

SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCING FACTORS IN EDUCATION DISSEMINATION

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ABSTRACT

Today the social media has become an integral part in people's lives. Social media became more perceptible at higher education level and changing the ways students collaborate, learn and communicate. Students' communication with faculty and peers over social networking sites can help a student in socializing, to find friends and discuss study related matters. Many scholars in their research studies had favored the usage of social media as an additional tool for education. There is abundance of educational content available online for the use of students. This problem of plenty has aroused the need for purposeful content a student seeks. In this paper, an effort has been made to identify influencing factors influencing students in education dissemination on social media. The data was collected from management students through Likert scale and analyzed using factor analysis with reliability and validation checks. The emerged factors that came out were topic discussion, better learning, motivating, and communicative shows the effectiveness of social media in education dissemination. This study will help higher education institutes and faculty

in disseminating education over social media which will further help students in education.

Keywords: Social Media, Higher Education, Social Networking Sites (SNS), Education Dissemination, Factor Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

In the past decades the world has witnessed tremendous development and the increase in the use of Information Technology (IT) and IT-enabled services. This advancement in the field of IT has brought the emergence of Social media. Social media is defined as "Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allow the creation and exchange of User-Generated Content". Some examples of social media are social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), blogs, microblogs (e.g. Twitter) and wikis (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The use of social media has been widespread and it has its impact on society. The usage of social media is increasing particularly amongst students of higher education in India. India has 250 million active internet users (Jan 18). India's annual growth of social media users is 2nd in the world at 31% against the global

growth rate of 13% (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). This media has emerged as an integral part of personal, professional and social life. This social phenomenon has caught the attention of academicians around the world and being investigated by researchers around the world.

Social media is highly prevalent with higher education students and this technology is changing students' communication, collaboration and learning techniques. Now a days, higher education students are experiencing variety of classroom forms (i.e., "traditional as well as virtual and hybrid classrooms), Social media has marshaled new openings for students to interact with faculty and institutes. Many researchers had argued for the purposeful amalgamation of social media for educational purposes (Manjunatha, 2013).

Existing studies show students mostly use social media sites for socializing, exchange of views and entertainment purposes (Tess, 2013). However, such activities can also be incorporated for educational purposes. A study at the University of Delhi on 160 researchers in philosophy and social studies finds 71.25% of the surveyed students used facebook for research and collaboration projects (Madhusudhan, 2012). Some of the studies have conflicting results owing to the lack of descriptive research in the domain of social media use in education. There is no clear understanding of the impact of social media on education experiences of higher education students.

Faculty using these technologies often fails to understand the unique opportunities and challenges that accompany the adoption of this new paradigm. This research work tried to study the social media use in higher education

and to identify influencing factors that drive a student to use social media in education. The data were analyzed using statistical techniques like exploratory factor analysis with reliability and validity checks.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the literature was undertaken by systematically searching the database sources with relevant search words. The recent works and relevant articles were studied. A literature review of the relevant articles is presented here. Gretzel, Ulrike, Kang, and Lee (2008) mentions in his study that people are using the internet for many motives like searching information, issues discussions and to make inquiries etc. These activities over the internet are now days being carried out over social media or Web 2.0. Ajjan and Hartshorne (2008) studied faculty perception to examine faculty's awareness and readiness about web 2.0 technologies and its benefits to the students by collecting data from 136 faculty members at university in the US. Survey results revealed the usefulness of social networks in improving student to student interaction and student satisfaction.

Wang, Y., & Braman, J. (2009) in their study explored factors associated with the use of the virtual world Second Life (SL) for education and proposed a research model. That model then tested through an administered survey on business school students who were using SL in courses. The study results find usefulness in the ease of use in adopting SL.

Selwyn (2010) mentions 03 interconnected concepts that encourage using social media in education: the connected, collective and creative nature of the highly connected student;

knowledge consumption and construction and finally formal education. These concepts are taking the students to “user-driven” education that supports the use of social media in education. Kabilan, Ahmad, and Abidin (2010) surveyed 300 randomly selected students and found 74% of them acknowledged enhanced attitude towards learning of English language on facebook. Respondents also agreed to feel motivated to converse in English language on social media. The study also recommended the incorporation of facebook as an education tool under the supervision of experts to achieve desired results.

Deil-Amen, Regina, Cecilia, Charles HF Davis III, and Canche (2012) reported in their study a survey conducted by the National School Boards Association in 2011. The survey results found high usage of social media by students and 60% of students on social media talk about topics related to education. These polls find that social media is mostly used for marketing, information sharing and education. Sadaf, Newby and Ertmer (2012) studied pre-service teachers’ beliefs about their intent to use Web 2.0 technology in their future classrooms. The exploratory qualitative study used an open-ended survey conducted on 190 students and 12 participants from first-year students in a teacher education program. The results found that a majority (51%) of them were found devoted to using social media technologies in education dissemination as it found to enhance student engagement. The pre-service teachers were found comfortable in the use of technology, however, they emphasized the need for guidance to implement its effective use in the classroom.

Manjunatha S. (2013) conducted study on usage of social media sites among higher education students in India and found that adoption of internet usage is high among newly joined higher education students in Indian and most of students have access to the sites. The students see these as supportive tools to traditional teaching methods and see these sites more quick and convenient to interact with. Students were also found to be conscious of the menaces and risks involved in using these sites, which seems as a positive indicator as students were also found to be aware and hold social consciousness as well.

Sobaih, Moustafa, Ghandforoush (2016) in their study on the use of social media in developing countries found that there is an increase in use of social networking sites among students of higher education. This calls for interest of both researchers as well as policymakers. The study found that most of the faculty members are aware and use social media sites regularly. Faculty saw great value in using these sites for academic-related activities but actual use of these sites was not found much for teaching and learning purposes due to unawareness of apposite social media tools. The study reported that social media will prove as an effective tool in teaching especially in developing nations. It could fill the gap between institutes and students. **Amin, Mansoor, Hussain and Hashmat** (2016) studied the impact of social media on student’s academic performance and found that students who spent more time on social media reflect a better scholastic performance. Students found these sites helpful as they can create and share ideas, contents and concepts for their studies.

Students also found to be having fun on these sites and agreed that the use of social media helps them in preparing their home assignments and these sites encourage them to concentrate on their studies.

Zachos, Georgios, Kollia and Anagnostopoulos (2018) prepared a review study consisting of 77 articles, published from 2010 onwards. The study found great interest among teachers and researchers to use of social media in academic uses. The study revealed some encouraging trends about learning with social media which provides through a variety of contributions. The use of social media mostly deals with users' learning style and personality and not depends upon organizational support. The investigation finds practically complete concurrence on the positive commitment of web based life to the correspondence and collaboration of understudies for instructive purposes. It was additionally discovered that specialists are confronting numerous challenges in accomplishing exact information on conceivable upgraded scholastic execution with the utilization of internet based life. Some of the respondents seek parameters that support successful educational action and seem to be apathetic towards use of social media in education despite cheering results. The study highlighted a lack of empirical data to enhance research enrichment.

The above studies clearly show the relevance, use & acceptability of social media sites by students and the use of social media sites show a positive impact on the academic performance of students. The said studies are however silent on the type of content to be shared on social media and quantitative measure on its significance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Many researchers have discussed the wide-ranging benefits of using social media in education dissemination. Social media activities in education dissemination are found to be valuable for improving academic performance through collaborative learning where learners and faculty use social media that are appealing to them. Existing research also rue the lack of empirical data on the use of social media in education. Professionals also seek parameters that support the use of social media in education. In this research an effort is made to identify factors that influence student behavior towards use on the use of social media in education. The data will be collected and measured on Likert scale and will be analyzed using exploratory factor analysis with reliability and validity checks.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To identify influencing factors in education dissemination, firstly statements related to social media uses were collected from the study of literature, existing social media forums of higher education institutes & students and other exploratory studies. Afterward, an exploratory factor analysis technique was applied to summarize the variables. A pilot survey with 35 respondents was also conducted to analyze the content validity of the questionnaire. Data is collected through Likert scale. 218 students in Punjab filled their responses in questionnaire. After applying techniques of data cleaning, 191 questionnaires were selected for final analysis. Data was collected between Aug 2018 and Oct 2018.

The core purpose of the study was to sum up the variables; therefore Principal Component

Analysis (PCA) technique of factoring was used. PCA technique begins with extracting the greatest variance and then place together into a single factor. Afterward, it eliminates those variances in the 1st factor and then again begins extracting maximum variance for the next factor. The process keeps on going until we have the last factor. Each factor is defined as the best linear combination of variables to explain the variance that the preceding factor does not account for (Luck, 1987). To check the internal reliability of observed variables Cronbach Alpha (α) (Cronbach 1971) was used (Hair et al., 2010). The acceptable range of Cronbach's alpha coefficient as per Literature is 0.7-1 (Nunnally, 1978). In the present work, this value came out is 0.912, which was found acceptable.

DATA ANALYSIS

We first examine the appropriateness of factor analysis by running Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

(KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity tests. High values (more than 0.5) generally indicate the applicability of factor analysis for the data collected (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) tests the hypothesis that our correlation matrix is an identity matrix. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test results as in table 1 give KMO value of 0.866 (>0.5) imply sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant ($p < 0.05$) indicates that factors are highly correlated and suitable for factor analysis. The exploratory factor analysis has been applied to identify the various influencing factors prospective students lookout for education purposes. Principal Component Analysis using varimax rotation was employed for extracting factors. Statements with small value of communalities (less than 0.5) were dropped from the analysis as such statements do not fit with factor solution. Anti image correlation values were also found to be more than 0.5 for each statement.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.866
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1171.058
	Df	105
	Sig.	.000

An Eigen value represents the amount of variance associated with the factor. Eigen values greater than one or only the factors having latent roots were measured significant; all other factors with latent roots less than one have to be considered insignificant. In the present study four factors were considered significant for analysis. These four factors were liable for 64.65 % of the overall variance explained. All these factors were given suitable names based on the variables loaded in each of the factor as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Perceived factors and Cronbach Alpha

Factor Name	Statements	Rotated Factor loading	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha)	Eigen Values	%age of Variance Explained
Topic Discussion	Ask questions to my classmates	.740	0.767	2.707	18.049
	Receive videos and presentations	.645			
	Upload and view group project/assignments	.597			
	Accelerated data & information sharing	.534			
	Acts as additional resource for my learning	.464			
Learning tool	Facilitates more comprehensive understanding	.760	0.698	2.526	16.837
	Social media is real life learning experience	.556			
Motivation	Appreciation and encouraging feedback motivates me	.423	0.749	2.262	15.077
	Do research work before posting	.764			
	Pictures and video on social media motivates me to initiate	.664			
	Increased student motivation & engagement	.671			
Communication	Feel more comfortable sharing and discussing	.825	0.767	2.203	14.688
	More comfortable responding to online discussions	.729			
	Helps in developing communication	.536			
	Communicate with instructors/teachers and ask questions online	.538			

FINDINGS

From the above discussions and results we can conclude that students pursuing higher education are using social media in education. Prominent factors were emerged in this present study on student use of social media in education. Students use social media as a learning tool and believe that social media provides them a learning environment where they can have in-depth discussion on the topics being covered in classrooms. Students also believe that the use of social media motivated them to study and help in improving their communication skills.

From the results of the study we can conclude that students are using social media in education and they are finding it helpful. Faculty and institutes should also focus on the use of social media and put serious consideration on this channel of education dissemination. As it is found that social media help in developing communication and motivating therefore for the faculty of languages, soft skills and training and development will be more beneficial in its use.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the research studies give insight and present solutions for the future, still research studies have their limitations. This study is done in limited time with limited resources resulting in small sample size and constrained demographics are limitations of the study. Though there are many study streams and considering a large number of students the sample in the study does not adequately represent them. This study considers only

postgraduate students and characteristics of undergraduate students are ignored. Similarly only students of management discipline are considered other streams of study that may have different characteristics and different social media use in education. Hence the results may not be generalized at a broader level. Hopefully future researchers will add more to the study and help in generalizing the results.

FUTURE WORK

The study does not give a quantitative measure of the use of social media in management education. For further studies can be made with a collection of more comprehensive data like varied demographic profiles and social media sites surfing patterns to get more insight on the topic. Further demographic characteristics and family profiles of the participants can be studied to establish a relationship with factors outcome. The relationship can be established using ANOVA or any other appropriate statistical techniques. The outcome of the relationship will further insight into the use of social media and will help the institute and faculty in drafting the policy framework towards content and use of social media. This will further result in better outcomes of social media use for students as well as institutes. More such studies can also be planned for other streams of specialization and with a varied and extensive respondent profile.

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