INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING REVIEW
ISSN:1474-6743 | E-ISSN:1478-3401

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract
Social networking enhances student engagement and learning in the classroom. These platforms facilitate collaboration and the exchange of information. Students' personal development and critical thinking are enhanced when they devote considerable time and effort to collaborative and educational activities. Diverse studies indicate that social media facilitates staying informed about developments in higher education. Further investigation is required to harmonise educational theories with the pedagogical advantages of social media. Literature from 2009 to 2021 will be examined for this endeavour via bibliometric and content analysis techniques. "Theoretical frameworks, current research trends, and patterns" in this field are investigated in this study. A multitude of publications underwent bibliometric review. Recent studies have examined the role of social media in the field of education, suggesting that this subject remains prevalent. Acceptance theories of technology and learning predominated in content analysis. Pedagogical theory is still in its infancy, so technology adoption models are utilised in place of pedagogical models in this course. We also investigate the implications for research and practice. Following an analysis of student learning and participation, the study examines the impact of social media on classroom communication, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. Provide instructors with recommendations on how to incorporate social media into the curriculum.

Keywords: *Social media, student education, higher education, student engagement.*

1. Introduction
As a result of developments in Web 2.0 tools, the prevalence of social media utilisation among students has increased substantially in recent years (Eid & Al-Jabri, 2016). Without a doubt, social media has amassed an astounding three billion active consumers across the globe (Statista, 2022). The ability of these technologies to facilitate learning and instruction has been demonstrated by their functionalities for document exchange, virtual communication, and access to knowledge resources (Hosen et al., 2021). Online gaming and social networking platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are widely employed to

accomplish various objectives, including information acquisition and sharing, collaborative learning, and the formation of online professional and social connections. A recent examination of Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and WhatsApp by Manca (2020) revealed that content creation and peer-based discussions for learning and assessment constituted the predominant educational activities utilised by students. There has been an increasing scholarly focus and interest in the potential integration of social media platforms into educational endeavours (Barrot, 2021a). The utilisation of social media platforms by academicians for personal, professional, and pedagogical purposes has been empirically supported by a number of studies (Johnson &Veletsianos, 2021). In relation to specific social media platforms, several research studies have found that Facebook groups can effectively support learning by offering benefits that are absent from traditional online learning management systems (LMS). In recent times, there has been a shift in research emphasis towards investigating the utility of social media platforms such as Snapchat, Pinterest, and Instagram. Manca (2020) asserts that despite the considerable attention given to these platforms by young people, the scientific literature has largely disregarded them.

The social media has shown the ability to challenge traditional beliefs and teaching methods utilised in academic establishments, including colleges and universities. Ascertained by specific academicians, from a technological and educational perspective, educators ought to accord priority to the following topics: student-teacher communication, professional conduct, and the integration of social networking practices into academic and teaching methodologies. Furtherissues like, psychological opposition, traditional views on education, inadequate technical support, perceived dangers, institutional obstacles, pedagogical viewpoints, pragmatic factors, and ethical considerations arose. The scholarly work is increasingly focusing on empirical research on the specific kind of implementations of social media (Alshalawi, 2022). However, there is a dearth of studies that have methodically examined the manner in which researchers are integrating social media into their pedagogical approaches or conducted a comprehensive analysis of the utilisation of social media in education across various academic fields (Barrot, 2021).

Notwithstanding the prevalent integration of social media platforms in higher education, additional investigation is warranted to augment our understanding of its effectiveness as an instructional and training tool (Sutherland et al., 2020). In fact, research has demonstrated that instructional methods that are grounded in empirical evidence and reflect relevant studies have proven to be ineffective. Therefore, further experiential research grounded in theories of "teaching, learning, and educational technology" is required to advance the growth of this burgeoning field of education (Valtonen et al., 2022). It is our conviction that placing greater emphasis on the criticality of theoretical integration may assist in mitigating certain constraints linked to the aforementioned concerns.

From 2009 to 2021, the purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic analysis of the use of social media for educational campaigns in higher education. Bibliometric methodologies and content analysis were utilised in the review. The primary objective of this study is to assess the theoretical validity of the existing literature and examine the current state of social media

implementation in the field of education. This research examines two facets of value: initially, it conducts a comprehensive assessment of the theoretical validity of previous studies concerning the use of social media for instructional and learning purposes in higher education; secondly, it utilises a mixed-methods strategy that combines bibliometric and qualitative analysis to investigate the processes of teaching and learning. According to our knowledge, this volume represents the initial attempt to achieve these objectives.

2. Research Gap

This research paper undertakes a theoretical examination of social media, with a particular emphasis on studies that employ theory to clarify the incorporation of social media as an instructional and learning instrument in higher education. Recent years have witnessed the emergence of a substantial corpus of research establishing a correlation between theory and the application of social media within the context of effective teaching strategies. The educational outcomes of incorporating social media into instruction were assessed using the TAM model. In contrast, the potential of Facebook and wikis as tools for collaborative learning was investigated through the lens of social constructism theory (Churcher et al., 2014). By utilising a mixed-methods approach, this study examines the connections between research papers published between 2009 and 2021, thereby overcoming the constraints of previous single-method and conventional approaches to literature review.

3. Research Questions

RQ1: What is the impact of social media methods on student decision-making?

RQ2: What arethe primary elements that motivate students during the admission process?

4. Theoretical Foundations

The following study will focus on how the social media impacts the higher education of students. For this purpose, the variables that will be considered in this study will include the following:

- Use of social media
- Student engagement
- Content viewed

Also, the literature that will be used in this study must include all three or at least two variables from above therefore, the inclusion criteria for selecting a study will be two or more variables included. Thus, the exclusion criteria will be one or no variable from above present in the study.

5. Methodology

The methodology applied in the present research is called a systemic literature review approach. It involves qualitative approaches, like content analysis. By employing this approach, an exhaustive comprehension of the discipline was acquired, by scrutinising contextual patterns and substantiating conclusions via triangulation. Qualitative content analysis is a robust methodology employed to examine textual data in a subjective manner through the meticulous classification and discernment of recurring themes or patterns.

A systematic literature review (SLR) is an autonomous scholarly approach that seeks to ascertain and assess all pertinent literature pertaining to a given subject with the purpose of formulating

conclusions concerning the inquiry being examined. To establish a transparent and replicable selection process, an SLR protocol records every piece of information obtained and each step performed during an SLR. The PRISMA flow diagram facilitates the visualization of the selection procedure.

5.1 Steps of systematic literature review

The research inquiry was the starting point for the investigation. Several articles were examined in the form of queries that prompted the selection of specific keywords. A total of 200 articles were chosen from the entire review pool based on their degree of similarity to the research questions at hand. The quality of these two hundred articles was subsequently evaluated through the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria. On the basis of these, 170 articles were excluded from the total of 200. A total of 30 articles were ultimately chosen, all of which addressed two or more variables. From the thirty articles that were chosen, data analysis was conducted, and a research framework was constructed. After conducting a review of the findings, implications and conclusions were then derived. In addition, it was proposed that the study expand in the future.

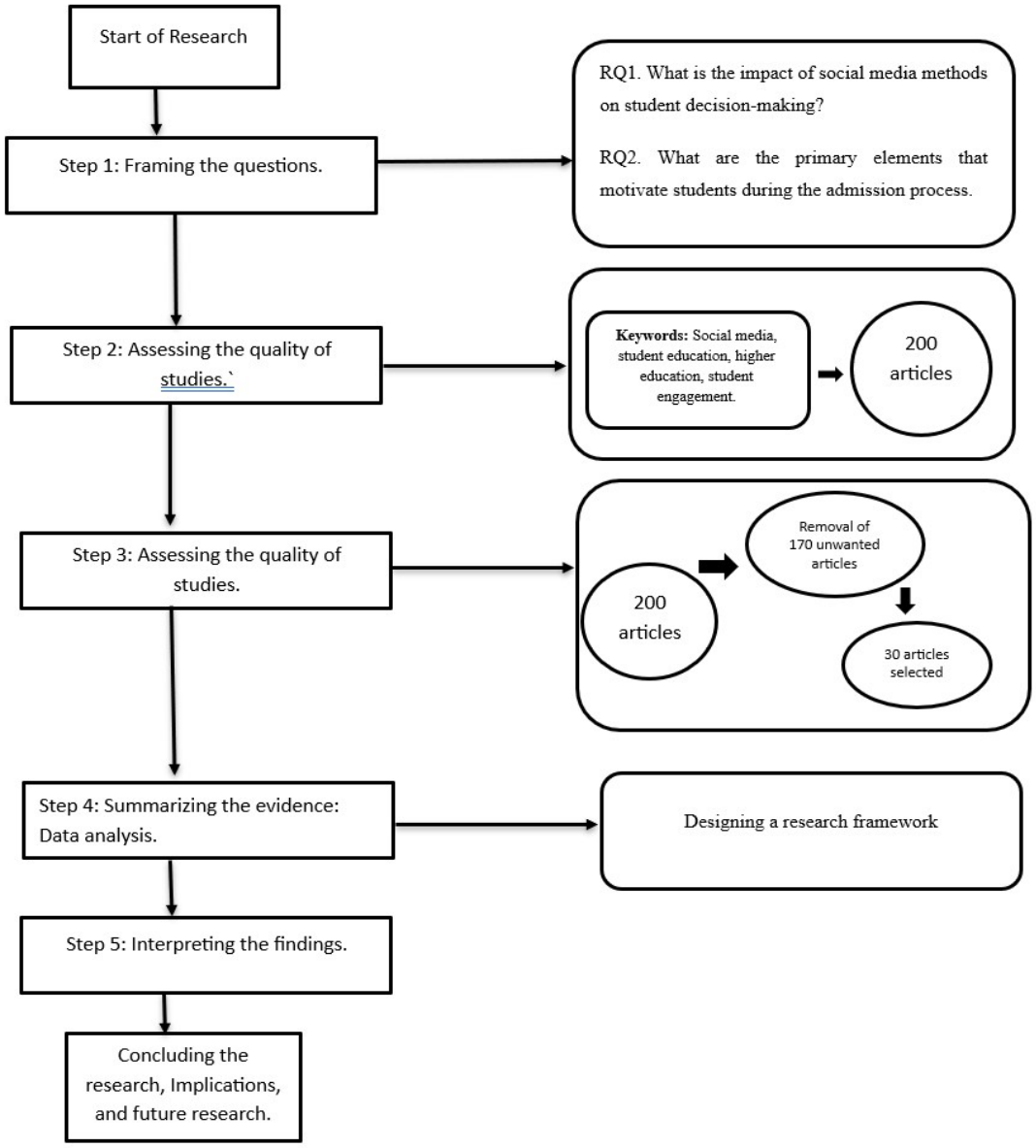


Fig 1: Prisma Flow Diagram

5.2 Choices of databases

- By conducting database queries, a comprehensive collection of 200 studies was identified. Supplementary data was procured from multiple sources. The titles of the publications were utilised by two impartial evaluators to classify them, and the abstracts were examined to determine their eligibility. The selection process involved studies that met the subsequent criteria:
- Any papers containing duplicate data were eliminated during the initial screening phase, and subsequent analysis was performed on the papers that remained.
- Approximately 170 papers were omitted from the study during the preliminary screening stage as a result of inadequate data for analysis.

- In total, thirty articles that satisfied the predetermined inclusion criteria were chosen and subjected to a comprehensive examination.
- A total of 30 publications were gathered from studies that met the inclusion criteria. The eligibility of each study was assessed by two independent reviewers in accordance with the inclusion criteria.

5.3 Keywords for search

Social media, student education, higher education, student engagement.

5.4 Exclusion and inclusion criteria

- Inclusion criteria: Only the studies which include two or more variables in them are reviewed for the current study.
- Exclusion criteria: The studies which include less than 2 variables will not be considered for this study.

6. Results

6.1 Learning benefits of social media in higher education

Numerous studies have presented empirical support for the notion that social media can serve as a constructive and interactive tool for facilitating knowledge acquisition in higher education (Greenhow & Galvin, 2020). Numerous scholarly investigations have focused on widely used social media platforms, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, and Pinterest (Manca, 2020). It has been demonstrated that the use of social media in higher education facilitates student-centered pedagogies, which has numerous benefits. An noteworthy advantage of Facebook is its potential to function as an educational instrument that promotes enhanced collaboration, information exchange, and communication (Niu, 2019). Facebook groups are frequently employed for the purpose of coordinating educational endeavours, whereas Twitter is frequently used for communication and evaluation (Tang & Hew, 2017). In general, the incorporation of social media plays a positive role in enhancing student education. Nevertheless, this is not entirely attributable to the technologies themselves; rather, it is also attributable to the implementation style and the evolution of particular pedagogical approaches and instructional methodologies.

Scholars have documented instances in which learning theories were applied to enhance the integration of social media, resulting in the formation of virtual communities of practice and the progression of favourable learning outcomes. Aubrey and Riley (2016) argue that social constructivist learning theories emphasise the dynamic nature of knowledge construction and discovery, which takes place in a social and cultural framework. Educators consider social media to be consistent with the tenets of social constructivism theory, as it provides direction for the implementation of social constructivist pedagogical approaches (Rambe& Nel, 2015). In addition, the connectivist perspective regards learning as a networked phenomenon that is technably mediated and socially interactive. Students are strengthened in order to engage in collaborative discussions with their peers, share valuable information, and improve their

communication skills. Social media can function as a platform for incorporating educational and social initiatives when examined within this particular framework (Manca, 2020).

In general, there is a widespread positive sentiment among students across all academic levels concerning the educational advantages and pragmatic implementations of social media. Nevertheless, educators demonstrate a marginally more prudent demeanour in comparison to learners. Chugh et al. (2021) report that academicians employ social media primarily for the purposes of career advancement and research, as opposed to to facilitate teaching and learning. Educators may encounter this difficulty in maintaining effective teaching methodologies while simultaneously incorporating emerging technologies. Prior research on the use of social media in higher education has primarily evaluated the effectiveness of social media as a learning and teaching instrument. Nevertheless, empirical evidence and theoretical support have been lacking in these investigations (Al-Qaysi et al., 2020).

A discernible dearth of theoretically grounded research exists, which hinders the development of a standardised set of approaches for the implementation of social media in higher education. The lack of progress in theoretical frameworks regarding the integration of social media into higher education has significant ramifications for the development of social media literacy. Authors Manca et al. (2021) assert that instructors who prioritise the use of technology over a comprehensive understanding of the formation and progression of meaning run the risk of incorporating learning theory into their pedagogical approaches.

6.2 Social-Media and Student Learning Achievements

By incorporating social media into academic coursework, students may experience improved learning outcomes. Individuals who participate in academic courses that integrate social media utilise these platforms at a higher overall GPA than those who abstain from using social media. One positive consequence of integrating social media into the classroom is an increase in students' GPA. Moreover, it facilitates students in offering constructive criticisms to their fellow students regarding assignments and in conducting substantial introspections regarding the subject matter of the course. The establishment of robust student relationships and the promotion of open communication are enabled and facilitated by social media platforms (Arnold & Paulus, 2010). Furthermore, the incorporation of social media platforms facilitates the long-term maintenance of knowledge and fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter being taught (Chen & Bryer, 2012). Students who utilise social media have a greater capacity to connect course material to interactions with peers outside of class, according to this study. Ultimately, this facilitates their academic progress in the classroom.

6.3 Effects of Student Engagement with social media on Student Learning

The rapid progression of information and communication technology has prompted the creative incorporation of social media platforms into pre-existing educational procedures and applications. Social media comprises an extensive array of digital platforms and applications that seek to promote the development of communities through the facilitation of information sharing and collaboration (Junco, Helbergert, & Loken, 2011). These technologies provide opportunities

for individuals to express themselves and interact with one another (Arnold & Paulus, 2010). Social media comprises an extensive array of online communication and interaction platforms, including but not limited to blogs, wikis, diverse media formats (including text, photo, video, and audio), content-sharing tools, networking sites (such as Facebook), and virtual environments. Recent studies have provided evidence that the integration of social media platforms into educational settings can effectively increase student engagement (Junco, 2012a). Through the encouragement of active engagement on social media platforms, pupils cultivate relationships with their fellow companions, create a virtual community of learners, and ultimately augment their academic progress (Fewkes & McCabe, 2012). The objective of this literature review is to analyse the diverse facets of student engagement that social media platforms enable, in an effort to improve student learning. In addition, the repercussions of incorporating social media into scholastic course content for instructors will be examined.

Student engagement refers to the degree to which pupils invest their time and energy in engaging in purposeful academic endeavours and interacting with their peers (Leong, L. W., et al 2018). This collaboration illustrates that an increase in technological engagement corresponds to a corresponding rise in engagement with academic disciplines, thereby cultivating a stronger connection between learners, instructors, and the course content (Mehdinezhad, 2011). By actively participating in a community of learners, students increase their level of engagement with the course material, which ultimately results in more successful achievement of shared learning goals, including the development of critical thinking skills and personal growth. Therefore, by encouraging student engagement through social media platforms, connectivity can be strengthened, leading to the formation of a virtual community that aids in the acquisition of educational resources.

6.4 Challenges for Social Media Use

Although social media may potentially augment student learning by fostering peer interaction, its integration into an academic curriculum also poses challenges. Making the inadvertent assumption that students possess both awareness of and a willingness to employ particular social media platforms can result in educators neglecting to furnish the necessary resources and motivation to foster student engagement and learning. Arnold and Paulus (2010) found that students may incorporate social media into their daily lives in a way that may not align with the course instructor's intended objectives, despite the instructional use of the technology. Social media platforms frequently become venues for off-topic or non-academic discourse, owing to their fundamental function as social networking tools. Furthermore, a positive correlation has been observed between the age of a student and the frequency of off-topic discussions (Lin et al., 2013). This finding indicates that while social media platforms may enable more comprehensive discussions on the subject, mature students are more inclined to allocate a significant portion of their time to engaging in discussions that lack direct relevance to the course material.

Students' GPAs and the amount of time they devote to class preparation may be negatively impacted by social media, according to Junco (2012). One plausible hypothesis for this occurrence is that the abundance of stimuli provided by social media may distract students from

their scholastic obligations (Hurt et al., 2012). An alternative hypothesis posits that students who allocate a substantial portion of their schedules to social media platforms might encounter challenges in effectively balancing their online activities with their scholastic obligations. The integration of social media into the classroom may present difficulties, as it necessitates finding an equilibrium between the instructor's jurisdiction and the learners' proactive participation. The utilisation of social media platforms to facilitate collaboration promotes a constructivist learning approach, in which educators and students work together to collectively develop understanding of a specific subject matter, rather than placing emphasis on individual contributions. As a result, educators and pupils alike assume equivalent responsibilities in the knowledge exchange process. Although social media may enable the generation and dissemination of information, it can also present threats to privacy, including cyber-plagiarism, and function as a medium for misuse and cyber-harassment (Chen & Bryer, 2012). Hence, it is recommended that behaviour and attitude criteria, similar to those enforced in academic environments, be incorporated into the formulation of standards for social media usage.

7. Discussion

By incorporating social media into educational settings, students may experience numerous benefits. Social media platforms serve as a conduit for peer connections, which in turn promotes effective communication between students and educators and fosters inclusivity in the classroom (Liu et al., 2011). Furthermore, by facilitating discussions and the exchange of information, social media platforms enable students to develop a deeper understanding of the course material (Chen & Bryer, 2012). As a result, students who employ social media may produce artefacts that genuinely mirror their own perspectives, surpassing the simple function of rote memorization. In essence, social media platforms have the potential to aid students in achieving learning objectives that are specific to their fields of study (Junco, 2012b). Therefore, by incorporating social media into the curriculum of academic courses, students' learning outcomes may be improved.

This research has a twofold objective. Our primary aim at the outset was to identify the prevalent research patterns and frequently used terminology associated with the educational use of social media in higher education. A bibliometric analysis was undertaken to ascertain the journals that exhibited the greatest quantity of pertinent papers, identify the principal investigators engaged in this field of study, and pinpoint the nations where the corresponding research was carried out. According to the data, this area of research is undergoing accelerated expansion and development. This is due to the profound influence that social media has had on the lives of individuals, which has generated considerable levels of interest and participation. In addition, we employed content analysis to provide an original perspective on the theoretical underpinnings of the relevant literature. The results revealed a scarcity of theoretically grounded research in this field. However, there were indications that prominent theories that clarify the integration of social media as an instrument for teaching and learning are technology acceptance models and learning models.

8. Limitations and Future scope

The current investigation has provided insights into the utilisation of social media in education, albeit with certain limitations. Initially, the findings of each study were not reported, debated, or analysed in this review. Conversely, the objective was to quantify the fluctuating study patterns associated with the utilisation of educational social media. Thus, Scopus articles, book chapters, book reviews, and other publications may be incorporated into future research. As social media research is still in its nascent stages, it is inevitable that additional studies and technologies will emerge (Ngai et al., 2015). Future research should incorporate the most recent findings in social media education. Alternative research methodologies, contexts, or disciplines may be investigated in subsequent investigations.

Given the increasing scholarly attention towards the educational applications of social media, it is crucial to investigate the subsequent inquiries as areas for future study: To what extent can social media platforms with a commercial focus facilitate learning in an academic environment? What theoretical implications does the implementation of social media have? Further investigation is warranted into the development of instructional methodologies that are tailored for social media platforms and are firmly rooted in robust theoretical underpinnings.

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