Social Networking Media in Higher Education: A Review

DU JIN

King's College, University of London
3503656094@qq.com

ABSTRACT

Social media has become a constant presence in the daily lives of young people. As a result, many educational procedures and processes have been influenced by the widespread use of social networks. The number of people using social media has continuously increased. Students' perceptions on how social media affects their learning is a prominent subject of research. Students' school achievement has been significantly impacted by their interaction with professors, peers, and online knowledge-sharing behaviors. Several aspects are involved in this review, which aims to shed light on how students use social media in higher education. Findings reveal that the usage of online social media for cooperative learning encourages students to be innovative, dynamic, and research oriented. In other words, it is a matter of academic competence. This study gathered and analyzed social media data in higher education for computing disciplines. Digital libraries from EBSCO, IEEE, and ACM were utilized for data gathering. All of the above traits were found to be positively influenced by social networks, which suggest that their usage in higher education should be broadened. Teachers and educational institutions have not taken full use of internet social networks.

Keywords: social media; social networks; higher institutions education

INTRODUCTION

Online social networks (OSNs) and their apps have become an integral part of human life in the previous decade. As one of the primary channels of communication and amusement of today's generation, OSNs have had a profound impact on the way the youth live their lives (Ainin et al., 2015). A growing body of academics is concerned that individuals' engagement in school is being eroded by OSNs, which not only impairs their academic performance but may also result in students dropping out of school altogether. Although social media has been widely embraced by many users, academics have questioned its suitability for higher education use. Despite the fact that many faculty members in higher education use social networking sites professionally, many are reluctant to use them to teach and learn. Moreover, in spite of the many teaching alternatives that have been presented, the conventional education system appears to be unable to respond adequately to the ongoing decrease in student engagement (Fata-Hartley, 2011). Integrated entertainment and informative social behaviors have been recommended to boost students' awareness of instructional procedures. Such conduct is supported by social networks, which appear to be a universally popular and entertaining medium among students (Tess, 2013). To make a difference, people must adhere to these laws and practices, as well as assist in the promotion of environmentally friendly ideas and inventions (Xin and Senin, 2022)

Much emphasis is placed on teaching and learning on the Web 2.0 platform because of its many advantages, such as social media networking and user-generated content (Brown, 2012). Online learning, e-learning, and collaborative learning, as well as various hybrid versions, have replaced traditional classroom learning paradigms in the recent few decades. As a result of this transition, learning environments no longer revolve around the transmission of information but rather around the development and construction of new knowledge by students themselves (Brownson, 2014). Although Web 2.0 advanced technologies seem well suited for student contexts, a growing body of evidence indicates that the implementation of Web 2.0 systems and technologies in higher education learning is slowing down.

With the wide range of options and resources available through social networking, a learner-centered environment can enhance situational learning by focusing on learners' individual needs and the circumstances in which they learn. Students may decide the tools they use in their own unique learning experience (Rodriguez, 2011). Hence, students may become involved in the academic community because of these new tools (Junco, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Given social media's capacity to facilitate better connection between individuals, many businesses are striving to capitalize on it. In particular, educational institutions have the best chance of adapting to these new technologies. The typical college-age population is increasingly turning to social networking as a primary form of communication, and institutions are taking advantage of this trend to reach out to current and potential students (Gruber, 2009).

Formal and informal education have benefited from the rise of social media in the last decade. Formal education refers to a set of educational programs for all ages that are organized in a hierarchical manner, ranging from pre-kindergarten through high school, and ending with a university education. These programs include academics, professional knowledge, and practical and technical training (Malcolm et al., 2003). Jeffs and Smith (2021) defined informal learning as a type of learning that occurs in the context of everyday life and social interactions. Interactional learning or lifelong learning are other terms for informal learning.

The use of educational technologies has revolutionized the way students and teachers study and teach, respectively. Massive open online courses, online classes, and open and online colleges have become widely available because of improved Internet connectivity. Online universities are becoming widely accessible, and traditional colleges and universities continue providing students with lifetime learning options that they may take advantage of from anywhere and at any time (Harris et al. 2009). Technology's widespread availability has also enabled students from remote locations, those from low-income families, and those with disabilities to obtain an education. In addition, ICT provides new means of offering a flexible, individualized education that can be tailored to meet the needs of students in a variety of learning situations. According to Englund et al. (2016), although social media has made considerable inroads into academia, the extensive use of the medium by academics has not resulted in the necessary conceptual modifications to traditional forms of teaching. The opportunity for technology to revolutionize higher education teaching is being overlooked, or worse, ignored, which is disheartening. Incorporating technology into academics' teaching practices has not been completely unsuccessful. According to Davies (2011), one-third of professors are not ready to use ICT in their teaching practices. In addition, faculty training appears to discourage the use of information technology as a fundamental part of delivery of education.

The use of social media in the teaching–learning setting is a contemporary trend in higher education (Manca, 2020). Even though Web 2.0 technology is widely available, academics have not taken advantage of it to complement their teaching, content delivery, and assessment methods (Manca and Ranieri, 2016). Moreover, the usage of social media by students is mainly for socializing than for educational purposes, despite their proclivity to use it. Contrary to popular belief, evidence suggests that faculty are less open and cautious to the use of social media for teaching purposes (Piotrowski, 2015, p. 3).

Academics are unsure of the role that social media should play in the classroom, considering its impact on academic practice. In addition, lecturers have been "recommended to maintain a balance in relation to the objective, control, and utilization" of social media platforms (Stathopoulou et al., 2019, p.422). The use of social media for educational purposes has been the subject of research (Stathopoulou et al., 2019), and most research shows that professors are

wary of its use (Manca and Ranieri, 2016). Some academics view social media as a disruptive technology (Friesen and Lowe, 2012), whereas others argue that it blurs the line between personal and professional use (Tang and Hew, 2017). Another reason for academics' lack of interest in the educational potential of social media is their lack of personal use of these platforms (Guy, 2012). Time restrictions, excessive workload, network security and bullying, anonymity, and a lack of adequate assessment procedures are contextual issues that prevent academics from using social media for teaching.

Using social media in a college or university setting has benefits and drawbacks. Implementing social technologies in the classroom requires careful planning for a variety of reasons. For example, not all students are enthusiastic about using these technologies due to different factors, such as their diversity of experiences, familiarity, attitudes, and expectations regarding online technologies (Hamid et al., 2009). For public information dissemination, some social network media have become more formal and official than they were intended to be despite the benefits and drawbacks. Examples include Facebook and Twitter. Numerous universities leaped at the chance to set up an official Facebook page, along with a number of other university entities, such as the library, students' association, and students' forum. Viral marketing is possible because friends of those who have already become fanatics can be enticed by a social network page (Reuben, 2008). By using Twitter, students and lecturers can form a network of mutual admiration and support. Twitter also makes it easy for users to disseminate information and voice their opinions.

METHOD

This study gathered and analyzed social media data in higher education for computing disciplines. Digital libraries from EBSCO, IEEE, and ACM were utilized for data gathering. Research on how social media is used in higher education, especially for computing-related subjects, was the primary goal of the search. The review employed the following criteria to choose papers for review: social media technologies were used in the research; students' performance and behavior, their perspective of the educational process, and lecturers' perceptions of social media use were all affected by their use of social media. Research focused on higher education, with an emphasis on computer-related fields.

RESULTS

MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR LEARNING VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

In higher education, the Learning Management System (LMS) has become an essential instrument. Teaching activities and procedures can be easily included into the LMS' framework because it provides teachers with a wide range of resources to choose from. Among these are the ability to share and interact with content as well as a calendar, enrolment, communication, and assessment features. The technologies and even the user interface provided in LMS by open source and private enterprises are similar, despite claims made by each of the multiple providers that the features vary. Although LMS can enable many of higher education's current models and methods of teaching, it has advantages and disadvantages (Anderson and Dron, 2012). Content distribution and assignment and grade management are two of the most popular features of the LMS (Phillips, 2006).

Campus-based educational institutions are the primary users of LMS. For campus-based universities and their LMS, the LMSs are only a small part of an even larger machine. Thus, choosing well-established physical alternatives is sensible. Such LMSs serve the same goal and are likely already a part of the schedule; hence, users are familiar with it and they do not feel like they are using cutting-edge technology. Unless they offer noticeable benefits, the

price, complexity, and risks of utilizing LMSs imply that most teachers naturally pick the original over the innovation because the architecture of most LMSs overtly or implicitly matches that of physical institutional structures and procedures.

Educational innovation can arise from the use of an LMS, including through teaching methods (Strayer, 2007), in which content is supplied and processed through the LMS, allowing classrooms to be used for active and social learning. According to a campus-based university, an LMS's additional value is mostly found in its power to enhance productivity and improve what has previously been accomplished. An obvious application is as a centralized database for materials and announcements to be distributed to an entire class at a short notice. Additionally, the capacity to automate procedures and migrate from simultaneous classroom to online text discussions and presentations enables new methodologies for those who believe they are necessary. The LMS provides an edge in this regard. Furthermore, the LMS allows for a smooth transfer from campus-based to online distance education without requiring a large pedagogical shift.

Educators are also employing commercial Web 2.0 products outside of the traditional LMS context to teach and learn in the classroom. Early adopters administer their own social media accounts for their classes (Kent and Leaver, 2014). Teachers in a secure LMS can use and evaluate socially created learning objects that have been captured and gathered in these informal environments (Conde et al., 2014). Learners are already active in these environments, and integrating them into the classroom may help them bring their enthusiasm, motivation, and understanding of "real world" into their academic work. This is a benefit over solely relying on LMS systems. However, such incorporation of social media tools has drawbacks, including the data gathering of student performance by outside commercial firms, possible data loss or closure of online companies related to corporate confidentiality or security protocols, and the requirement for students to take part in these commercial operations even if they hesitate to do so (Manca and Ranieri, 2016).

STUDENTS' USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The number of schools and institutions offering online courses to their students has risen tremendously in recent years, and the efficacy of using social networking technologies to learn has increased because of this greater access. Throughout the decades, learning has progressed from classroom-based methods to distant learning, and now to online learning as the globe has become more technologically adept. The traditional lecture format has given way to multimedia lectures because of the widespread adoption of computer technology. Traditional lecture format has also become a tremendous repository of knowledge because of the growth of technology and the Internet (Rozi et al., 2021). Learning from a respectable university, or even from across the state or the country, is now feasible, thanks to online learning. Modules in a social network represent the relationships between people in a certain domain, making them ideal for education (Liccardi et al., 2007).

Twitter, Web 2.0, and Facebook are the three most popular social media platforms in the education sector. Around 65% of students claim that they use social networking platforms to discuss lessons, to learn outside of education, and to organize college requirement (Masic et al., 2012). Students also use chat, text messaging, blogging, and virtual communities like MySpace to collaborate on school projects. Furthermore, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are the most popular social media platforms used by students because connecting and sharing information are easy on these platforms.

Facebook - Facebook is a famous social networking site that is used for communication, knowledge exchange, and information sharing. Facebook is selected, because it allows the majority of higher education students to connect effectively. Users have benefited much from

the engagement on online social networking sites. These networks draw non-users as well owing to their high level of user protection in place. For example, Facebook can verify if an account truly belongs to a specific user by sending a code to the user's cell phone. The majority of people worldwide use Facebook for a range of functions, including conversing and exchanging information in a variety of fields such as engineering, nursing, business, and even education. Many organizations also use Facebook to communicate with customers. Facebook can also serve as an online gallery of photos and videos for entertainment purposes.

YouTube - YouTube is a video-sharing website that lets users watch, upload, and download videos, as well as comment on other videos. To enhance the viewing experience, users can check what other users "like" to see what videos they enjoy. YouTube has a plethora of options for viewers of all kinds. By harnessing user data, YouTube strengthens its service by learning how their users utilize these services. Students are able to access YouTube videos in a variety of channels, such as Google search and Facebook, as well as through features offered on YouTube itself. They can watch lectures, seminars, and conferences to learn about the topic at hand. Zhou provides a valuable source of information about YouTube views, and the great majority of these inputs evaluate and debate pertinent information and facts. Video views from sites other than YouTube, such as search engines and video searches and social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, only account for 7% of all YouTube views on the site (Zhou et al., 2010).

In the micro-blogging world, Twitter is one of the most popular and fastest-growing platforms (Goroshko and Samoilenko, 2011). Its slogan is "the greatest way to discover what's new in your world." Jack Dorsey created this service in March 2006, and it went live the same month. Friends can send and receive short messages on a regular basis, which is why this service was created. These alerts can be particularly useful for university students, as they can provide quick updates on a wide range of topics that are of interest to them, such as business, wellness, and fashion. Through Twitter, they can get an overview of any topic.

CONCLUSION

In higher education, the usage of social media enables students to interact with content that they can generate or share with one another. Academics have taken a pedagogical turn, thanks to social media tools. Technology empowerment and a curricular shift were supported by academics' enthusiasm and resilience in the value and ease of use of social media. Academics designed a social networking teaching–learning environment associated with academic pedagogy to increase student engagement and egocentricity. Moreover, students can now learn outside of the classroom as long as they have access to the Internet. Social media technologies have a positive impact on pupils' performance and growth, according to the findings. Researchers with a keen interest in new methods of instruction now have new tools at their disposal owing to the emergence of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

REFERENCES

Ainin, S., Naqshbandi, M. M., Moghavvemi, S., & Jaafar, N. I. (2015). Facebook usage, socialization and academic performance. Computers & Education, 83, 64-73. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2014.12.018

Anderson, T., & Dron, J. (2012). Learning technology through three generations of technology enhanced distance education pedagogy. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning*, 2012/2.

Brown, S. A. (2012). Seeing Web 2.0 in context: A study of academic perceptions. *The Internet and Higher Education, 15*(1), 50-57. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2011.04.003

Brownson, S. M. (2014, March). Embedding social media tools in online learning courses. In San Francisco, USA: The Clute Institute International Business & Education Conferences.

Conde, M. Á., García-Peñalvo, F. J., Rodríguez-Conde, M. J., Alier, M., Casany, M. J., & Piguillem, J. (2014). An evolving Learning Management System for new educational environments using 2.0 tools. *Interactive Learning Environments, 22*(2), 188-204.

Davies, R. S. (2011). Understanding technology literacy: A framework for evaluating educational technology integration. *TechTrends, 55*(5), 45-52. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-011-0527-3

Englund, C., Olofsson, A. D., & Price, L. (2016). Teaching with technology in higher education: Understanding conceptual change and development in practice. *Higher Education Research & Development, 36*(1), 73-87. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1171300

Fata-Hartley, C. (2011). Resisting rote: The importance of active learning for all course learning objectives. *Journal of College Science Teaching, 40*(3), 36.

Friesen, N., & Lowe, S. (2011). The questionable promise of social media for education: Connective learning and the commercial imperative. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 28*(3), 183-194. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2011.00426.x

Goroshko, O. I., & Samoilenko, S. A. (2011). Twitter as a conversation through e-learning context. *Revista de Informatica Sociala*, 15.

Gruber, Abe, (2009). Social Media in Undergraduate University Admissions. [Thesis of M.B.A.]. Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu. Accessed from http://www.bloomfield.edu/socialmediathesis/ AbeGruber_SocialMediaThesis.pdf, 20 September 2011

Guy, R. (2012). The use of social media for academic practice: A review of literature. Kentucky *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Practice, 1*(2), 7.

Hamid, S., Chang, S. & Kurnia, S (2009). Identifying the use of online social networking in higher education. In Same places, different spaces. Proceedings ascilite Auckland 2009, accessed from http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/auckland09/procs/hamid-poster.pdf, 21 September 2011

Harris, J., Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. (2009). Teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge and learning activity types. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 41*(4), 393-416. https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2009.10782536

Jeffs, T., & Smith, M. K. (2021). The education of informal educators. *Education Sciences, 11*(9), 488. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11090488

Junco, R. (2012). The relationship between frequency of Facebook use, participation in Facebook activities, and student engagement. *Computers & Education, 58*(1), 162-171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2011.08.004

Kent, M., & Leaver, T. (2014). *An Education in Facebook? Higher Education and the World's Largest Social Network.* Routledge.

Liccardi, I., Ounnas, A., Pau, R., Massey, E., Kinnunen, P., Lewthwaite, S., Midy, M.-A., & Sarkar, C. (2007). The role of social networks in students' learning experiences. In the proceeding of ACM SIGCSE Bulletin, 39, 224-237.

Malcolm, J., Hodkinson, P., & Colley, H. (2003). The interrelationships between informal and formal learning. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 15*(7/8), 313-318. https://doi.org/10.1108/13665620310504783

Manca, S. (2020). Snapping, pinning, liking or texting: Investigating social media in higher education beyond Facebook. *The Internet and Higher Education, 44*, 100707. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2019.100707

Manca, S., & Ranieri, M. (2016). Facebook and the others. Potentials and obstacles of social media for teaching in higher education. *Computers & Education, 95,* 216-230. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.01.012

Masic, I., & Sivic, S. (2012). Social networks in medical education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Materia Socio Medica, 24*(3), 162. https://doi.org/10.5455/msm.2012.24.162-164

Otunla, A. O., & Amuda, C. O. (2018). Nigerian undergraduate students' computer competencies and use of information technology tools and resources for study skills and habits' enhancement. Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology, Fourth Edition, 2303-2313. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2255-3.ch200

Phillips, R. (2006). Tools used in Learning Management Systems: analysis of WebCT usage logs. In Proceedings of the 23rd annual ascilite conference: Who's learning? Whose technology?, 663-673.

Piotrowski, C. (2015). Emerging research on social media use in education: A study of dissertations. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 27*, 1–12

Reuben, R. (2008). The use of social media in higher education for marketing and communications: A guide for professionals in higher education.

Rodriguez, J. E. (2011). Social media use in higher education: Key areas to consider for educators. *MERLOT J. Online Learn. Teach. 7*(4), 539–550

Rozi, F., Putri, M. W., & Wijaya, M. R. A. (2021). E-Learning System For Physical Education In IAIN Salatiga Using Google Classroom. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, 3*(2), 270-277.

Stathopoulou, A., Siamagka, N., & Christodoulides, G. (2019). A multi-stakeholder view of social media as a supporting tool in higher education: An educator–student perspective. *European Management Journal, 37*(4), 421-431. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2019.01.008

Strayer, J. F. (2007). The effects of the classroom flip on the learning environment: a comparison of learning activity in a traditional classroom and a flip classroom that used an intelligent tutoring system. Ohio State University.

Tang, Y., & Hew, K. F. (2017). Is mobile instant messaging (MIM) useful in education? Examining its technological, pedagogical, and social affordances. *Educational Research Review, 21,* 85-104. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2017.05.001

Tess, P. A. (2013). The role of social media in higher education classes (real and virtual) – A literature review. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29*(5), A60-A68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.12.032

Xin, Y., & Senin, A. B. A. (2022). Features of Environmental Sustainability Concerning Environmental Regulations, Green Innovation and Social Distribution in China. *Higher Education and Oriental Studies, 2*(1).

Zhou, R., Khemmarat, S., & Gao, L. (2010). The impact of YouTube recommendation system on video views. In the proceeding of Proceedings of the 10th annual conference on Internet measurement, 404-410.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Du Jin (1990), female, Han nationality, is a native of Xuanwei City, Yunnan Province, China. She is a MA graduate from King's College, University of London, UK, majoring in digital culture and society. Her research areas are digital media culture and new social networks,

international exchange and cooperation and higher vocational education. Her publications includes *"Are the interactivity and participation increasing in the mobile media world?"*. Published in 'Speed Reading' Magazine in May 2019 and *"Digital Culture and Society"* published in Campus English in June 2019.

Mailing Address: No.2 West of Shilin Road, Guanshanhu District, Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, P.R.China
Contact number: +86-13078535958