



Education and Social Media: Some Issues

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Abstract: Social Media can be a great way to engage your student population and ensure they are made aware of student-centered activities on campus. Another area where the role of social media in education is becoming apparent is in recruitment and admissions. The use of social media is growing and has almost become a utility in many cultures. Colleges tend to be behind the curve in the adoption of using social media in their educational strategy and have not put a lot of time how to overcome the obstacles. Research paper is based on secondary sources.

Key Word: Student, Social Media, Education, Facebook, Twitter,

The social media theme began with Enhancing Participatory Culture: How to Design International Collaboration with Social and Mobile Media? Ilona Buchem along with three of her students demonstrated their work as part of the 'I collaborate project' in which they used Mahara, a social media platform, to aggregate the produced content, document their findings, blog their opinions and importantly receive peer feedback from other students all over the world. Social media permeates today's society with millions of us engrossed, some would argue to the point of unhealthy addiction, in the latest happenings via apps such as Facebook and Twitter.

Universities and other education providers have responded by increased use of social media marketing to showcase their courses and attract students, but are they harnessing the full power of the medium to engage and interact with those same students once they begin their studies? Does social media have a place as a teaching tool or is it simply a distraction? It seems that some lecturers are indeed beginning to tap into the potential benefits of social media in education. Many faculties and societies have attuned to the fact that 75% of students admit to being on Twitter mostly. Blogging sites are a forum to share content, encourage debate and answer queries, with some even setting up hashtags for individual courses to create online discussion communities for their students. But could social media play

a more central role in university education? For a clue as to what the future may hold, we can look at the lead taken by distance learning models which in some respects have got ahead of the game when compared to their campus-based counterparts. Distance learning providers are obliged by the very nature of their courses to keep pace with any trends and technological advances which promote communication with students and enhance the learning experience. There are many uses of social media in education and these can range from attracting new students to your college programs, building a relationship with your students through social media and even using social media prescience of an applicant as a measure of how well they may fit in at your institution.

Institutions of Higher Learning have one need while the schools may be thinking the role is different for them. This is true while there may be some overlap, we are going to focus on the role of social media in higher education. If you ask the marketing department what the role of social media for your educational institution is, the most likely answer will be that it needs to be used for attracting new students. This is a very useful purpose that many colleges are using. According to the Noel-Levitz e-expectations survey for 2015, many students use social media to decide whether to apply to a college. Of course, it is not near the number of college-bound students who use the college website as their main decision-making tool, but the social media channels of a college are becoming an increasing way that potential students are checking out what social events are available at the potential college. The two main channels that potential students use are Facebook and YouTube. You may see reports that Facebook is losing favor among the younger population, but it has not lost all its appeal and not to mention, even if the students do not see your Facebook posts, there is a chance the parents will. Many of the students in the Noel-Levitz survey cite their parent's approval as one of the many reasons for selecting a college. Then if you talk to someone in Academics, they may say the role of social media in education is to increase student engagement and have them connect with the institution. There have been numerous studies that have concluded that the more you connect with your student population the better your retention rate. Social Media can be a wonderful way to engage your student population and ensure they are made aware of student-centered activities on campus. This helps students make a connection with the school and as a result raises the likely hood they will persist to graduation. Another area where the role of social media in education is becoming apparent is in recruitment and admissions. There is quite a few college who now search student's social media prescience as a method to get a better view of the student. There is some debate about the ethical repercussions of using social media posts as a deciding factor, but some are still doing it. We will leave that debate for another time.

The bottom line is there is a role for social media in education. There are still some questions and obstacles to overcome with exactly how a college can implement and use this technology, but it some an area that needs further investigation. The use of social media is growing and has almost become a utility in many cultures. Colleges tend to be behind the curve in the adoption of using social media in their educational strategy and have not put a lot of time how to overcome the obstacles. Regardless of whether the colleges are looking for viable solutions to the obstacles or not, the world is still moving in that direction. Colleges just need to decide if they are going to put in the work or if they are going to be left behind. There are many other areas where social media plays a role. From marketing, to business interactions, to the overall effect social media has on society. Social media has changed the landscape of how information is delivered and who has access to that information. The internet is the vehicle that has led to this growth, but social media platforms has played a larger role is it's a push technology. You don't really need to know or be looking for any certain topic to be exposed to the information because of interaction with social media platforms.

Many people wonder what the role of social media in society is. Social media has led to a more connected world and more people get their news now from social media outlets than they do from any other one source. According to a study by Pew Research in 2016, 62% of people reported seeing an initial news story on social media outlets. As we all know there are a lot of less than reputable news sites on the internet and many publish blatant lies. This means that social media has led to an increase of false information and conspiracy theories masking themselves as news stories. Facebook and other social media channels have attempted to curb this activity, but if there are share buttons on social media, this sort of thing will continue to have a negative effect on the role social media plays in society. This is one of the downsides of social media but having people able to connect to others and share information is of utmost importance to society. People in third world countries, disaster areas, and war-torn countries can share true information about what is going on there without the influence of the corporate media or governments. This creates an overall positive impact of social media on society, so while you can't believe everything you see, some of the information is accurate and helps the flow of information overall.

Advantages:

1. Social Media can increase student collaboration. Students become friends not only with their classmates on social media but more likely to collaborate on projects too. This can lead to higher retention rates as students become more connected to the institution.
2. Faculty can use social media to get students to participate. Many students are naturally shy in person, and many may not speak up in a classroom, but that may not be the case on social media. Today's students grew up on social media and for many it is the natural way to interact. Faculty can ask questions on social media such as Twitter and students can answer those questions, by including a specific hashtag. This not only allows the faculty to find the student answers but also allows other students to see what others are answering and create a dialog. Many learning management systems incorporate a discussion board to accomplish this same educational pedagogy but are just as useful if not more by using a social media platform.
3. Social Media can be useful for team projects. Many colleges stress the importance of the soft skill of working in groups. Social Media sites can be helpful to increase this ability as the students can hold meetings in real time and work on their projects. This increases the likelihood that they will also spend time together working on projects and may not have to make time to meet in person all the time as the project progresses. Having teams work together using social media only strengthens advantage one and two in your educational activities.
4. Social media can provide a richer experience for resources. Videos, resource websites, and tutorials can be shared very easily with the entire classroom at the click of the button. This eliminates the need for students to copy website links from a hand-out and have the risk of mistyping. It is much easier just to click a link than to type it.
5. Using social networking sites such as Google Plus will allow the use of Google Hangouts. These sorts of resources can be used to setup class sessions where everyone can collaborate through video in real time.

These are just a few of the many advantages of using social media in education, but like anything else, where there is an advantage there are also disadvantages of social media in education.

Disadvantages:

1. Students can get distracted and start using the social media for their personal purposes and not actually pay attention to the educational content. This is going to happen to a certain extent, and there is not a lot the faculty member can do to prevent it. They key to explain to the students that you are using social media as an educational resource, and they need to stay focused on those task during classroom participation. Using the feedback model for answering questions listed in the advantages of social media will help to reduce this disadvantage.
2. Posting inappropriate content can also be a significant disadvantage. This can damage the reputation of the educational institution and likely one of the reasons that many educational institutions have not embraced social media. The risk of these sorts of incidents can normally be reduced with proper education of the students. Students, especially those in college that posting inappropriate content on social networks can not only hurt them in their classes but also raise a red flag to potential employers that the student may not be a good fit. Many companies now use social media posts as a background check measure before hiring and having content you would not want your mother to ready could reduce the chance of a student landing a great job.
3. Relying too much on social media for communication can stifle a student's ability to interact in person. This is a problem throughout society and not just limited to education. Many of today's youth have grown up with technology and many times it is easier for them just to communicate online and not in person. Having the student interact through a social media technology such as Google Hangouts, can sometimes break the ice and allow them to communicate better in person. This is one of the main reasons that social media in education should be a supplement to your educational activities and not the only method of instructional delivery.

With the use of technology, skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking can be grasped faster and easier. Students' knowledge of technology and communication skills also improves as they can connect globally. They can connect and collaborate with many other countries and their education system if they want to learn on a wider platform.

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