



Student teachers' use of social media for academic purposes

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Abstract

The emergence of social media in particular has altered the teaching-learning process due to technological advancements. College and teacher education students today have a variety of methods to benefit from using social media. It will provide a means for the students to efficiently communicate with one another regarding class projects, group tasks, or for assistance with homework assignments, as well as greatly benefit practice teaching. The study investigates student teachers' independent usage of social media for academic purposes. Data regarding the use of social media in the teaching-learning process of student teachers was gathered using a questionnaire in order to examine how student teachers use it for academic purposes. Data collected from 98 student teachers allowed for the development of a nuanced picture of social media usage. The results imply that student teachers utilized a variety of social media to both "survive" and enhance their student identities during their teacher education course. They utilized social media at the same time to get ready to shift into their future careers. Through social media, participants built their social skills by connecting with people in their existing networks and loose communities of peers and study groups. The study discusses the advantages of this social media usage. When conceptualising the usage of social media, it is crucial to recognize the blurred lines between personal and academic goals and to take participants' complicated reality into account. The study offers recommendations for further research into the use of social media by pre-service teachers as well as theoretical and practical consequences for institutions that provide basic teacher education.

Introduction

Education is the most powerful weapon to change the universe. The teachers are the key to mould the students in a desirable way. Teaching is for teacher and learning is for learners. Evolution of technology occupies prominent place in teaching-learning process and it minimizes manual task of the teacher. The present education system is highly different from what it was in the past, especially with regard to application of technology. Information and Communication Technology has revolutionized the entire teaching – learning process. Students with access to the technologies have an infinite world of knowledge at their finger tips. A learner or a teacher without the knowledge of modern or latest technology is just like a frog in the well or in other words found unfit in the society. Today, teachers and students are taking

advantage of the advances of internet technology and applications more than in the past. With the introduction of social media, a new approach to teaching and learning may be taken seriously into consideration.

Social media- An emerging educational tool

Social media is the collective of online communication channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. It's a tool that connects people, states and nations. This media rely on cell phone and internet-based technology for developing most interconnected platforms which help people and groups to discuss, create, share out, and convert generated content. Social media is a defining component of Web 2.0, the term given to the information technology that permits users to be active creators and

sharers of online information, rather than simply absorbers of information.

The major types of Social media includes Social networks, Bookmarking sites, Social news, Media sharing, Micro blogging, Blog comments and forums, Face book Twitter, Whatsapp Wikis, YouTube, Instagram etc

Need and Significance of the Study

The developments in technology, especially the arrival of social media has changed the scenario of teaching-learning process. Today, students of college can use the social media to their advantage in many different ways. It will give a way to the students to effectively reach each other in regards to class ventures, bunch assignments or for help on homework assignments. Many of the students who do not take an interest consistently in class might feel that they can express their thoughts easily on social media. Students can use social media to communicate with their teachers as a group outside of class.

Teachers can use social media in a wide variety of ways. Teachers may post on social media about class activities, school events, homework assignments etc. The access of social media provides the opportunity for educators to teach good digital citizenship and the use of internet for productivity. The teacher trainees are at once teachers and students. They have to learn many things related to their subject and also for teaching the students during their teaching practice. Social media is a useful technology for them to acquire new knowledge, share learning materials, lesson plan preparation etc. The present two year B.Ed. curriculum offers many opportunities for the student teachers to use social media in their teaching and learning process. Adequate training in selection, utilization and evaluation of the appropriate instructional media may help the student teachers to prepare the future generations for the information society. The review of related studies revealed that numerous studies are being conducted with regard to social media. But studies regarding the use of social media for academic purposes among student teachers are meager. This research most often focuses on particular tools that are found to be the most popular, while participants' overall use of social media tools

has not been comprehensively explored. Hence the present study is noteworthy to know the extent of use of social media by the student teachers in their teaching-learning process. The study will also illuminate the benefits of using social media for the purpose of teaching-learning of student teachers.

Research Question

Based on the context and need for the study the initial question which rose in the mind of the investigator is

How do the student teachers use social media for academic purposes?

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the pertinent aspects with regard to the use of social media in the teaching-learning process of student teachers
2. To study the different social skills that developed through the use of social media in teaching-learning of student teachers.

Methodology in Brief

Methodology gives a detailed account of the methods adopted and the procedures followed by the investigator .In the study normative survey method was used to collect the data required. The sample for the present study consists of 98 student teachers from two Teacher Education Institutions. In order to collect the data required a questionnaire in Google form was employed .The questionnaire covered items with regard to the use of social media in the teaching-learning process of student teachers and the social skills developed. Computation of percentages was done to decide the proportion of responses made by the subjects under study.

Analysis and Interpretation Of Data

The analysis and interpretation of the data regarding the academic uses of social media falls under under the following major headings:

I)ANALYSIS OF THE PERTINENT ASPECTS WITH REGARD TO THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN TEACHING - LEARNING OF STUDENT TEACHERS

a) Types of social media used by the student teachers

There are a numerous social media platforms available today. The table 1 describes the types of social media used by the student teachers for their teaching-learning.

Table 1: Percentage of student teachers using different types of social media

Sl.No	Type of social media	No. of student teachers	Percentage
1	Facebook	49	50
2	Twitter	14	14
3	Whatsapp	98	100
4	Blog	98	100
5	Wikis	23	23
6	YouTube	98	100
7	Instagram	46	47
8	Others	6	6

From the table 1, it is revealed that all the student teachers (100%) were using Whatsapp, blog and YouTube for their teaching-learning purpose. The reason for increased use of blog might be due to its inclusion in the B.Ed curriculum. Due to covid-19 all classes rooms are rearranged virtually into groups under the leadership of the concerned teachers. As part of the internship programme student teachers are added into the school whatsapp groups too. Regarding the use of YouTube it has made mandatory for the student teachers to observe and write the critical review of the High School classes telecasted in the Victors

Table 2: Showing the duration of usage of social media by the student teachers

Time	No. of student teachers	Percentage
a)2-3 hrs	3	3
b)4-5 hrs	9	9
c)6-7 hrs	50	51
d)above 7 hrs	36	37

From table 2, it is revealed that 51% of the student teachers spend 6-7 hrs on social media during a week. About 37% spend more than 7 hours in a week. Least number of students 3 (3%) use social media up to 3hrs per week. The student teachers spend most of the hours in social media because teacher educators make use of social media to transact both the theory and practical as the blended mode of teaching has emerged due to covid-19 pandemic.

Table 3: Percentage of different purposes of communicating with teachers

Purposes	No. of student teachers	Percentage
a)for clearing doubts	58	59
b)to discuss classroom works	86	88
c) to share learning materials	98	100
d)for personal guidance	17	17

From table 3, it is found out that all the student teachers 98 (100%) depended on social media for sharing the learning

Channel. About 46(47%) have reported in the use of instagram .Only 23 (23%) and 14 (14%) have reported to the use of Wikis and Twitter simultaneously as they might be unaware of its features. and only one student teacher was using a social media named 'Facetime' other than the listed ones.

b) Time spend on social media during a week

With the arrival of mobile technologies, it became easy for everyone to access social media at any time. The table 2 shows the time spends on social media by the student teachers during a week.

3) Purpose of communicating with teachers through social media

Social media offers a variety of features that makes its users easy to communicate with others. Teachers and students can communicate each other and discuss academic matters through different social media. The table 3 shows the different purposes of communicating with the teacher educators through social media by the student teachers.

materials. About 86(88%) student teachers used social media for discussing about classroom works and 58(59%) used for

clearing their doubts .Seventeen among the student teachers (17%) of them got personal guidance from their teachers through social media. Thus it can be assumed that social media provides an easier medium to share learning materials for student teachers and to clear their doubts by consulting their teachers.

Table 4: Percentage of different purposes of searching materials in social media

Purposes	No. of student teachers	Percentage
a)for lesson plan preparation	95	97
b)for the deeper knowledge of a subject	98	100
c)for finding activities for students	76	78
d) for making teaching aids	56	57

From the table 4, it is observed that all the student teachers searched materials in social media to get a deeper knowledge in their subject. About 95 (97%) of them used it for lesson plan preparation. It can be assumed that they depend more on social media than on books to get more knowledge. Majority 76(78%) use social media for finding activities for students and about 56(57%) used social media for making teaching aids.

5)Other educational purposes

a) Discussion of study matters through social media

93.4% of the student teachers agreed that they discussed study matters with their friends through social media and remaining. The high score indicates that social media provides a comfortable platform for discussion.

b) Seeking help of social media to complete assignments, seminars etc

It is found that majority of the student teachers (95.7%) completed their assignments, seminars and other classroom works with the help of social media. Thus it can be assumed that students get the framework for assignments and seminars in social media.

c) Downloading/watching videos

When 98% of the student teachers downloaded or watched videos related to their own subject. The high percentage shows that videos in social media are very much informative.

d) Sharing of learning materials with friends through social media

It is observed that all of the student teachers(100%) share learning materials with their friends through social media. The high score may be due to the photo sharing feature of social media.

4) Purposes of searching materials in social media

Social media provides lots of materials and information on various topics. The table 4 shows the different purposes of searching materials in social media by the student teachers.

e) Membership in learning groups in social media

It is revealed that all of the student teachers (100%) had membership in learning groups in social media. It can be assumed from this that membership in learning groups has become the need of the hour.

f) Regular updating of blog

All the student teachers (100%) were regularly updating their blogs .It may be due to the fact that it was necessary to upload their teaching practice weekly report in their blogs.

g) Posting of PowerPoint presentations in blog

PowerPoint presentations made as part of the classroom works were posted in the blogs by 85%of the student teachers.

h) Submission of assignments through blog

It is investigated that 95.7 % of the student teachers had submitted their assignments through blogs at least once. The high percentage for blog related aspects may be due to the integration of blog activities in the B.Ed curriculum.

i) Uploading videos/documentaries in social media

85% of the student teachers had uploaded a video/ documentary that made as part of their curriculum. They uploaded it because they may get valuable comments about their work.

j) Usage of social media to show videos or articles to students

Social media was used by 87.1%of the student teachers to show videos or articles related to their subject to the students. Thus it can be assumed that social media makes leaning more easier. The remaining 12.9% of them did not use the facility of social media in their classrooms.

k) Increase in knowledge with the help of social media

98.6% of the student teachers' knowledge had been increased with the help of social media. This may be due to the fact that social media provides knowledge on each and every subject around the world. Only 1.4% had a negative opinion.

l) Achievement of better results with the integration of social media into the lessons

Most of the student teachers (88.6%) said that they will get better results if social media is integrated into their lessons. With the integration of social media their learning may become easier and relaxed.

m) Social media as a best way for teachers to reach students

Among the student teachers 85.7% had of the opinion that social media is the

Table 5: Percentage of development of social skills

Social skills	No. of student teachers	Percentage
a) Sharing	70	71.4
b) Effective communication	77	78.6
c) Interpersonal relationship	46	47.1
d) Cooperation	63	64.3
e) Helping mentality	46	47.1
f) Adjustment	10	10

From the table 5, it is revealed that Effective communication (78.6%) and Sharing (71.4%) developed the most because of the use of social media, followed by Cooperation (64.3%), Interpersonal relationship (47.1%) and Helping mentality (47.1%). It may be because student teachers get the opportunity to maintain a good relationship with everyone through social media. The least developed social skill was adjustment (10%).

Conclusion and Recommendation

The present study Student teachers' use of social media for academic purposes throws light on the fact that, student teachers greatly use social media in their teaching-learning process. In the current context it is important that student teachers keep abreast of technological developments and are aware of IT skills. Student teachers use social media like Blog, Whatsapp, Facebook, YouTube, Wikis and Facetime. They consider social media as the best way to communicate with their teacher educators for clearing their doubts and to share learning materials. Materials available in social media are searched by the student teachers usually for their lesson plan preparation. Social skills like effective communication, sharing, cooperation, helping mentality etc. can be

best way for teachers to reach students. It may be because social media provides a platform for communication with the students and also contains interesting videos and articles that can be shown to the students

n) Productiveness of teaching-learning with the use of social media

Majority of the student teachers (91.4%) reported that their teaching-learning had become productive with the use of social media. It may be because social media provides everything they want to make their teaching fruitful.

II) DIFFERENT SOCIAL SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The table 5 shows the percentage of student teacher's opinion on the social skills that developed through the use of social media.

developed with the use of social media. Hence social media provides a large platform for the student teachers to fulfill their teaching and learning needs. Thus the findings of the present study leads to a better understanding of the educational and academic use of social media among student teachers and the present teaching community.

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