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## Teachers' Perspectives On Integrating Social Media In Higher Education And Its Impact On Student Learning

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### **Abstract:**

Social media has become an integral component of contemporary communication and is increasingly shaping teaching and learning practices in higher education. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, and YouTube offer opportunities for interactive engagement, collaboration, and knowledge sharing, supporting innovative pedagogical approaches like flipped classrooms, collaborative learning, and peer interaction that can enhance student motivation and deepen understanding. However, the incorporation of social media remains uneven, as some educators readily adopt these tools while others face challenges related to limited digital literacy, insufficient institutional support, and concerns about privacy, copyright, and accessibility; moreover, disciplinary differences and cultural contexts further influence patterns of adoption. While existing research has largely focused on student engagement and general usage trends, comparatively little attention has been given to teachers' perspectives and experiences. Addressing this gap, the present study examines how educators perceive and utilize social media in their teaching practices, the challenges they encounter, and the influence of contextual factors such as infrastructure and policy frameworks on its effective use. The findings are expected to provide meaningful insights into the role of social media in higher education and inform the development of more effective, context-sensitive, and sustainable strategies for its incorporation, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Higher Education, Teacher Perspectives, Student Learning

## Introduction:

Social media has become an integral part of modern communication, not only in everyday life but increasingly within educational contexts. In higher education, platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, and YouTube provide educators and students with opportunities for interactive engagement, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. These tools enable innovative pedagogical approaches, including flipped classrooms, collaborative projects, and peer-to-peer learning, which can enhance student motivation and deepen understanding of course material (Tess, 2013; Boateng & Amankwaa, 2023).

Despite its potential, the incorporation of social media into higher education remains inconsistent. Studies indicate that while some educators adopt these tools enthusiastically, many are constrained by limited digital literacy, lack of institutional support, and concerns related to privacy, copyright, and accessibility (Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Rodriguez, n.d.; Anderson, 2020). Additionally, cultural and disciplinary norms often influence the extent to which social media is adopted in teaching practices, resulting in uneven patterns of use across institutions and academic disciplines (Chugh, Grose, & Macht, 2020).

Existing research has largely focused on student engagement, general adoption trends, and institutional perspectives, with comparatively limited attention given to teachers' perceptions and experiences. Understanding how educators perceive social media, the strategies they use for its incorporation, and the challenges they encounter is essential for developing effective and sustainable approaches that enhance learning outcomes. Furthermore, examining teachers' perspectives can provide valuable insights into how contextual factors, such as infrastructural limitations and policy frameworks, influence the practical implementation of these tools (Sobaih et al., 2016; Vandeyar, 2020).

Given the growing presence of social media in education, there is a clear need for systematic investigation into how teachers perceive and apply these tools and how such practices influence student learning. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining educators' experiences and perspectives regarding social media use in higher education and assessing its perceived impact on teaching and learning.

## Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To examine teachers' perceptions of social media in higher education.
- ii. To identify how educators use social media in teaching and learning.
- iii. To explore the challenges faced by teachers in integrating social media.
- iv. To analyze the impact of social media on student engagement and learning outcomes.
- v. To assess the influence of institutional and contextual factors on its use.
- vi. To suggest strategies for the effective and sustainable incorporation of social media in education.

## Methodology:

This is a qualitative and theoretical research work. It examines teachers' perspectives on the incorporation of social media in higher education and its perceived impact on student learning. It is based on a critical review of relevant academic literature to develop a conceptual understanding of the topic. A thematic analysis is used to identify key patterns, including teachers' attitudes, usage practices, learning outcomes, and associated challenges. Limited qualitative inputs from higher education teachers may be included to

support the findings. Ethical standards are ensured through proper source acknowledgment and confidentiality in any primary data collection.

## Review of Literature:

Boateng and Amankwaa (2023) examine the influence of social media on students' academic experiences in higher education. Using qualitative interviews with ten students, the study finds that social media is widely used and appreciated for supporting learning, collaboration, and interaction with peers and instructors. The findings suggest that social media can make a positive contribution to students' academic development and knowledge construction.

Dumpit and Fernandez (2023) examine the adoption of social media in higher education in the Philippines using an extended Technology Acceptance Model. Based on a survey of 500 students from both public and private institutions, the study finds that factors such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, subjective norms, and playfulness significantly influence social media usage. It also reveals that Internet reliability and speed have a stronger impact on students in public higher education institutions. The study highlights that private institutions benefit more from integrating social media into classroom practices, whereas public institutions require improved ICT infrastructure to fully realize its potential advantages.

Manca and Ranieri (2016) investigated the use of social media in Italian higher education through a survey of 6,139 academics. The study found that although platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, as well as tools like blogs and YouTube, have the potential to enhance teaching through interactivity and collaboration, their actual use remains limited. Cultural resistance, pedagogical concerns, and institutional constraints were identified as major barriers, with adoption also varying across academic disciplines. Overall, the study highlights that, despite its potential benefits, the challenges often outweigh the advantages of integrating social media into university teaching.

Tess (2013) examines the use of social media in higher education to support teaching and learning. The study highlights that these platforms can enhance interaction, participation, and collaborative learning among students. At the same time, the review notes that existing research presents inconsistent findings and is often based on self-reported data. While some studies indicate positive outcomes, others point to challenges such as distraction and reduced academic focus. Therefore, the author concludes that although social media offers valuable opportunities in education, more rigorous and reliable research is needed to establish its effectiveness.

Chugh, Grose, and Macht (2020) conducted a scoping review of 24 studies examining social media use among higher education academics. The review found that, although social media is widely accessible, it is primarily used for research dissemination, career development, and professional networking rather than for teaching purposes. Limited use in teaching is attributed to factors such as lack of awareness, confidence, and digital skills. Despite these challenges, social media offers several advantages, including enhanced communication, expanded professional networks, and improved student engagement. The study highlights the need for academics to integrate social media more effectively into their teaching and professional practices.

Vandeyar (2020) found that teachers in resource-constrained universities tend to move away from traditional Learning Management Systems (LMS) and adopt social media tools, developing more positive attitudes toward these technologies. Anderson (2020) highlights both the benefits and challenges of social media use,

including concerns related to data control, and suggests solutions such as improved institutional management and user-controlled approaches.

Anderson (2020) examines the use of social media in higher education, highlighting both its benefits and challenges. While social media offers convenience and value for teaching and learning, it also raises concerns related to data control. The article discusses potential solutions, including institutional management of social media platforms and technical approaches that enable users to retain greater control over their data.

Rodriguez (n.d.) examines the growing use of social media in higher education and highlights key considerations for educators. The article emphasizes that Web 2.0 tools can enhance learning, communication, and student engagement, while also presenting challenges associated with their public nature. Key issues discussed include compliance with privacy and accessibility regulations such as FERPA and ADA, as well as concerns related to copyright, intellectual property rights, and fair use. The paper also provides practical guidance for integrating social media into teaching in a manner that maintains legal and ethical standards.

This study examines how higher education staff use technology and social media, and how individual innovativeness influences adoption. Based on a survey of 502 staff members and a subsample of 106 analyzed using structural equation modeling, the findings indicate that staff generally use devices, social media, and cloud services at a satisfactory level. Adoption patterns vary across demographic groups: male staff tend to adopt devices earlier, academics are early users of commercial services and academic social networks, while administrators lead in the use of platforms such as Office 365. Overall, the study finds that general innovativeness has a positive influence on technology adoption, highlighting the importance of personal traits alongside demographic factors in higher education technology use.

### **Analysis of the Study:**

The reviewed literature collectively underscores the increasing significance of social media in higher education, particularly in enhancing communication, collaboration, and student engagement. Studies by Boateng and Amankwaa (2023) and Tess (2013) indicate that social media platforms positively influence students' academic experiences by supporting interactive learning and knowledge construction, leading to improved participation and engagement.

However, the findings also reveal notable inconsistencies in both adoption and effectiveness. Manca and Ranieri (2016) and Chugh, Grose, and Macht (2020) demonstrate that, despite the recognized potential of social media, its pedagogical use remains limited. Academics tend to utilize these platforms more for networking, research dissemination, and professional development rather than for instructional purposes, reflecting a disconnect between availability and effective classroom integration.

The literature further identifies several barriers to implementation. Key challenges include limited digital literacy, inadequate institutional support, cultural resistance, and concerns related to privacy, copyright, and data control (Anderson, 2020; Rodriguez, n.d.). In addition, infrastructural constraints, such as poor internet connectivity, significantly hinder adoption, particularly in public institutions and developing contexts (Dumpit and Fernandez, 2023).

Contextual and individual factors also emerge as critical influences. Vandeyar (2020) notes that in resource-constrained environments, educators often adopt social media as an alternative to formal learning management systems, developing more positive attitudes toward its use. Moreover, individual innovativeness and demographic characteristics play an important role in shaping technology adoption patterns among higher education staff.

Overall, the analysis suggests that while social media presents considerable opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning, its incorporation in higher education remains uneven and influenced by multiple interrelated factors. This underscores the need for stronger institutional support, targeted skill development, and coherent policy frameworks to facilitate effective use. Furthermore, the limited emphasis on teachers' perspectives within existing research highlights a significant gap that warrants further investigation.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This study contributes to the expanding body of research on social media in higher education by foregrounding teachers' perspectives, an area that remains comparatively underexplored. While prior research has predominantly focused on student engagement and general usage trends, this study emphasizes the pivotal role of educators as key agents in the effective incorporation of social media into teaching and learning processes.

The significance of the study is multifaceted. First, it offers insights into how teachers perceive and utilize social media within their pedagogical practices, thereby enhancing understanding of the relationship between educator attitudes and technology adoption. Second, it examines the perceived impact of social media on student learning, contributing to ongoing debates regarding its effectiveness in improving academic outcomes.

In addition, the study identifies practical barriers such as limited digital competence, institutional constraints, and ethical concerns that influence the effective use of social media in higher education. By addressing these challenges, it provides valuable implications for policymakers, institutions, and educators seeking to develop sustainable and responsible strategies for digital integration.

Furthermore, the study holds particular relevance for resource-constrained and developing educational contexts, where infrastructural limitations and support systems present additional challenges. The findings can inform the design of targeted interventions, professional development initiatives, and institutional policies aimed at maximizing the educational potential of social media.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, social media offers considerable opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning in higher education by promoting interaction, collaboration, and student engagement. However, its effective incorporation depends largely on teachers' perceptions, readiness, and capacity to integrate these tools meaningfully into their pedagogical practices.

The study highlights that although educators acknowledge the potential benefits of social media, challenges such as limited institutional support, concerns related to privacy and ethics, and varying levels of digital competence continue to influence its adoption. The findings suggest that a balanced approach, combining

technological innovation with adequate training, policy support, and ethical considerations, is essential for achieving meaningful learning outcomes.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of viewing social media not merely as a technological tool but as a pedagogical resource that requires thoughtful and context-sensitive application. Future efforts should focus on strengthening institutional frameworks, enhancing educators' digital capabilities, and advancing empirical research to better understand the long-term impact of social media on learning in higher education.

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