

Olha Sushkevych  
Associate professor, PhD  
Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University  
(Uman, Ukraine)

## **COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA: LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES & PROBLEMS**

Communication and learning are among fundamental needs of people and a source of social capital, it outlines peoples' roles and boundaries in a society. Nowadays, social media occupy a primary position as a means of communication among youth. Still, the existence of a device or some medium between people makes the communication poorer. The synergy of interpersonal energy reduces. At the same time, "...we attain the basic primary needs of communication of sharing meaning with each other which remains constant" [6]. Thus, communication through social media causes a decline in communication skills (written and spoken) causes era of virtual relationships, sharing fake lifestyles and personalities. Still, modern methodology can not ignore the presence and constant influence of social media on learners having plenty of gadgets with them in the classroom which may seem much more interesting than a teacher or subject. Correspondently, today the basic aim of a teacher is to wisely use various influences of social media on students for different learning purposes. To turn problems into benefits for the sake of effective learning requires answering a number of questions:

Why do students prefer to communicate on social media rather than face to face?

How has social media influenced communication patterns and interaction?

How these social communicative changes could be applied to learning process?

How social media may become the learning platform?

To answer these questions we have utilized qualitative approach for data collection as well as analysis of top world universities' achievements in the sphere of distance learning and learning with social media. We interviewed students who use

various social media in their daily interactions. Their number is 30 respondents from the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University (Uman, Ukraine).

Social media sites have enabled students across the world to network and share information, interact and come up with information thereby impacting the lives of many other people. Sunitha and Narayan observe that the Internet is now more about blogs, podcasts, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter [5]. Most users of social media are young people who are still in school. Al-Rahma and Othman position that there is no doubt that social media has gained wider acceptability and usability and is also becoming the most important communication tools among students [2].

A significant percentage of University students interviewed (98%) are registered on Facebook or Instagram and spend a big amount of time using computers, ipads or smart phones browsing in the social media sites and especially Instagram. Their learning turns into multitasking in order to perform somehow in class and seize every opportunity to check news and posts or upload some information. They usually spend up to 8 hours per day using some form of technology with socially networked media.

Students cooperate with each other gaining some important social connections, grasping new ideas and points of view. Thus, one of the learning options is creation of social academic group to share the materials and feedbacks. Various distance-learning platforms are actively employed by universities to attract students' attention, reduce costs and real-time space for education. A bright example is the experience of the University of Edinburgh. It provides thousands of potential students with online courses and enroll a number of them into BA and MA programs with simple links and redirections from Facebook. It allows the students to live their lives, work, and have their families and at the same gain higher education being a part of the students' community even without seeing each other face to face. Definitely, it is a challenge of developing a new kind of social order that strengthens mass communication and weakens interpersonal communication. "Social media is transforming the contours of social interaction, emotions like love, friendship, family bonding, intimacy and language are finding various platforms of expression" [4:2]. It goes without saying

that new learning approaches have already invaded the traditional learning tools and methods. The situation has dramatically changed: students can easily gain knowledge from the Internet and social media. Students – teacher interaction is more about discussion and practical application of studied concepts. As scholars have argued that too much reliance on social media in seeking information reduces creativity and originality of thought, that the quality and quantity of communication, language, diction and grammar are also affected. Thus, communication in class may become a tool to balance the situation, and prevent the risks.

To sum up, people need interaction for fulfilling their social needs and social media has become a preferred medium for communication replacing face to face interactions consequently altering the way people cooperate with each other, study and learn. But these challenges could be wisely applied to learning process and education, in general, transforming traditional approaches.

### Resources

1. Alhabash, S.. A Tale of Four Platforms: Motivations and Uses of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat Among College Students? 2017. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117691544> (retrieved 19.0319).
2. Al-rahmi, W., & Othman, M. The Impact of Social Media use on Academic Performance among university students: A Pilot Study. In Journal of information systems research and innovation. 2013. URL: <http://seminar.utmspace.edu.my/jisri>
3. Kalelioğlu, F. Using Facebook as a Learning Management System: Experiences of Pre-service Teachers. Informatics in Education. – 2017. – 16(1), 83–101.
4. Kiran Bala. Social media and changing communication patterns: Global Media Journal-Indian Edition Sponsored by the University of Calcutta. 2014. URL: [/www.caluniv.ac.in](http://www.caluniv.ac.in) ISSN 2249 - 5835 Summer Issue/June 2014/Vol. 5/No. 1
5. Sunitha and Narayan. International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking.- 2014. - (IJVCSN) 2(1). – 13 p.
6. Trenholm, S. & Jensen, A. Interpersonal communication (7th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. – 2013. – 442p.