



SEEU USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH SHARING KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to investigate how teachers at SEEU use social media tools in and out of their work. Social media as an innovative tool can be developed to enhance teaching instruction and enrich learning practice. It also can help shift to a model of connected teaching. Social media could also enrich professional practice and offer clear support in working with students. It is clear from the results that teachers are actively and purposefully using social media to support their professional activities. The results showed that teachers and students are well-informed, self-taught, and sophisticated users of social media and consider Facebook, blogs, YouTube and others to be valuable tools in their work and personal contexts.

Keywords: *Social Media, teaching and learning, enhance teaching instruction, enrich learning practice*

Introduction and research questions

The aim of the research is to observe the private and individual as well as the professional use of social media web sites by teaching staff at SEEU.

Like the wider public, teachers may use social media web sites for numerous reasons. This research will distinguish and analyze the influence of these social media web sites on three different levels:

- for individual or private use with no connection to professional or teaching tasks;
- for professional use with no connection to individual and teaching tasks;
- and finally the most important, for teaching use.

Additional information on the value that teachers identify in social media web sites and how they employ them in their teaching classes will be also explored.

Based on the objectives defined, the following five hypotheses were also tested as part of this study:

- H1:** Older teachers are less aware of social media than younger ones.
- H2:** Teachers' not engaged in online programs have smaller usage of social media than those that are.
- H3:** Social media usage improves students' motivation.
- H4:** Social media usage improves students' engagement in the course.
- H5:** Students would like social media to be used more by their teachers.

To address the above, the following methods were implemented. Firstly, the main quantitative research instrument was an online survey designed using Google Docs, distributed among the following SEEU faculties:

- Contemporary Sciences and Technologies
- Languages, Cultures and Communications
- Law
- Public Administration and Political Sciences
- Business and Economics

In addition, a qualitative interview was used to explore student/teacher perceptions about the impact of social media in the teaching and learning process.

The survey covered several well-known social media like Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, LinkedIn, SlideShare, and Flickr. Blogs, wikis, video and podcasts were included as well.

To discover exactly how social media sites may be used in higher education institutions, teachers were asked to identify their social media usage (personal, in class, or professional). Teaching usage includes usage in both traditional and online classes as the faculties offer both modes of teaching and learning.

In the author's opinion, higher education's ability to benefit fully from social media for promoting professional progress, increasing institutional achievements and rising student success could be revolutionary.

Literature review

At present, we are witnesses of a huge growth in the number and use of social media by the Macedonian population. Today, more than 1 million young people from Macedonia are social media users. Most of the users, as the Institute for Sociological Political and Juridical Research in Macedonia stated, are students that are using social media for fun or study activities (Veljanovska, 2013).

While social media's start was for personal use, its use has evolved in virtually all domains. From a preliminary check, it appears that almost every college and university in the world has adopted some form of social media, using it for general outreach, to attract potential students, maintain alumni relations, and increase institutional reputation and pride (Center for Marketing Research, 2013). Facebook is the most used social media tool in higher education institutions, with over 96 percent of American colleges and universities using it in 2010-2011. One of the largest surveys of social media in higher education to date shows that universities can lever social media into the classroom and ensure increased use (Qualman, 2009), (Center for Marketing Research, 2013).

The adoption of social media by students outside of course requirements leads to examining its potential in the classroom. A primary reason for adopting social media in the classroom is because it is familiar to many people from other areas of their life, and also because it is free of charge and requires minimal training.

Some academic experts believe that social media can be used as an effective teaching tool in higher education because of its ease of use, ready availability, individual affordability and network effects. Facebook has been used in

university courses to facilitate teacher/student discussion, and wikis and blogs have been used to collaborate on projects and provision of rapid feedback (Alexander & Levine, 2008). Some courses have also used YouTube as a platform for students to create and share videos for their course (Grosseck, 2009). In other courses, Johnson et al. (2009) reported that students have used Twitter to discuss course topics during class, with Tweets being displayed on a large screen to encourage cross group communication.

Not only can social media facilitate peer communication and collaboration, it can facilitate communication between students and teachers. Studies conducted by Hamid (2011) have shown that students are more likely to communicate with their professors if they are Facebook friends with them.

Research methodology

Higher educational institutions are huge consumers of social media sites. Almost all higher education teaching faculties are conscious of their existence. From a preliminary check of other higher educational institutions, it appears that persons involved in education are visiting social media sites for their personal use and most of them are posting content and positively demonstrating acceptance of social media in their professional lives. Teachers are using social media in courses they are teaching or for their professional occupations outside the classroom. From the other side, the students are willing to participate in all of these forms of social media as a part of their online culture.

In this study, the teachers' use of social media as a tool for enhancing the teaching and learning process was researched. As a University that gives emphasis to the effective use of technology, we are aware of how significant it is to understand these promising media, the opportunities they offer and how their adoption can enhance higher education teaching and learning.

Social media's potential transforms the way of externally approaching content to a way of inviting online discussion, exchanging information, and invoking individual, community and even global transformation.

Supported by a representative selection of teaching staff from our university, the research explored their level of social media understanding and use in each faculty and center. At the same time, it identified the level of significance given to using social media web sites as a component of instructional practice. The author also conducted a SWOT analysis to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats of using social media by faculty teachers.

This research involved academic and administrative staff engaged in the teaching process from all faculties at South East European University (SEEU). The study records represent 36% of all full time academic and administrative staff involved in teaching at SEEU. A total of 48 staff respondents were included at this phase. Via e-mail addresses, the survey invitation messages were sent to a total of 135 full time staff engaged in teaching. SEEU staff that visited the online survey provided a sufficient number of responses for this study. The survey design was based on the study needs and it was prepared in cooperation with the university Quality Office.

In line with the online survey, interviews were done with three students from all five faculties at SEEU. There were five interviews with teachers as well, by one from each faculty. Student/teacher opinions and views about social medial use in teaching and learning process at SEEU are presented in this report.

This report includes all data processing, data analysis and charts for the study.

Social media web sites understanding and awareness of teachers

The first part to be observed was the level of academic staff awareness of a variety of popular social media sites. Next, the measurement of the teachers' use of these sites for individual and professional purposes was analyzed and how this impacted on the awareness level of other teachers using social media sites. As supposed, given the high level of social media awareness, higher education staff members were very comfortable with social media. 56% of the respondents stated that they were aware of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and LinkedIn. The level of awareness went down slightly for other sites, with exactly 45% saying that they knew of Wikis, YouTube, Myspace, SlideShere and Flickr. What can be noticed from Figure 1 is that all respondents were familiar with some kind of social media.

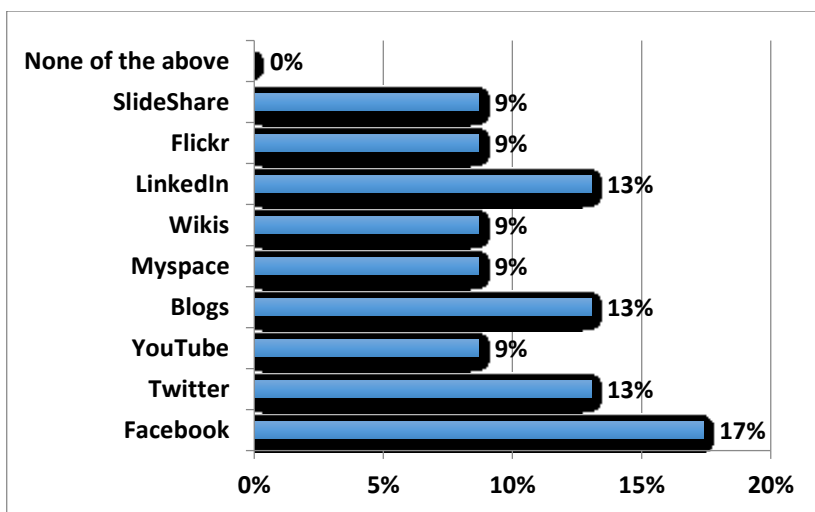


Fig. 1 Teacher awareness of social media sites

Having in mind the growth of social media in the last few years, the following three questions were raised, related to our first hypothesis about age and social media:

1. Do these rapid expansions translate into differences in the level of awareness by age and academic status?
2. Is there a higher awareness among younger teachers?
3. Are older teachers paying less attention to those latest developments?

When questioned by length of teaching career or academic status, respondents indicated that there was a significant difference in the level of awareness (Fig.2). Teachers who have been teaching more than 10 years were less likely to be aware of the various social media sites than teachers who had only recently begun their teaching careers. This data confirmed the first hypothesis H^1 of this study. It is very clear that there is a generation gap in awareness.

It is commonly believed that the teachers involved in online study programs would have greater experience with the social media sites possibly because of the greater level of comfort in their practical use. However, this was not true in our case. When we checked the levels of awareness of the social media sites, there were no real differences between those who taught online (31%) and teachers with no online teaching experience (69%).

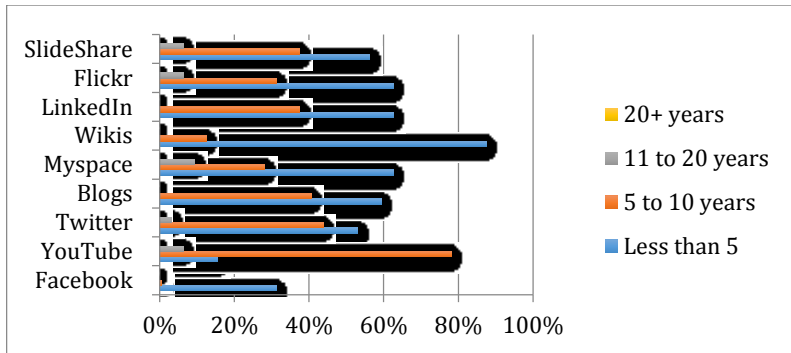


Fig. 2 Teacher awareness of social media sites by number of years teaching

So we can conclude that the staff involved in the teaching process at SEEU is very well aware of social media sites and this awareness is reasonably consistent amongst all subgroups of teachers.

Teachers personal use of social media

It is one thing to be aware of social media sites, but another thing to actually make use of these sites. To uncover these elements, SEEU faculty members were asked about their use of social media for personal purposes.

With the exception of those “*Heard of*” with 0%, teachers’ personal use of social media sites was quite high. As shown in Fig.3, 22% of all teachers visited a social media site within the previous month for personal use, and 78% visited and posted some content during that period. Teachers’ use was not confined to a single site. As we can see from Fig. 4, the majority of teachers visited more than one social media site, with nearly 28% visiting three or more sites.

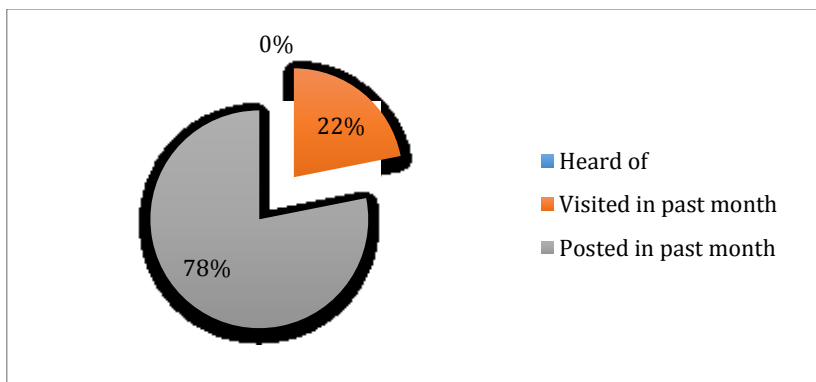


Fig. 3 Teacher personal use of social media

Also, social media use among teachers did not consist only of passive reading and/or viewing. Teachers who posted some content during the past month were doing so on more than one site. However, even where the level of teachers' awareness does not vary with age or with stage in career, the usage level does.

Teachers with longer teaching experience were less likely to visit and less likely to post content than teachers who were earlier in their teaching careers. Just about 50% of surveyed teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience visited a social media site within the previous month for personal use. Also, almost over 60% posted content to at least one site on a monthly basis. This compares with only twenty percent of those who had 20 years teaching experience and who visited a social media site for personal use within the previous month and with only 28% who posted some kind of content. It appears that more-experienced and older teachers are quite aware of social media sites, but they do not seem to see the same level of usefulness as do younger and less-experienced teachers.

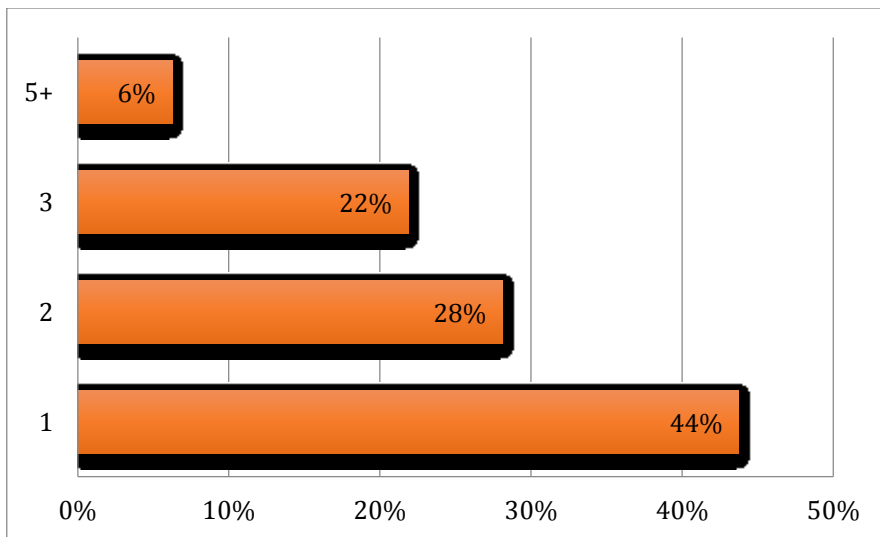


Fig. 4 Number of social media sites visited in past month for personal use

As noted, there was no significant difference in the level of awareness of social media sites between faculty members engaged in online programs at SEEU and those who were not, as shown in Fig. 5. They both had a similar confidence and experience level with technology and online sites.

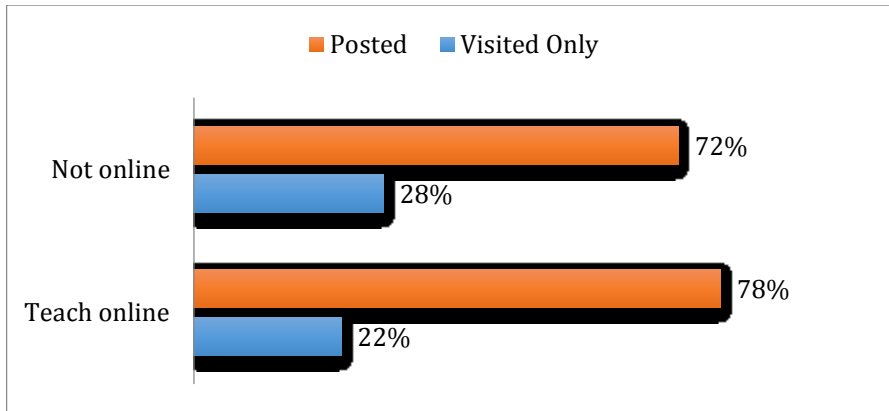


Fig. 5 Teacher personal social media use in the previous month by online teaching status

Following on, as we can see from Figure 6, teachers' have different patterns of personal use for different social media oriented sites. Exactly 53% of all teachers' visited Facebook during the previous month. This was closely followed by visits to YouTube (50%), Blogs (63%), Wikis (66%) and Flickr (56%). The visiting frequency was much lower for other social media sites, with 44% of teachers' visiting LinkedIn or Twitter with 31% over the previous month, while the visiting rates for SlideShare and Myspace were fewer than 13%.

The posting frequency was even more diverse than that of overall social media visits. Almost half of the teachers who visited Facebook also posted (53% visited and 47% posted). Posting rates for LinkedIn and Twitter were greater than those for YouTube site.

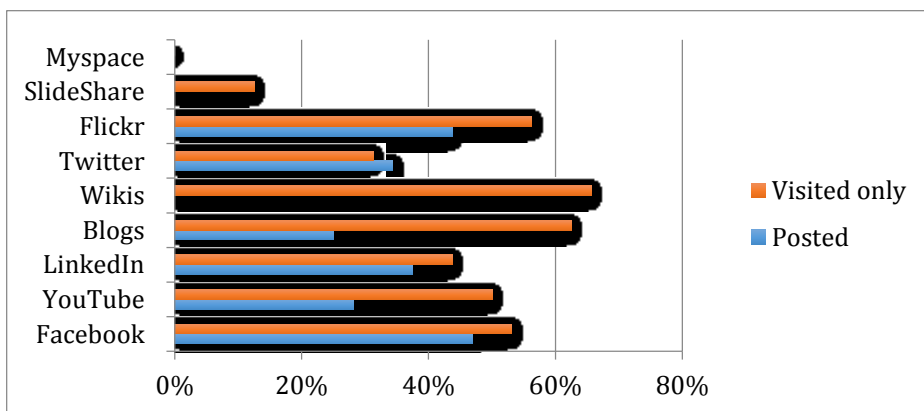


Fig. 6 Teacher personal social media use in past month by site

Teachers professional (out of class) use of social media

In addition to personal use, SEEU teachers were asked about social media use in support of their professional careers and about their use of social media in teaching classes. Our survey data confirmed that the percentage of teachers that use social media either for professional purposes or in their teaching classes or both combined was again high. The comparison of social media use by workplace employees and teachers was quite notable. Only 22% of administrative staff used social media in the workplace (Fig. 7), most likely because such use was not in their job requirements.

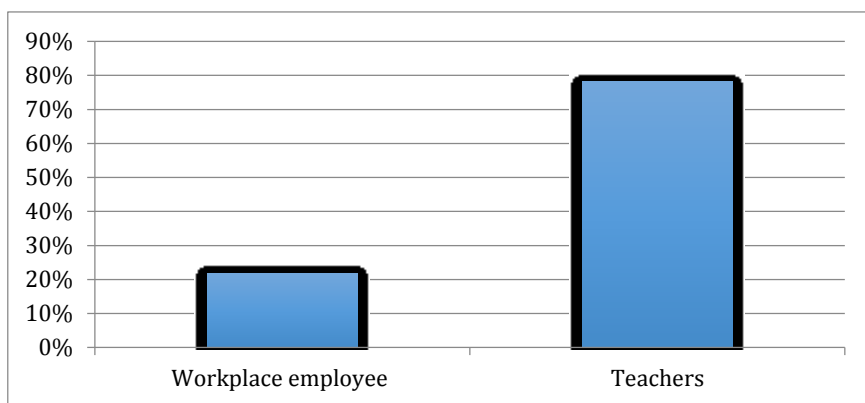


Fig. 7 Comparison of social media use by workplace employees and teacher

The 78% of SEEU teachers using social media for professional and teaching purposes included a large fraction that used social media sites for both reasons.

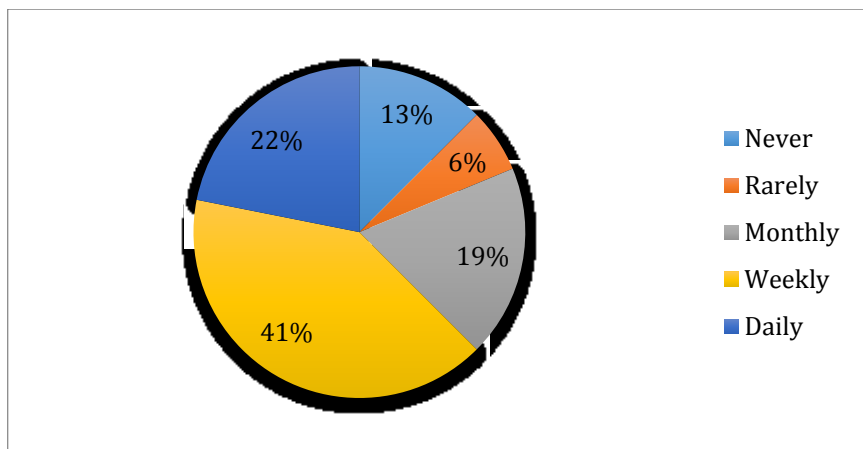


Fig. 8 Frequency of teacher professional (out of class) use of social media by site

Teachers were also asked to determine the rate of their use of diverse social media in support of their professional careers. This data is shown in Fig. 8. The greatest use of social media by teachers was on a weekly basis, with 41%. 19% of teachers reported at least monthly use of social media. Only 6% of them said they very rarely use social media as a supporting tool of their professional careers.

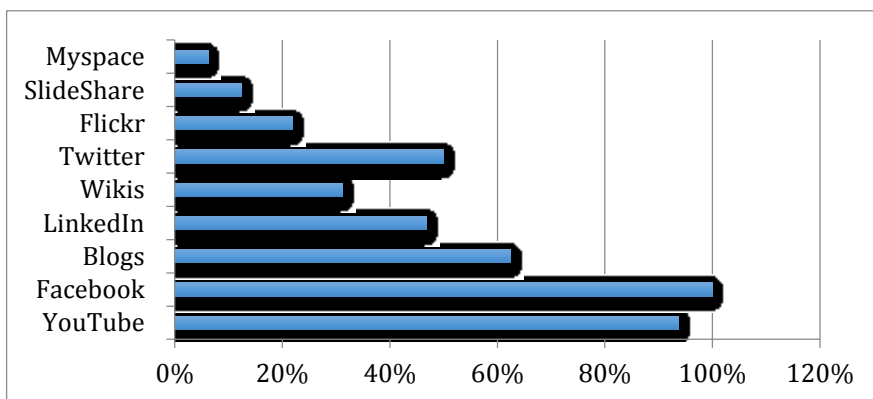


Fig. 9 Teacher professional (out of class) use of social media by site

Considering all levels of use, most teachers' report using Facebook for professional (out of class) use more than any other social media, as given in Figure 9. The level of use was different between sites, as for example, YouTube with 94% was used a bit less than Facebook with 100%. Around 14% of teachers reported using other mentioned media blogs (63%), Twitter (50%) and LinkedIn (47%); and exactly 31% point out Wikis and 22% Flickr. Professional use of SlideShare and Myspace was below 13%.

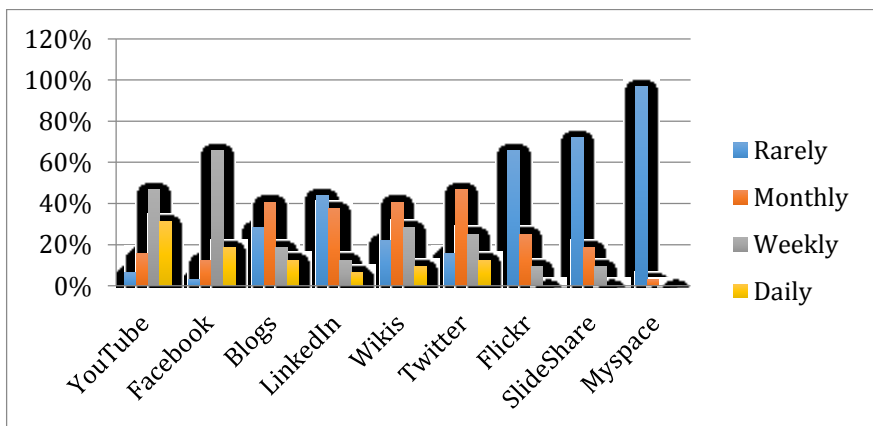


Fig. 10 Frequency of teacher professional (out of class) use of social media by

site

A different picture comes out when we look at the frequency of use of each of the social media (Fig. 10). The rate of using Facebook and YouTube varied. Daily use of YouTube with 31% led over that of other social media sites, like Facebook with 19% daily use, blogs and Twitter with 13% and Wikis with 9%.

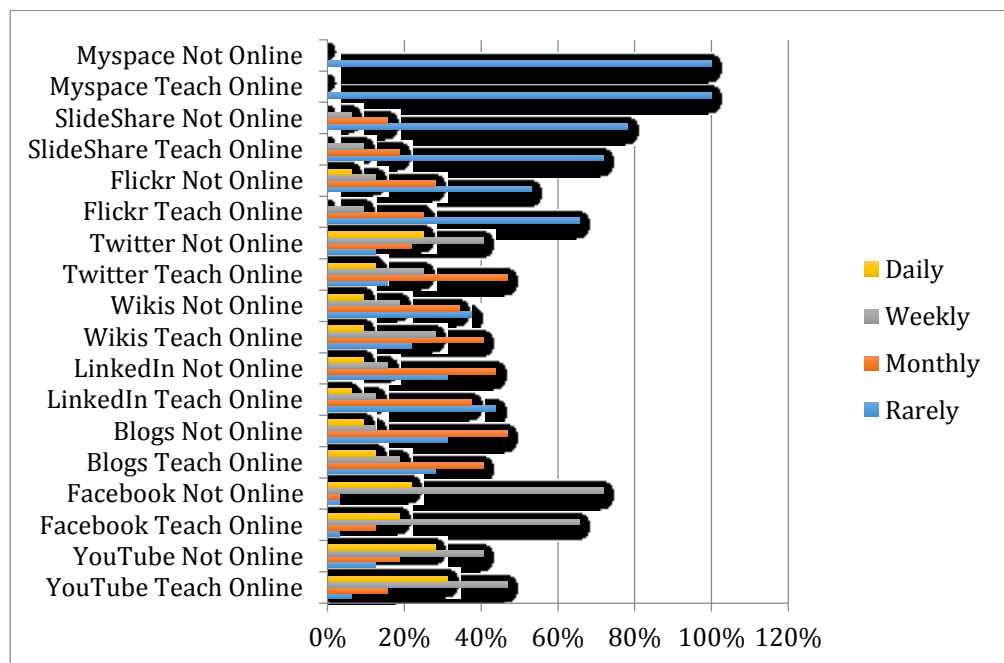


Fig. 11 Frequency of teacher professional (out of class) use of social media by site and online teaching status

Small difference were noted (Fig. 11) in social media awareness levels between teachers who taught online and those who did not teach with this mode of delivery. Teachers engaged in online programs at SEEU were to some extent more likely to visit and post to social media sites for personal purposes. Teachers who taught online also showed higher rates of social media usage for professional reasons. With this data the second hypothesis (H^2) is verified.

Teachers class use of social media

The majority of SEEU teachers surveyed were well aware of social media, and most were using them for personal and professional purposes. But, do teachers also think that social media can be a part of their course syllabuses? To tackle that

question, teachers were asked to identify their use of social media in their classes, posting for student use out of class, and use as part of student homework or in class assignments. It is evident, based on the results, that teachers do make considerable use of social media in their teaching classes. As shown in Figure 12, 48% of teaching staff had used social media during a class session “*Used in class*”, and 20% had posted content for students to view out of class hours “*Posted content for class*”. These results show good and active use for class room and out of class activities.

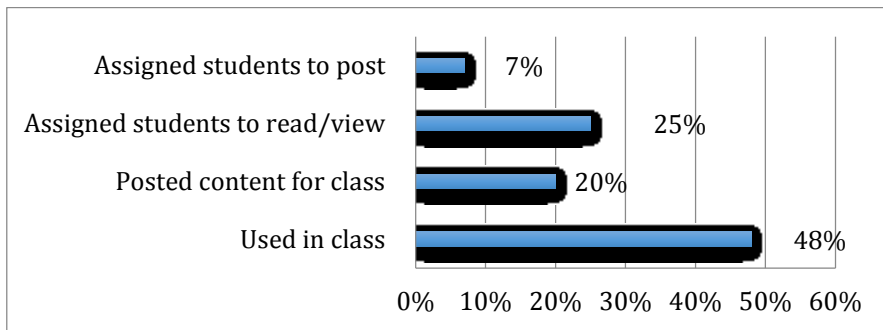


Fig. 12 Teacher use of social media in class and for student assignments

It is also evident that there is a good level of integration of social media into course assignments. Over 25% of teachers have instructed students to read or view social media postings as part of course assignments, and 7% have asked students to comment on or post to social media sites.

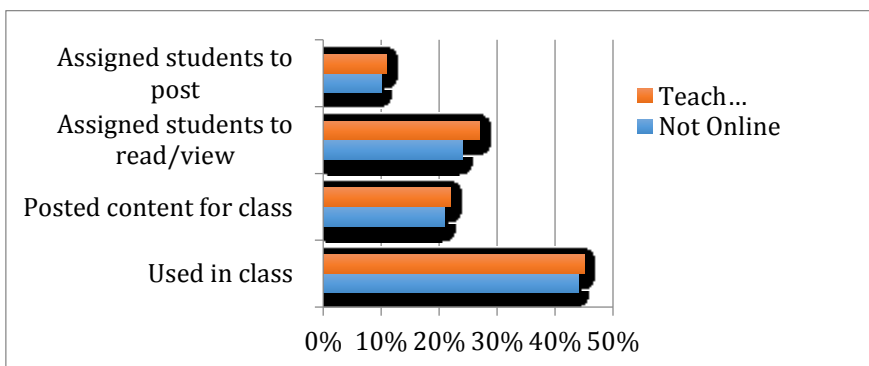


Fig. 13 Teacher class use of social media by online teaching status

Related to the results noted in Fig. 13, for teachers’ personal and professional use of social media, teachers who teach online were slightly more likely to post content for students and to assign students to read/view or comment on social

media sites. Teachers who were teaching online prefer to use social media in their courses and were a little bit more likely to post content for students and to assign students to either read/view or to post content.

Social media sites were not all used equally within a particular course. For example, online video was the most widespread type of social media used in class for student activities. Podcasts, Wikis and blogs were the next most attractive. Some of the social media sites commonly used for personal purposes, for instance Facebook and Twitter, were not so often used as part of a course (Fig. 14).

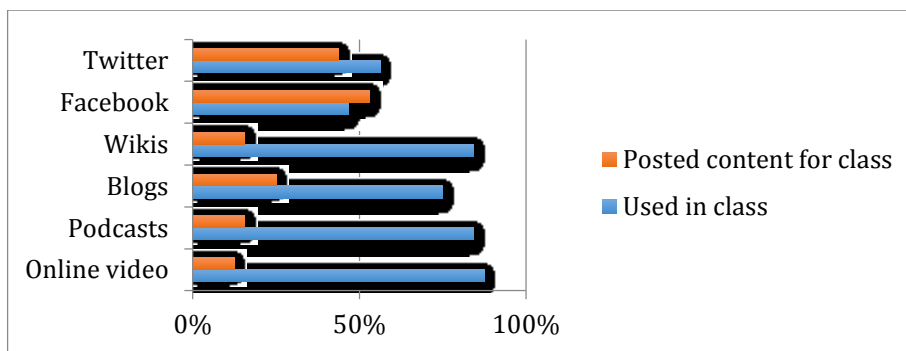


Fig. 14 Teacher class use of social media by site

A similar picture was noted in the use of diverse social media as a component of student assignments. Online video was again on the top of the list, followed by Blogs, Podcast and Wikis (Fig. 15).

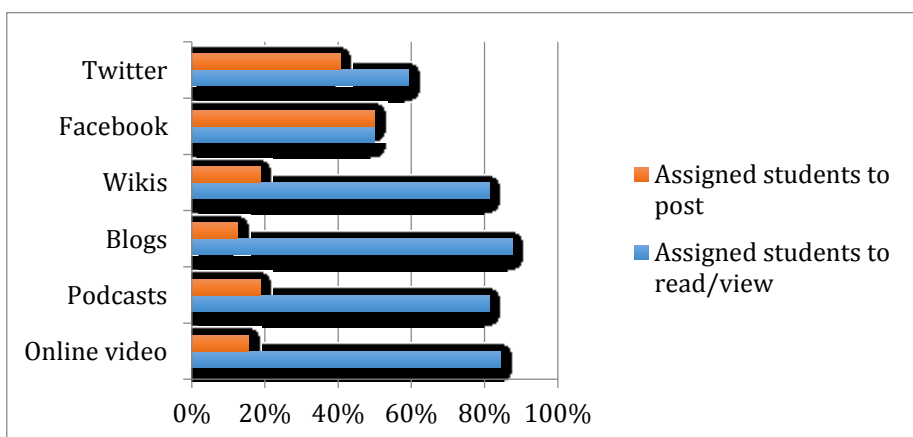


Fig. 15 Teacher use of social media for student assignments by site

Teachers were less likely to assign students to post podcasts (19%) and wikis (19%) than they were to assign online video (16%) and blogs (13%). As was the case for use in class sessions, Facebook (50%) and Twitter (41%) were the most commonly used by teachers as a component of posting student assignments.

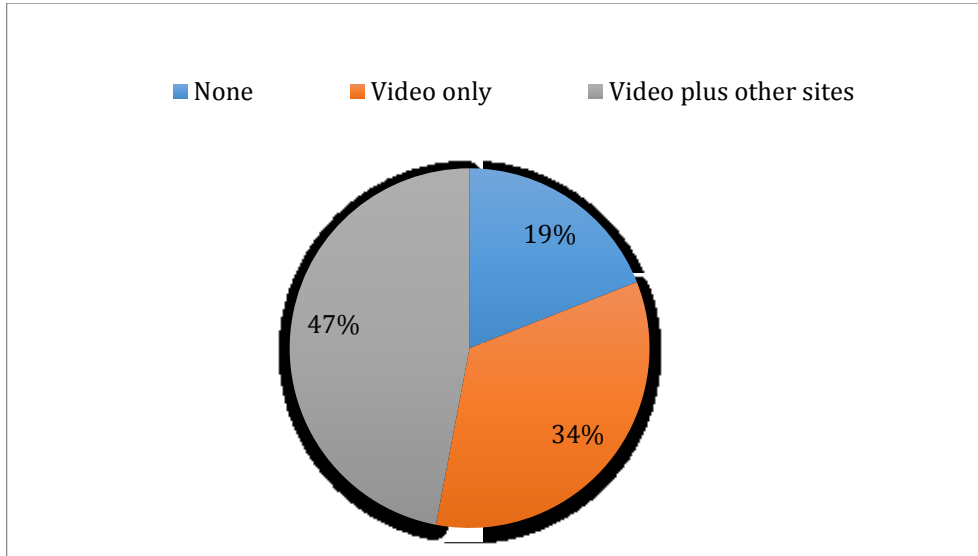


Fig. 16 Teacher use of video and other types of social media in teaching

As we can see from Figure 16, of the 81% of teachers who made any use of social media as part of their courses, virtually all included some form of online video use. One-third of them restricted their social media use to only online video, but nearly one half used other forms of social media in addition to online video. As noted in the previous sections of this report and in Figure 17, teachers who teach online used social media for personal and professional purposes at slightly higher rates than do teachers who do not teach online. That pattern holds true for class use of social media as well: teachers who teach online are slightly more likely to report use of social media than are those who do not teach online (19% compared with 18%). They are also more likely to use multiple types of social media, with 49% reporting they use social media sites in addition to just video, compared with 47% of those who do not teach online. This is quite good information knowing that there is no exception in social media use by engagement in online programs or regular studies.

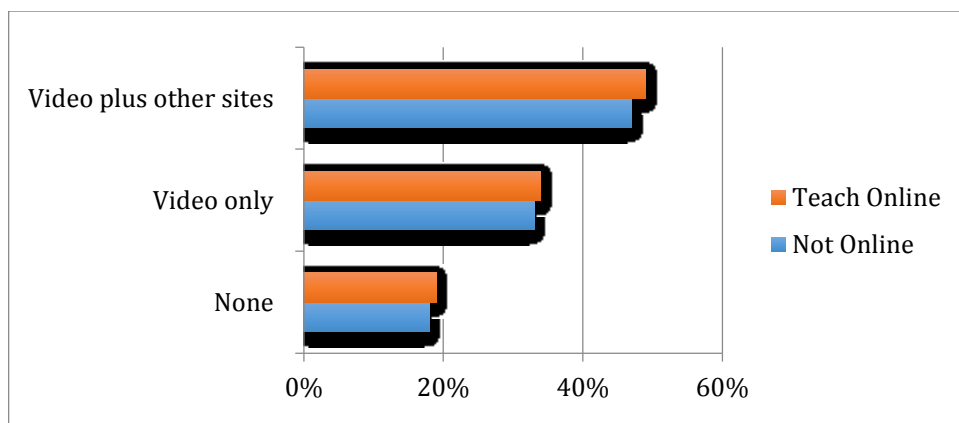


Fig. 17 Teacher use of video and other types of social media in teaching by online teaching status

There were some pronounced differences in the selection of social media sites for professional uses (within a professional career or within a course) versus use for personal purposes. The top two sites for personal use, YouTube and Facebook, remained the top two for professional use, but there was a noticeable domination of the Facebook site. Concerning the social media use in class sessions Youtube, Podcasts and Wikis were the winners.

The pattern of use for the other social media sites, however, was similar for personal and professional purposes.

Opinions and barriers

The picture of social media use was not all positive. The majority of teachers reported that social networks took more time than they were worth (see Fig. 18). Only 38% of teachers disagreed with the statement *“Social networks take more time than they are worth”*.

When asked about potential barriers to the use of social media, teachers said their two most important concerns were privacy and integrity: 75% reported that *“lack of integrity of student submissions”* was an *“important”* or *“very important”* barrier, and 69% said privacy concerns were an *“important”* or *“very important”* barrier. Both lack of training and the amount of time that using social media takes were also seen as barriers, but to a lesser extent. Lack of institutional support was the least-cited but still important barrier, with 54% of teachers classifying it as an *“important”* or *“very important”* barrier.

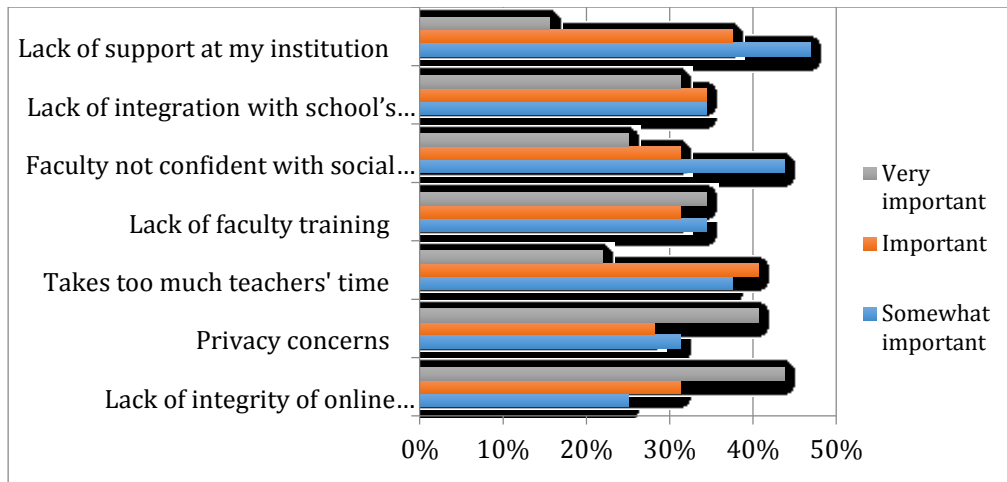


Fig. 18 Teacher views of barriers to use of social media in class

Given the concerns about the amount of time it takes to use social media and about issues of privacy and integrity, it might be expected that teachers do not see a potential for social media use in classes. That is not the case, however.

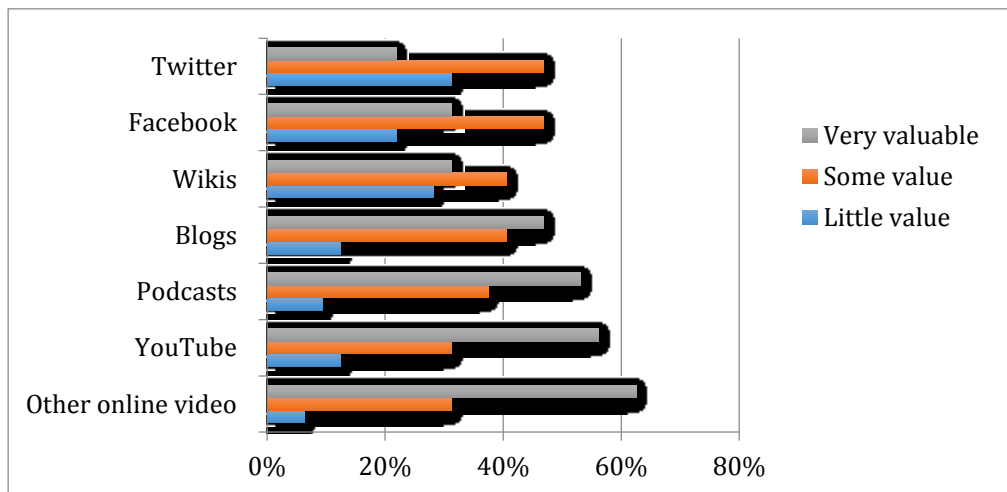


Fig. 19 Teacher views of the value of social media for class use by site

Teachers see considerable value in many social media sites for use in class. Teachers' responses showed that online video from either YouTube or other online video sites were seen as having the greatest value for use in classes (Fig. 19). This matches the usage pattern of those sites, where online video was the most-used form of social media in courses. After online videos, teachers reported

that YouTube videos were next in value for class use, followed by podcasts and blogs. Not all social media sites were seen as being valuable for teaching; Wikis and Twitter were not seen as very valuable for class use. A large proportion of teachers said Wikis (28%) and Twitter (31%) had “negative” value for use in class.

When asked about the overall value of social media for teaching—via the statement “Video, podcasts, blogs, and wikis are valuable tools for teaching”—the overwhelming majority (81%) of teachers agreed, with just 3% of them disagreeing with the statement. There was slightly less agreement—but still a majority of teachers (78%) agreeing—that social media could be valuable for collaborative learning. 3% of teachers’ disagreed with the statement (Fig. 20).

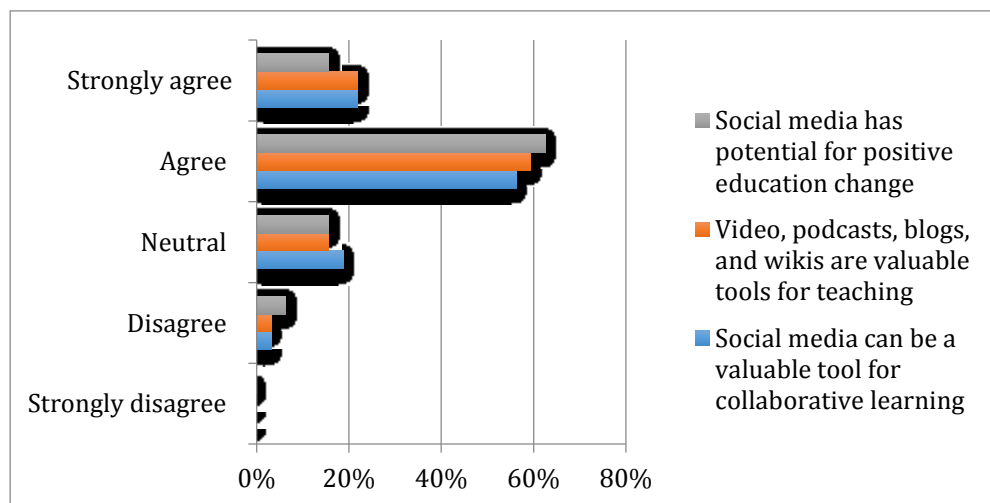


Fig. 20 Teacher opinions on the value of social media for class use

Interviews with students and teachers

As a part of this research, we conducted personal interviews with SEEU students from different study levels and full time employed teachers. The interviews were done online and face-to face. The author extracted the most valuable comments regarding the topic of research. At the request of the interviewees (students/teachers), the names are anonymous.

Online Bachelor Student, CST Faculty

S-1: “In conclusion, there are some benefits and drawbacks in using social network sites when it comes to opportunities offered to students, teachers, administrators,

alumni, educators in the realm of education. Social-network sites provide them with flexibility, capability to interact as well as to motivate and engage them with communication, content exchange, and collaboration. However if not used carefully it may lead to serious dangers such as privacy, real friendship, taking up time and miscommunication. To sum up, flexibility, convenience and accessibility have a vital influence in the use of social networking in education."

Full-time Master Student, LCC Faculty

S-1: "From what I have experienced at SEEU in some cases, I learned much more from online courses than I did from in-class lectures, it all depends from the professor and the subject."

S-2: "I would like social media to be used more by our teachers."

Fulltime Bachelor Student, PA Faculty

S-1: "It's much faster and easier to reach the needed information by using the social media."

Fulltime Bachelor Student, CST Faculty

S-1: "Personally, I find social media very useful in many cases, especially YouTube Videos that help incredibly as additional resources to clarify and understand lessons/things better. As such, additional links that would provide always extra information about a lesson would be more than welcomed from the part of Professors."

S-2: "Social media includes all the tools that are increasing the interest of young people and also initiating communication."

S-3: "Even though it could have disadvantages, because there are irresponsible people who would misuse it."

Fulltime Bachelor Student, BE Faculty

S-1: "Using social media in education means that the students and professors are closer and can communicate freely for matters regarding the course."

S-2: "I believe that using social media as a medium of communication would benefit not only the participants but also the other readers, in a way that the academic discussions on a particular topic will be open to be questioned and improved."

S-3: *"Teachers can use social media to engage us, students, in creative ways."*

Full-time Bachelor Student, LAW Faculty

S-1: *"There were rarely cases in which we have used the benefits of social media at SEEU with the professors."*

S-2: *"Using social media in our courses it looks that to be scary for some professors. Professors, please Don't Be."*

S-3: *"We are hyperactive students and we would like to be more motivated by our teachers, so social media can help here."*

Based on comments made by several full time employed SEEU teachers, social media represents a way of sharing information and knowledge:

T-1: *"Typically, every time I found new materials that I think my students would benefit from, I would share the links immediately on my Facebook account. Sometimes I also share random thoughts that I have, just to challenge my students' analytical skills."*

T-2: *"I encouraged my students to collaborate among themselves in completing their group work. I often see the students interacting among themselves on Facebook and to my surprise, they are discussing about the assignments I gave them."*

T-3: *"Our students are education-oriented, information seeking and multi-tasking experts, and this phenomena is attracting them."*

T-4: *"We are trying to catch up on social media, there's no doubt about that. But it needs time."*

T-5: *"Social media are for younger teachers, leave us the older ones ☺."*

Undoubtedly, teachers and students as well can benefit enormously from the rich knowledge base available via the internet. However, it is vital that teachers and their students proceed with care in order to avoid the pitfalls associated with using social media. Through the information gathered from each interviewed SEEU student and results from the data collected from the online survey, I can state that the hypothesis three, four and five (H³, H⁴, H⁵) are confirmed.

Swot analysis

Online social networking activities are increasingly common in higher education. The trend can be observed in many higher learning institutions around the world (Davis et al. 2012), (Mrva-Montoya et al. 2012). There are many ways of appropriating online social networking for teaching and learning. Higher educational institutions including SEEU are putting their efforts into developing such environments. Online social networking enables lecturers and students to publish and share knowledge quickly and easily. Therefore, as planned, the author did a SWOT analysis to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of faculty teachers using social media. In the table below, we can see the results based on the data gathered from the online survey and face-to-face interviews with teachers and students at SEEU.

INTERNAL	<p>Huge source of freely available information.</p> <p>Proactive engagement with students and teachers</p> <p>Real-time communication updates</p> <p>Improved relationship between students and teachers</p> <p>Direct channel to target audience</p> <p>Low cost to implement and manage</p> <p>Willingness to adopt new medium</p>	<p>New mode of communication</p> <p>Requires urgent effort to mitigate negative image and mistakes</p> <p>Time intensive to manage and moderate</p> <p>Training required operating functionality</p>
EXTERNAL	<p>Strengthened reputation for transparency and students/ teachers friendliness</p> <p>Ability to listen and respond proactively</p> <p>Increased online students' opportunities.</p> <p>Easier exploration into new markets</p> <p>Opportunity to engage and empower</p> <p>Increase help-seeking behavior</p>	<p>Need to align social media strategy with legal and regulatory compliance</p> <p>Risk of damaged brand image due to high exposure</p> <p>Risks associated with security, privacy and ethics</p> <p>Loss of control of brand and messaging.</p> <p>Threatening behavior in public online environment</p> <p>High risk contact outside of class hours</p>
	Opportunities	Threats

Conclusions

Despite the exponential rise of social media use in higher educational institutions, not so much is known about its influence on teachers and students [11]. The aim of this research was to investigate how teachers at SEEU use social media tools in and out of their work.

Social media as an innovative tool can be developed to enhance teaching instruction and enrich learning practice. It also can help shift to a model of connected teaching. Social media could also enrich professional practice and offer clear support in working with students.

It is clear from the results that teachers are actively and purposefully using social media to support their professional activities. The results showed that teachers and students are well-informed, self-taught, and sophisticated users of social media and consider Facebook, blogs, YouTube and others to be valuable tools in their work and personal context.

Research data indicates that Internet platforms such as Facebook, Youtube and Twitter are not just social tools. Besides the professional and personal use, many SEEU teachers are now using social media in the classroom sessions. According to the data, about 41% of teachers use social media professionally on a weekly basis.

Also, the data shows that the staff involved in the teaching process at SEEU is very well aware of social media sites and this awareness is consistent amongst all subgroups of teachers.

Social media usage among faculty drops off with age, according to the research. Younger teachers had the highest usage rate for personal, professional and teaching use and therefore some staff needs further training or encouragement.

While social media are seen as a distraction from the concentrated attention needed to create content, it is interesting to consider whether taking time out from work to catch up with personal Facebook, etc., may actually be refreshing and help people stay motivated at work.

While social media tools are also seen as easy to use, their perceived usefulness varies. Moreover, they are considered to be time consuming and somewhat distracting. Other concerns, and indeed barriers to the adoption of social media are linked with the blending of professional and private identity, the merging of

working and personal life and issues surrounding privacy and author confidentiality.

While the level of participation in social media can differ, a clear understanding of the capabilities of social media tools is essential. Social media is merely a tool, and it is only as effective as the person using it. Social media are blending the boundaries between the public and private life, work and free time, but the degree of fusion remains in the hands of the social media user. Theoretically, it is up to the individual how much disclosure happens online, what platforms are used, what privacy settings are chosen, who is followed, what types of posts are sent, what can be automated, and how much time is spent on these activities. Social media tools are flexible and able to cater for any personality, provided one is open enough to give them a try. It is important to keep in mind that anything posted online is permanent and can become public through cross-posting and because social media sites often change their privacy policies. Moreover, teachers have little control over what other teachers/students can do with the information provided. Teachers need to establish clear objectives in order to use social media effectively in the teaching/learning context and allocate the time and attention effectively.

So as a conclusion, we could imagine two scenarios:

- First teacher enters the class, pushes a remote button, the blackboard screen turns to life, one half shows a digital display of a Prezi presentation (<http://prezi.com/>), other half shows a live synchronization with another professor from a different university. The class starts, and the obvious “always in doubt person” asks a question. Teacher pushes another button, the digital display changes into an informative video, with a link for further reference. Finally the class ends, teacher e-mails the links to students and puts the e-books on LMS Libri for students to download. Moreover, students are given a task to tweet about and also to make a page on Facebook.
- Scene two, teacher enters the class, puts down two heavy books on the desk, turns towards the board and starts speaking some very meaningful sentences. The “doubt kid” asks a question, which the teacher explains after referring to one of the books and he/she says they understand. Other students comment on the question and the teacher asks them to write something for homework.

Therefore, we should ask ourselves, which one is better, more interactive and

productive?

The answer depends on what methods students like and how the teacher uses them. The new generation today loves technology and expects the same from his/her ideal person. Teachers generally play that role, and if they don't use technology, an invisible wall may get erected between them.

Teachers today themselves use technology in their day-to-day lives. They blog, connect through social media etc. So, would it not be better if a teacher combined technology with other resources and good methodology. For example, the teacher could comment and interact on some post by a student in the class. The student immediately starts a discussion with his own device and thus the knowledge gets shared, in other words technology supports interactive teaching which students enjoy.

In the words of Kuman Snehansu: "Technology doesn't teach, Teachers teach. But today, teachers who don't use technology will be replaced by teachers who do."

There are three key factors for a technology to accomplish widespread use and to be accepted by teachers:

- pedagogical flexibility
- support for teacher control
- and accessibility

The current mixture of technology provides credible evidence of the importance of these three factors.

These "innovations" can be flexibly integrated into teachers' curriculum plans and provide options for teachers to shape or shift their instruction whenever they think suitable.

Teachers also can utilize these without reducing their control over the classrooms. Their flexibility and low cost make them accessible and pervasive for teachers and students alike.

The main conclusion regarding social media use by students and teachers is: students like it, they want more, it helps with learning in and out of class. So, if today a teacher does not want to be called "old-fashioned" or "boring" then he/she needs to support student learning in the best possible way with technological teaching.

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Appendix 1: Online survey

Choose faculty/center:

Contemporary Sciences and Technologies

Languages, Cultures and Communications

Law

Public Administration and Political Sciences

Business and Economics

Language Centre

eLearning Centre

Academic degree

Younger assistant

Assistant

Docent

Associate professor

Professor

Other

Teacher awareness of social media sites (more than one check is possible)

Facebook

Twitter

YouTube

Blogs

Myspace

Wikis

LinkedIn

Flickr

SlideShare

Teacher awareness of social media sites by number of years teaching

Less than 5 5 to 10 years 11 to 20 years 20+ years

Facebook

YouTube

Twitter

Blogs

Myspace

Wikis

LinkedIn

Flickr

SlideShare

Teacher personal use of social media

Heard of

Visited in past month

Posted in past month

Number of social media sites visited in past month for personal use

Number of Sites

1

2

3

5 or more

Teacher personal social media use in past month by online teaching status

Not online

Teach online

Visited Only

Posted

Teacher personal social media use in past month by site

Posted Visited only

Facebook

YouTube

LinkedIn

Blogs

Wikis

Twitter

Flickr

SlideShare

Myspace

Comparison of social media use by workplace employees and teacher

Workplace employee

Faculty

Frequency of Teacher professional use of social media

Never

Rarely

Monthly

Weekly

Daily

Teacher professional (nonclass) use of social media by site

YouTube

Facebook

Blogs

LinkedIn

Wikis

Twitter

Flickr

SlideShare

Myspace

Frequency of teacher professional (nonclass) use of social media by site

Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
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YouTube

Facebook

Blogs

LinkedIn

Wikis

Twitter

Flickr

SlideShare

Myspace

Frequency of teacher professional (nonclass) use of social media by site and online teaching status

Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
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YouTube Not online

Teach online

Facebook Not online

Teach online

Blogs Not online

Teach online

LinkedIn Not online

Teach online

Wikis Not online

Teach online

Twitter Not online

Teach online

Flickr Not online

Teach online

SlideShare Not online

Teach online

Myspace Not online

Teach online

Teacher use of social media in class and for student assignments

Used in class

Posted content for class

Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Teacher class use of social media by online teaching status

Not online Teach online

Used in class

Posted content for class

Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Teacher class use of social media by site

Online video Used in class

Posted content for class

Podcasts Used in class

Posted content for class

Blogs Used in class

Posted content for class

Wikis Used in class

Posted content for class

Facebook Used in class

Posted content for class

Twitter Used in class

Posted content for class

Teacher use of social media for student assignments by site

Online video Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Podcasts Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Blogs Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Wikis Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Facebook Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Twitter Assigned students to read/view

Assigned students to post

Teacher use of video and other types of social media in teaching

None

Video only

Video plus other sites

Teacher use of video and other types of social media in teaching by online teaching status

Not online Teach online

None

Video only

Video plus other sites

Comparison of teacher personal and professional use of social media by site

Professional Personal

YouTube

Facebook

Blogs

LinkedIn

Wikis

Twitter

Flickr

SlideShare

Myspace

Teacher opinions on social media use

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

Educators should use
social media to reach students
where they are
Social networks take

more time than they are worth

Teacher views of barriers to use of social media in class

Somewhat important Important Very important

Lack of integrity of online submissions

Privacy concerns

Takes too much faculty time

Lack of faculty training

Faculty not confident with social media

Lack of integration with school's LMS

Lack of support at my institution

Teacher views of the value of social media for class use by site

Little value Some value Very valuable

Other online video

YouTube

Podcasts

Blogs

Wikis

Facebook

Twitter

Teacher opinions on the value of social media for class use

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

Social media can be
a valuable tool for
collaborative learning

Video, podcasts, blogs,
and wikis are valuable
tools for teaching