The Sociological Effects of Internet on Educational Opportunity among Students

Masoumeh Motlaq[*1]

Abstract

This paper tries to examine the effects of Internet on educational opportunity. Internet, as the most useful technology of modern times which helps us not only in our daily lives but also in professional lives. For educational purposes, it is widely used to gather information and to do research or add to the knowledge of various subjects. The theoretical framework considered with some theories like information society. This is a survey –method research based on questionnaires. The study area, Tavanir, in the central part Tehran. For this purpose, 380 students of the study area have been examined based on Cochran`s formula who was selected through classified random sampling. Having gathered the data, SPSS software is used for data processing .The findings show that the significant relationship exists between Internet and educational opportunity`s indexes like, increase of awareness, virtual and online education and educational services. It means that Internet has direct impact on educational opportunities.

Keywords: Internet, Educational opportunities, Learning, Online education.

[1*]. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Arak Branch, Islamic Azad University, Arak, Iran, m-motlaq@iau-arak.ac.ir (Corresponding author)

1. Introduction

Internet plays a very vital role in *education*. It is no doubt that in this modern era everyone prefers Google for their queries, problems or doubts. Popular search engines like Google, Yahoo, etc. are the top most choice of people as they offer an easy and instant reach to the vast amount of information in just a few seconds. It contains a wealth of knowledge that can be searched at any time.The internet has introduced improvements in technology, communication, and online entertainment.

The use of technology in education would reduce training costs, save time, increase opportunities for teaching-learning, increase academic success, and offer quick access to information. Therefore, in recent years, education policy makers in many developing countries including Iran, have paid a particular attention to e-learning (Zare & Sarikhani, 2016).

Significant shifts in theories about curriculum development and teaching methods are presenting dramatic challenges to traditional thinking about teaching social studies. None of these changes poses as great a challenge-or as many opportunities-as the rapid development of computer technology and instant, electronic communication. In particular, the Internet, an easily accessible means of electronic communication and research, may not only enhance but further revolutionize and even institutionalize these new approaches to teaching.

In the current age we live in, information or communication technology plays an important role in our lives as if Internet as a great index of this technological revolution has become a significant component of many activities of human kind. Considerable part of the technological news belongs to the new gadget or software that makes lives easier but it is not the whole thing, one of the great functions of ICTs especially internet refers to its role in our socio-cultural lives.

All around the world learning is considered as the key need of personal and social life .It is obvious that all the countries are not the same in this field it means that the situation of the certain country in the circle of development indicated the level of learning of those people. But nowadays, some changes have happened in the processes of this assessment due to the emergence of ICT

with focusing on internet. Technology in general and internet, in particular, is playing an increasing role in education. As technology advances, it is used to benefit to all the people but as the internet extend, it is basically at students' services so it can be useful for students of all ages and different levels in the learning process. For example, modern education recognizes each child as an individual and caters for learning theories that empower the child to play an important role in their own education (Fitzpatrick & Miriam, 2004).

Discussion, along with other types of social interaction between instructors and students, is a necessary component to learning according to many learning theories. It gives students the chance to engage in active cognitive processing; it demands that they participate in making meaning out of content; and, it forces them to contextualize that meaning among a social group Castaneda & Rentz, 2020).

Importance of internet in education to the students' means that it makes easier for them to research things, and relearn the content taught in the school. People use it according to their needs and interests. Internet usage growth according to statista.com

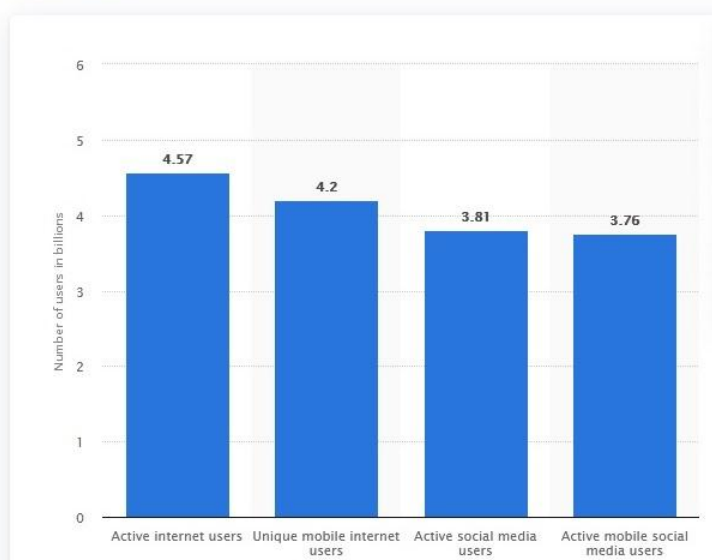## Global digital population as of April 2020
(in billions)

Figure 1. statista.com

information is the biggest advantage which the internet is offering. There is a huge amount of information available for every subject. It keeps us up to date with the latest information regarding the subjects in which we are interested

The recent decade many researches are done about the ICTs functions but this article focuses on the effect of internet on educational opportunities among young people of Tehran. The main question of this paper is as follows: What do the impacts of internet include on educational opportunities?

2.Theoretical approach

The present paper tries to survey about the impacts of internet on educational opportunities, for this purpose related theories of network society are chosen as the theoretical framework like Toffler, Castelles and Mitchell (Mitchell, W.J ,1980) and hypotheses are driven from them First of all review the related studies.

   Albert Sangrà and Mercedes González-Sanmamed (2010) in their investigation about the role of information and communication technologies in improving teaching and learning processes in primary and secondary schools listed important items and involves several studies from different methodological perspectives, and analyses the following:

• Attitudes, opinions, perception and assessment of teachers' assumptions on the advantages of the use of technologies (Cope and Ward, 2002; Windschitl & Salh, 2002), teachers' decisions regarding selection, use and evaluation of educational media (Solmon and Wiederhorn, 2000).

• Teachers' initial and continuous training and their training needs and demands in order to better help them integrate technology in teaching and learning (Davis, Preston, and Sahin, 2009).

• Organizational issues related to implementation of media and its impact in the contexts where applied (Condie and Munro, 2007).

• Institutional issues arising from programme design and development and from projects of implementation and diffusion of a particular medium in a specific context (González-Sanmamed and Pérez-Lorido, 2002).

   Studies on telematic networks. The emergence of the Internet has opened new educational research perspectives and has incorporated new issues and

methodologies. From this perspective, we have identified three major research lines:

• *Internet as a learning tool* has been categorized into three broad areas: as a tool to develop training activities at schools in the form of a complementary activity, as a way to facilitate personal contact and therefore interaction among people, and as a resource to widen access to content and services (Sangrà, 2001).

• *Collaborative learning.* Despite being an almost traditional approach (Lave 1988; Lave and Wenger, 1991), the link between collaborative learning and ICT has revealed stronger possibilities. Some research studies have focused on how students organize themselves to develop collaborative learning in a virtual environment and how this environment should be better designed (Harasim et al., 1995; Guitert et al., 2003).

• *Learning virtual communities.* Another research line has focused on how ICT can help to build actual learning communities in cyberspace (Powers, 1997; Palloff and Pratt, 1999; Renninger and Shumar, 2002). Research has also examined how these communities could develop into a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and a powerful tool to achieve personal and professional goals, and also how they contribute to new knowledge-building (Landow, 1997; Laurillard, 2002).

A further issue that different research studies highlight is how the actors in teaching and learning processes need to change their roles as members of a virtual learning community: students must adopt an active role (Sangrà and González-Sanmamed, 2004).

WBLE researchers and designers have identified potentially important relationships between perceived sense of community and perceived learning processes (Hill, 2002; Hill, Raven, and Han, 2007). Strategies designed to support community building, such as group work and team-building activities, may improve the quality of interactions among participants (Rovai, 2002; Hill, Ravenand Han, 2007). Further, providing diverse opportunities for social-peer interaction may strengthen the sense of community (Janette et al., 2009).

Youth is not just a biological category; it's also a societal invention. This may sound like socio-babble but as we have changed from an agricultural to

post-industrial society our definition of youth has evolved. Young people used to be parental property; nurtured by domestic folk practices then forced into work and afforded no legal rights. Youth today is a public institution; objectified by the state, preserved in law, commodified by business and studied and monitored by rational, scientific expertise. I will show that youth have been transformed from disempowered mini-adults to today's objects of expertise (Davies, 2013).

As we move into the 21st century, schools have to enculturate students to be lifelong learners. Students need to learn how to seek out new information, think critically and show initiative to meet up with the challenges of the fast-changing world. Research studies of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in schools have established that ICT facilitates the enculturation processes of lifelong learning (Sivin-Kachala, 1998; Wenglinsky, 1998; Mann, Shakeshaft, Becker and Kottkamp, 1999).However, many of these studies lack detailed investigation of what actually takes place in the ICT learning environment and its socio cultural context (Lim, Cher and Ping, 2002).

Castells is one of the most influential thinkers of network society which shows the changing role of place, space, distance and factors. Castelles explains about the space of flows and timeless time that are spread by networks worldwide (Hempel and Dienel, 2003). Toffler as futurist mentioned that third wave play the key role for home-centered society and impacts on mental and psychological mood of people in a good manner (Toffler, 1980).On the other hand "One of the tools for greater information capacity distance brought about by global technology is the Internet which has become the ideal means of providing of quality education".

3. Materials and Method

This is a documentary–survey research. To collect the data a self-administrated questionnaire was prepared which included some identification questions, information questions and questions measuring educational opportunities based on internet. Population of this study is young girl students in Tehran city. Their ages ranged from 14 to 18 years. The questionnaires were given to 380 students

which selected according to classified random sampling through based on Cochran `s formula.

Hypotheses are classified as follows:

-There is A significant relationship between internet and educational opportunities:

Internet impacts on the enjoyment and usage of educational services among students.

Internet impacts on emergence of virtual and online education among students. Internet impacts on increase of awareness among students.
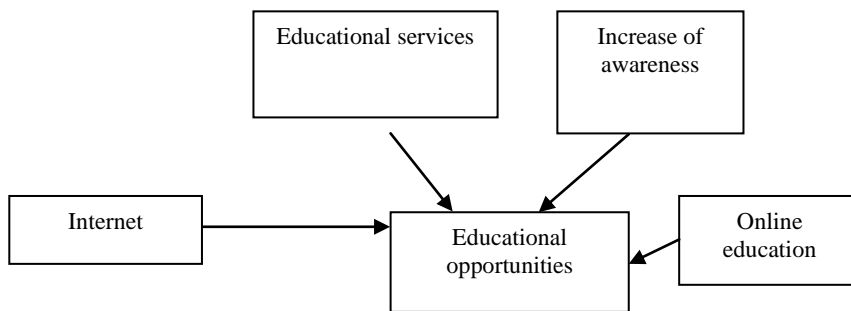
Figure 2. Model of research

4. Findings

Here the research hypotheses are tested based on Pearson correlation as follows:

Table 1.the correlation between internet and educational services

Correlations

		Internet	Educational Services
Internet	Pearson correlation	1	0.152% *
	Sig. (2–tailed)		.004
	No	380	380
Educational Services	Pearson correlation همبستگي پيرسن	0.152 ٪.	1
		.....	
	No.	380	380

· Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2–tailed).

A significant correlation was observed between the usage of internet and educational services (R=0.152%, sig=0.004<0.05)

Table 2. the correlation between internet and online education

Correlations

		Internet	Online education
Internet	Pearson correlation	1	0.125 %
	Sig. (2–tailed)		.017
	No.	380	380
Online education	Pearson correlation	0.125 ٪.	1
	Sig. (2–tailed)	.017	
	No.	380	380

· Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2–tailed).

The Pearson correlation showed a significant correlation between internet and online education (R=0.125 sig=0.017<0.05).

Table 3. the correlation between internet and increasing of awareness

Correlations

		Internet	Increasing of awareness
Internet	Pearson correlation	1	.122 ٪.
	Sig. (2–tailed)		.021
	No.	380	380
Increasing of awareness	Pearson correlation	.122 *	1
	Sig. (2–tailed)	.021	
	No.	380	380

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2–tailed).

Finally, the above table indicated that there is a significant relationship between internet and increase of awareness among student too. Sig=0.021<0.05 /R=0.122.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The growth of the Internet in the world provides many opportunities to many people around the world in many different ways. When students are considered, the use of the Internet is mainly for social and entertainment purposes. However, it is very obvious that the Internet provides not only social connection and entertainment, but also academic and scientific information as well. Additionally, the Internet can be used as a tool to learn the latest news all around the world as well as getting any kind of information that serves different purposes such as learning more information about a hobby or health. Therefore, it can be said that the Internet is the source of spreading information quickly to a large audience and of going beyond the limitation of time and space. In the light of the above information, it is vitally important to encourage students to use this invaluable source to get any kind of information they need in their academic studies. For the reasons mentioned above, the aim of this

study is look at the students‟ use of Internet in their academic studies(Dogruer,et al ,2011)

E-learning is an evolutionary pedagogy in social work. E-learning technologies transform learning so that it can be synchronous or asynchronous. The author provides a systematic discussion of e-learning and its role in social work education(Phelan and James, 2015).

Internet has brought about change in the way that public relations is practiced. Not only has it provided another channel of communication, but the communication dynamic itself has changed because of the Internet's unique combination of characteristics. Much public relations practice is still posited on dated theories of the system of communication along the linear lines of sender, channel, receiver (with feedback). The public relations professional is there to transmit a message with the purpose of persuading publics to the point of view being promulgated.There have been suggestions that a new model of communication is required in order to explain the Internet medium.This paper re-examines three of the older communication systems models to establish whether there are elements within them that can be helpful in explaining the dynamics of Internet-based communication. The authors use the three models, in turn, to examine this medium by focusing on the message sender, the channel itself and the user of the Internet. The conclusion is that together they can throw valuable light on Internet-based communication and that there are lessons to be drawn from these models that are useful for the contemporary public relations practitioner(Fawkes, Johanna& Gregory Anne,2001).

Access to global networks and ICT resources is a requirement for individual and community success in the information age(Navabakhsh, and Motlaq, 2009).

Day after day, we hear some news about improvement on the technology and software that already exists. Making lives easier is not, however, the only role technology plays in our lives. The effects of internet on all aspects of the human life are clear but something that is important is that the border and lines are influenced by the power of this technological revolution. It means that with the presence of wireless internet, web and online educational software, all the students are at the same starting level and the rest of the progress based on the

potentialities and basic facilities .students can use online enrollment system, buy language learning software and the other learning packages, chat with their classmate in all the world, check the exercises on the different websites, study about different fields of knowledge and also about related topic. Students can compare themselves with the other students in challenging tests in their classrooms and they can use virtual lesson and learning period in all the seasons.

There are many benefits of the internet in the field of education. Some of these are: Cost Effective and Affordable Education : One of the largest barriers to education is high cost. Internet improves the *quality of education*, which is one of the pillars of sustainable development of a nation. It provides education through videos and web tutorials which is affordable to everyone and cost-effective.

The online method of learning is best suited for everyone. This digital revolution has led to remarkable changes in how the content is accessed, consumed, discussed, and shared. Online educational courses can be taken up by office goers and housewives too, at the time that suits them. Depending on their availability and comfort, many people choose to learn at weekends or evenings.

E-Learning enables educators to get a higher degree of coverage to communicate the message in a consistent way for their target audience. This ensures that all learners receive the same type of training with this learning mode.

E-Learning has a positive influence on an organization's profitability. It makes it easy to grasp the content and digest it:

- It results in improved scores on certifications, tests, or other types of evaluation.
- Higher number of students who achieve 'pass' or mastery' level.
- Enhanced ability to learn and implement the new processes or knowledge at the workplace.
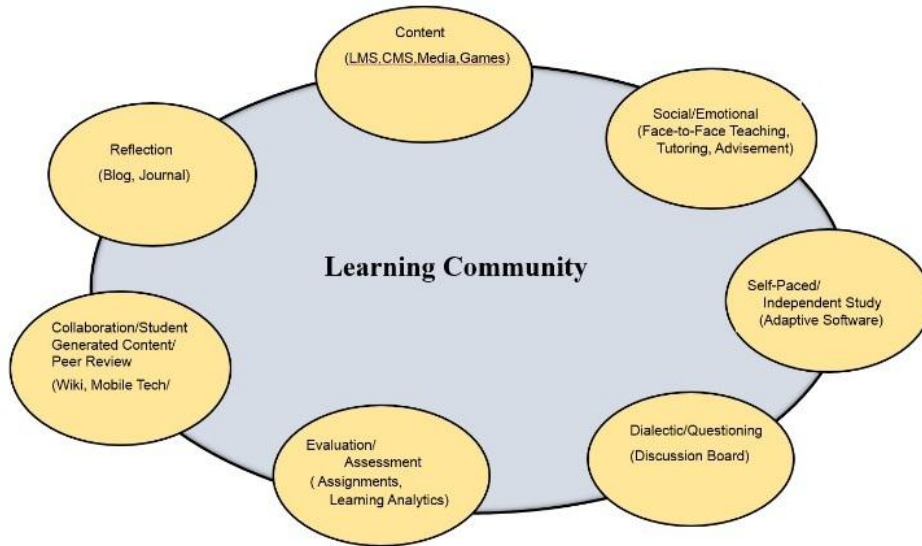- Help in retaining information for a longer time (Gupta, 2017).

Figure 2. Multimodal Model for Online Education(Picciano, 2017)

The influence of the open source movement continues to make an impact on education because of the reduced costs of installation and maintenance of a compendium of office productivity applications and access to free content and services specifically dedicated to education. Open source software can avoid the issue of vendor 'lock-in' where users become constrained by a commercial product (White and Gerry, 2008).

Also teachers can present the advantages of learning with the usage of internet and learning software package it means that teachers themselves should know enough about these items in order to encourage them. The study of ICT in schools needs to consider the social processes that ICT supports during the circumstances of use, and how the ICT experience is integrated into the discourse of learning to develop higher order thinking skills(Lim and Cher Ping, 2002).

As technology advances, students have better access to educational opportunities like these. When something new and "better" is revealed, the "older" technology becomes more affordable, allowing it to be used in educational settings, even when schools are on a tight budget (Steinberg and Paul, 2007). It is clear that the usage of internet rests upon the presence of computer, laptop, cellphone and the like instruments as the personal device or

general places like network stations, organizations and so on. All the above items exist in the countries but they make different in the quantity and quality of internet usability. It means that some infrastructure and superstructure facilities are needed for appropriate applicability of internet in educational opportunities.

For example, high speed interest services in areas and appropriate wireless internet range offer a wide variety of services to young people, especially students and include a list of useful links to other services available to students in all ages.

5. References

Albert, S. & Mercedes, G. (2010). The role of information and communication technologies in improving teaching and learning processes in primary and secondary schools, *ALT-J, 18(*3), 207-220

Castaneda, D. & Rentz, S. (2020).The *power of discussion: Activating learning online*.

Davies, H. (2013). A sociological perspective on youth.T*he Journal of Applied Social Theory*, *5,* 25-35.

Dogruer, N., Eyyam, R., & Menevis, I. (2011). The use of the internet for educational purposes. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *28*, 606-611.

Fawkes, J. & Gregory, A. (2001). *Journal of Communication Management*, *5* ,109-124.

Fitzpatrick, M. (2004). *Creating a living educational theory through ICT; Enabling enhanced learning through multimedia authoring in an early childhood setting*. Dublin City University: School of Education Studies.

Hempel, L. & Dienel, H. (2003). T*elicity version perception of ICT and impacts on city competition*.

Janette R., Hill , Liyan, S. & Richard, E. (2009). Social learning theory and web-based learning environments: A review of research and discussion of implications. *Journal of Distance Education, 23*(2), 88-103, DOI: 10.1080/08923640902857713

Lim, C. P. (2002). A theoretical framework for the study of ICT in schools: a proposal ,British *Journal of Educational Technology*, *33* (4), 411–421.

Mitchell, W.J. (1980). *City of bits: Space, place and Infobahn*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Navabakhsh, M. & Motlaq, M. (2009). Effects of urban information and communication technology on sustainable development. *Journal of Food, Agriculture and Environment, 7,* 891-897

Picciano, A. G. (2017). Theories and frameworks for online education: Seeking an integrated model. *Online Learning, 21*(3), 166-190.

White, G. (2008). *ICT Trends in Education*. Educational Assessment.

Zare, M., & Sarikhani, R. (2016). From E-learnin g to ubiquitous learning; Theoretical principles. *Future of Medical Education, 6*(3), 12-15.