Chapter 17
Social Media and Use of Technology in Higher Education

Alex Kumi-Yeboah
University at Albany - SUNY, USA

Herbert Blankson
Dalton State College, USA

ABSTRACT

Social media has, in the past decade, transformed the way students and faculty communicate in the teaching and learning process. The teaching and learning process in higher education is currently experiencing a technological revolution. This is mainly because social media is presently used as a tool by faculty and administrators to communicate with students inside and outside of the classroom. In this chapter, descriptive statistics are used to analyze secondary data on the trend of faculty use of social media by discipline, demographics, and number of years. It also analyzes the use of social media sites, barriers to the use of social media sites, as well as faculty use of social media in higher education. Results show that less than 50% of faculty use social media for instruction. Overall, younger faculty (under 35 years) report the use of SMT 55.7% more than older faculty (55 and above years). Faculty in Arts and Humanities indicate a higher use of social media than all disciplines. There is a strong correlation between faculty use of social media for professional and pedagogical purposes. The majority of faculty use SMT more often for personal reasons than instructional purposes. Results indicate that there is a high faculty awareness of social media use in higher education in recent years, and issues of privacy and integrity of online student submissions emerge as barriers to faculty use of social media.

INTRODUCTION

Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, SlideShare, Flickr, Podcasts, YouTube, WIZIQ, and LinkedIn allow people to connect to other users. In higher education, social media consists of using technological tools such as Blogs, Wikis, Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, SlideShare, Flickr, Podcasts, YouTube, WIZIQ, and LinkedIn. The aforementioned provide a means of communication between faculty and students. Social media are virtual places where people share information. Everybody, and anybody, can share anything anywhere and at anytime (Joosten, 2012). Registered

users have the ability to post, upload photographs about what they are doing at any time, as well as send messages to people when they choose to do so. The use of social media among young adults is growing rapidly in the United States (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2008). In 2010, it was reported that about 72% of all college students have an established social media profile with 45% of them using these social media sites at least once a day. More so, about 57% of social network users are in the age group of 18-29 years (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). In the United States, it is estimated that about 66% of online users are adults (Smith, 2011), while 73% of teenagers (between 12 -17) use social media (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010).

According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project (2012), about 20% of college students use computers between the ages of five and eight. It is apparent that the Internet has become a common phenomenon in their world today. College Internet users are twice as likely to use instant messaging daily compared to the average Internet user. On a typical day, 26% of college students use IM; 12% of other Internet users use IM on an average day (Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2012), and almost half (46%) of college students agree that email enables them to express ideas to a professor that they would not have expressed in class. Only 19% of students said they communicate more with their professors via email than they do face-to-face (Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2010). The Pew Internet and American

Life Project (2012) further indicated that 72% of college students check email daily, 85% of college students' own computers and 66% use at least two email addresses.

Additionally, with regards to Internet use and college students' education, about 46% of students stated that the use of emails allows them to express their views, ideas and opinions to course professor(s) that they may not have expressed in class, while 19% expressed that they prefer communicating more with their professors via email than face-to-face interaction (Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2002). Also 73% of college students had stated that they use the Internet for academic purposes than the library, while a small proportion of 9% used library more than the Internet for retrieving information.

A growing number of faculty, instructors, instructional designers, and staff are beginning to explore how social media technologies can successfully enhance student learning and, as a result, assist higher educational institutions in encouraging digital literacy among their students (Bennett, Bishop, Dalgarno,. Waycott, & Kennedy, 2012). The functionality of social media provides opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of our institutional processes while providing challenges as well. For example, Joosten (2012) states that because many social media tools are not institutional enterprise systems, "educators are concerned about using them in the classroom. At the heart of this concern are issues related to student behavior online, information privacy, and

Table 1. The landscape of social media users (2012)

Social Network Site	% of Internet Users	Adults Ages 18-29, Women
Use FaceBook	67%	Women, adults ages 18-29
Use Twitter	16%	Adults ages 18-29, African-Americans, urban residents
Use Pinterest	15%	Women, adults under 50, whites, those with some college education
Use Instagram	13%	Adults ages 18-29, African-Americans, Latinos, women, urban residents
Use Tumblr	6%	Adults ages 18-29

Note. Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Post-Election Survey, 2012

16 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/social-media-and-use-of-technology-in-higher-education/111846

Related Content

"I Found Myself Retweeting": Using Twitter Chats to Build Professional Learning Networks
Julie A. Delelloand Annamary L. Consalvo (2019). *Educational Technology and Resources for Synchronous Learning in Higher Education (pp. 88-108).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/i-found-myself-retweeting/225747

Correlation of University Lecturer Leadership Styles, Students Satisfaction, and Learning Outcomes During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Wenwen Cao (2022). *International Journal of Technology-Enhanced Education (pp. 1-17).*
www.irma-international.org/article/correlation-of-university-lecturer-leadership-styles-students-satisfaction-and-learning-outcomes-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/308468

A Systematic Review of the Potential Influencing Factors for ChatGPT-Assisted Education
Chuhan Xu (2024). *International Journal of Technology-Enhanced Education (pp. 1-19).*
www.irma-international.org/article/a-systematic-review-of-the-potential-influencing-factors-for-chatgpt-assisted-education/339189

Is the use of Makey Makey Helpful to Teach Programming Concepts to Primary Education Students?
Diana Pérez-Marín, Raquel Hijón-Neira, Ainhoa Romeroand Silvia Cruz (2022). *Research Anthology on Computational Thinking, Programming, and Robotics in the Classroom (pp. 631-647).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/is-the-use-of-makey-makey-helpful-to-teach-programming-concepts-to-primary-education-students/287359

Screencasts and Learning Styles
Rui Alberto Jesus (2019). *Advanced Methodologies and Technologies in Modern Education Delivery (pp. 152-164).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/screencasts-and-learning-styles/212808