and learning to take place.
- 3) Time – As teachers are known to always have tight schedules, they should as a matter of fact make out time to learn how to use the social media in teaching and learning.
- 4) For the digital immigrant teachers to teach the net generation very successfully, they have to learn to accept change and innovation. In all, change of attitude is needed.
- 5) The federal and state governments of the nation should join hands in the provision of steady electricity supply. This will enhance the use of media in teaching and learning.
- 6) The immigrant teachers are to be constantly trained and retrained so as to have the wherewithal in the use of modern devices in teaching and learning.
- 7) The federal and state governments should help to be subsidizing the cost of social media devices so as to make them affordable for both the digital immigrant teachers and the net generation and
- 8) More technicians are to be trained and sent to schools to be helping in the maintenance of social media devices. This will definitely bring down the high maintenance cost.

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