

Discussion On Microblog's The Application In Teachers' Communication In The Concerted Development Between Urban And Rural Schools

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Abstract. Concerted development between city and countryside schools is the main way to solves of imbalance of education, and the informal communication between teachers is the key to solve the problems above. This paper analyzed the “we media” characteristics of Micro blog, compared the differences of Micro blog and other web interaction tools, illustrate the feasibility of Micro blog in the communication in city and countryside teachers. The author think, the communication between city and countryside is endless, and the characteristics of Micro blog made it suitable for task of informal communication between teachers from city and country. So the vacancy after temporary support could be recuperated and set up a long communication system and steady social network.

Keywords: urban and rural education; Microblog; communication; teachers

1. Introduction

There are many not reasonable phenomena in our country's basic education generally due to unbalanced development in urban and rural areas. “The National education reform and development of long-term planning programs” presented, “To promote fairness as the state's basic education policy [1]” , “Promote balanced development of compulsory education” . With the implement of “Xiao Xiao Tong Network” and distance education of primary and secondary schools in countryside, our country's elementary educational informatization hardware environment has been improved dramatically, a variety of high quality teaching resources entering classrooms, ensuring to the share of quality resources between urban and rural students.

Education fair is the biggest fair. There exists an unequal phenomenon between the town and the country, concerned with our country's elementary education. This inequality not only affects the enhancement of the whole nation's quality, but aggravates the economical and social differences between the town and the country as well as between the advanced areas and the backward areas. To stabilize our society, to promote the development of the economy and the society, we must start from reforming the education investment system and education management system and establishing interaction system for urban and rural schools. The coordinated development of urban and rural schools is an important guarantee of realizing social justice. Therefore, state and local governments have invested a lot of human resource and material resources to accelerate the development of education informatization, basically constructing the solid system platform of education informatization. But, we should also be soberly aware that with the rapid development of education informatization , there still exist some problems, especially in the growing gap trend of education idea and teaching ability between urban and rural teachers. Western Hills High School Principal School Shuda Jun said that if the education and teachers today did not live in the future, while the students will be in the past. Visibly, teachers' teaching ideas and teaching ability become the most important factor influencing

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the future quality of human resources. Therefore, we must pay attention to teachers' deep interaction and communication in urban and rural schools. Otherwise, hardware facilities will eventually become decoration; filling up the digital divide will not bring the upgrade of ideas, the realization of information technology in education will not eliminate the phenomenon of education inequity.

With strong economic strength, Guangdong Province has conducted a wide range of practice in balancing development of urban and rural education. Through implementation of "thousand school helping thousands of school" action, distance video classroom teaching, "synchronous class" and Guangzhou test region intercollegiate union projects and other projects[2], Guangzhou promote coordination development in urban and rural education and receive good results. Their experiences tell us that this coordination need formal and informal communication chance for teachers in different regions. Formal communication mainly point to face-to-face talk, or even shared practices. And informal communication means with the help of modern technology, such as email box and instant message, teacher need not to be actually together to communicate.

For most less developed regions, the so-called coordinated development of urban and rural education is exchange between human resources training and short-term teachers. After the completion of Inter-school exchange and "teacher lectures", urban and rural teachers will return to their former schools, lacking of consistent exchanges and supporting. Central Office of EU-Gansu Basic Education Program delegated Northwest Normal University to conduct the "free education to the countryside" activities in 2004[3]. They found a strange phenomenon: in the training process teachers' passion is high, while few of them could sustain for a few months, which means the eventual effects of training is not satisfying.

"Urban-rural interaction" in the real significance should be a reciprocating cycle, the process should be a spiral, and there is no end, and never stop. In order to consolidate the coordinated development between urban and rural teachers communication, as well as to the continued development of education in rural schools, the "informal communication" should not stopping to help and enhance rural schools afterwards. In the most occasions, "informal communication" could be an important approach to solve the problem of efficient communication in human resource. New technology and new ideas in education need practice with encouragement, consistent helping system and non-stopped formative evaluation. All of these will be a question in the time-limited "formal communication". Thus we should emphasize the importance of "informal communication". In fact, there are many tools could supply this communication platform, BBS、e-mail box and so on. We noticed a new channel to communicate people is become popular in the internet, microblogging. In mainstream culture, microblogging has become an extremely popular channel for both professional and personal pursuits. Friends use it to keep in touch, business associates use it to coordinate meetings or share useful resources, and celebrities and politicians(or their publicists)microblog about concert dates, lectures, book releases, or tour schedules .For higher education, microblogging is an increasingly important tool for communities of practice, enabling scholars to communicate informally on subjects of shared interest and to open windows into their own projects, sparking interest and discovery among peers. Some universities are considering using microblogging in the curriculum to emphasize timeliness, student engagement, and aggregation of artifacts relevant to course content and experience [4]. The author of this paper suggested using microblog as universal commutation platform to support "informal communication" between teachers in different regions.

2. Communication characteristics analysis of Microblog as a "we media "

Microblogging is a relatively new phenomenon defined as "a form of blogging that lets you write brief text updates (usually less than 200 characters) about your life .Users can spread, establish individual communities, use 140 words to update the information, realize the real-time news and also release multimedia such as pictures, video, etc through the WEB, WAP and various clients .

The earliest famous microblog is America's Twitter. From the perspective of application platform and objects microblog uses the computer server as the platform, mobile phone as mainstream terminals. Therefore, cell phone users can release the latest information without computers. Microblog's characters limits are definitely from the words restrictions of sending single short messages.

Microblog is another “We media” after the bulletin board system (BBS), blogs, podcasts and mobile phones. U.S. News Media Center Institute in July 2003 published a “We Media” report, which creates a very strict definition of “We Media”: We Media are channels to allow a general public to associate with the global knowledge system through digital technology, to provide and share their true views, their own news. Microblog has broadly reduced the expression threshold, and everyone is “We Media”. There are some comments on the network, “microblogging has over 10,000 fans, then you are a magazine”, which is no exaggeration. According to the report of watery Data, microblogging “we media” transmission has five characteristics: civilians, grouping ring, personalized, along with the nature and spontaneous spread [5]. I consolidate the propagation characteristics of Microblog as follows.

2.1. The civilian + Individuation

In the websites like sina blog, users just need only a simple application for the registration, to use layout management tools, post text, music, photos, video and other information on the network, create your own “media” according to the network space and optional templates fed by the supplier. Have your own media does not need to put any cost and any professional technical knowledge. Its low entry threshold, simple operation and the diversity of publish methods make it popular and rapid developing. Make every civilian turn from “bystander” into “the parties”, and own a “network communication club”. Each civilian can all use the Internet to express what they want to show and express views of their life, transfer their life wanes.

2.2. Grouping + Along with the nature

Through the following and follower, Microblogging users can quickly create their own private social networking space, quickly find their own circles. From the “onlookers” to be “focus”, it could quickly gather into groups. In addition to recording and sharing, microblogging also has a social networking function. It is a combination of SNS (Social Network Service), IM (instant messaging) and blog[6]

Microblogging has “instant messaging feature” without limit of time and place .Wherever you go, you can record the events and thought through the cell phone communication equipment promptly, capture the feelings and fragmentation experiences of life and work, accumulate into personal intangible wealth, and then send to their own Microblog to complete the transmission through the MMS or 3G client, finally reaching the purpose of sharing and making friends. Internet media spread had a unique advantage that users can be both a source of information release and a transmitter. And microblog combines the spreading advantage of the Internet and mobile network, which carried the timeliness, speed, field sense, vivid.

2.3. Spontaneous communication+ efficient interaction.

A microblog adopted point-to-point communication model on the exchange. As well as a multipoint “follow” approach. Home page will display scrolling text of the latest updates from the people you focus randomly. If you meet someone who you have special interests, you only need to click the “attention” button, then you can immediately see the updates of this person, and you can choose mutual concern or unilateral attention. It is the combination of randomness and immobility. Microblog’s typical mode of transmission is a kind of “fission to spread” one to N to N) , whose propagation speed and width are the biggest of all. The microblog also has “a key reprint” function, which can be used to share common interests directly if you discover some the good information[7], so the interaction and dissemination of the results are quite astonishing.

3. The feasibility of the application for microblog in coordinated development in urban and rural teacher communication

Public Opinion Research Laboratory of Shanghai Jiao tong University's "2010 Annual Report of China micro blogging" shows that by the end of October, 2010 , Chinese microblog service users’ has already been up to 0.12 billion, and it is increasingly widely in the intervention and penetration of Chinese society as a completely new kind of information dissemination way[8].

Through the contrast among the E-mail, BBS, chat rooms and microblog, we find that, microblog is perfectly suitable to realize "informal interactions" between urban and rural teachers as a communication platform.

First, look at table1, compared to complete asynchronous interactive tools (email, BBS) and complete synchronous tools (chatroom, QQ), microblog's interactive mode is definite a big advantage, which will combine the advantages of both asynchronous interaction and synchronous interaction and strengthen the relationship among people. Interpersonal communication established by microblog result in strong ties rather than weak ties. Mirobloggers could find each other all the time which mean contacts made by miroblog is constant through concerning or being concerning. And what's more, it will make you and your social networks enjoy the empathy opportunities. Delaying effect in complete asynchronous interaction and rigor in synchronous interaction could be well solved in microblog. As the time schedule between city teachers and rural teachers are different, it is not practical for synchronous communication and in-depth discussions to certain questions. Interpersonal relationship established by asynchronous communication is looser, and the efficiency of interaction is not guaranteed. And microblog's "onlookers" features make urban and rural teachers capable to exchange visions with each other and to share more common experienced areas.

We do not mean mrioblog is a super media and it can take place of all the other interaction tools. Here mrioblog become a platform for the main channel of communication between teachers in different regions. With the help of hyperlink, teachers could also use other interaction tools. For example, teachers could use email box to send some ppt or pdf documents of courses.

TABLE 1 THE COMPARISON BETWEEN THIS HOLISTIC 4C/ID MODEL DESIGN APPROACH TO TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH.

Network interactive tools	informal communication between urban and rural teachers	
	Advantages	disadvantages
E-mail	point-to-point, asynchronous interaction, powerful functions of attachment	Delayed discussion
BBS	asynchronous public dialogs , for deeper interaction by posts and replays	Delayed discussion Fewer media forms
Chat rooms	Synchronous, time	the topic is loose,
Microblog	Asynchronous and communication platform, personal communication club, the rapid development of network community through the attention. Many media forms.	

Secondly, words restrictions of microblog make contents exchanging likely get more sophisticated processing. Shanghai Jiaotong University, Arts and Humanities Research Institute Professor Xie Yungeng thought that, technically speaking, the microblog connected with SMS, social networking websites, blogs and other media, strengthened its ties and made the messages shared in a wider range. Compared with the blog appearing in earlier years, its capacity of less than 200 words (compared with two messages' length) is more suitable to the fast-paced life in fast times, and it does not need to edit the first page to raise people's concerns. And it is more like the life experience of fragmentation and thinking sparks with the 200 words of random feeling and life by chance than the long speech. For publishers, the face of limited words, we are no longer free to paste the copied. On the contrary, we will rethink the messages. For onlookers, amount of a few words of text reading is still not bringing reading fear. The "informal communication" of urban and rural areas teachers apparently will take place in the spare time, and usually not last very long, so we can call it fragment time. Microblog just provides this fragment time a chance to record multimedia reflection. Therefore, teachers in different regions could take use of this platform to put down the confusions or

inspirations in daily instructions. This word limit in microblog could enhance efficiency of communication rather than hurt it. If there want to share more information, they could use hyperlink to direction follower to their website or blog.

Thirdly, microblog makes it more convenient to set up personal social network. Urban school teachers own more social resources and educational resources. The tangible resources could easily be shared both by urban and rural schools, while the intangible social network and tacit knowledge of teachers is hard to share. As we all known, teachers professional growth in urban areas are due to a better geography location and consistent help from other academic institutes, for example, universities and colleges situated in big cities always become a strong educational support. But rural areas are far from economic centers, it is more closed and backward. So it is hard for rural school teachers to set up their own professional social network. If there is some kind of platform that teachers in different areas could share, then it will be very helpful for the improvement of the human resources in rural schools.

From the analysis above, we know that microblog has a unique characteristic which is called grouping. Microblogging users can quickly create their own private social networking space by share the social network of others. And this does not need any permission (for example. to enter a persons QQ space need to permission), which means it is totally free to walk into another circle if you like. So it may be very convenient to set up you own social network online by consult others choices. We suggest urban and rural areas school teachers use miroblog to construct online social network, and we believe this is a good attempt. It is more flexible than any other “formal communication”. And it is more efficient to share a general common social network. Compared to the services in later stage, miroblog is always on site. The teachers in the rural areas will follow the advanced instructional ideas by the assistance of miroblog interaction. In the reformation of education, hardware is never the essential element. Thus educational administrations at various levels of the government need to consider how to promote the interaction of teachers in urban and rural areas. Synchronous advanced educational ideas is more valuable than synchronous equipments.

4. Summary

Owing to education's relations of dependence to the economic, the dual structure in urban and rural economy has penetrated into education field; derive a dual education structure that led directly to unfairness in urban and rural education. The author thinks, education fairness is the extension and reflection of social equity in education field , and the degree of realizing education fair is an important symbol of social progress, so we should spare no effort to reduce the gap between the urban and rural education resources, increase public to social vulnerable groups and rural areas, promote the coordinated development between urban and rural schools, establish effective communication between urban and rural teachers mechanism. In this process, the effective communication and interaction between urban and rural teachers become the important link of changing education concept and reducing the human resource gap. It is far less enough to only depend on the assists with time and space limitation or the "formal communication time" provided by training institution. So "informal communication" between urban and rural teachers is the essential way to solve this problem.

Through the comparison of similarities and differences between microblog and other network communication tools, we found that microblog could provide an efficient interaction platform for “informal communication” between urban and rural teachers. Existing research on microblogging still is quite rare although fast rising. The majority of work includes descriptions and analyses of Twitter (Barnes&Bohringer 2009; Huberman et al.2009;Erickson 2008; Krishnamurthy et al.2008; Java et al.2007).Others focus on microblogging as a learning tool (Ebner&Schiefner 2008; Skiba 2008; Ulrich et al.2008). Less research has been published on its potential to be an approach in interactions to promote concerted development between city and countryside schools. We analyzed the feasibility of the application for microblog in coordinated development in urban and rural teacher communication. Though microblog owns many features which is suitable for this interaction, there are still many concrete problems and limits, for example, how to encourage teachers accept this new media, who is in charge of the training at first. Anyhow, we hope educational administrations at various levels of the government could actively try new communication approach

nowadays, and spare no efforts to enhance the communication and reduce the gap between urban and rural areas.

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