

## Social Media in Higher Education Learning and Teaching

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### Abstract

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A study qualitative massively in the UK post in 1992 investigated experience and perception staff teachers and use of social media in learning and teaching throughout institution. Discussion between participant in two groups focus disclose a number factor complex and mutual depending on the influence success use of social media in learning and teaching. Three perspective different served in discussion guided: personal (experience and attitude lecturers and students), pedagogical (required by the context relevant learning), and institutional (dictated or directed by the institution education). Emerging themes used for grouping more go ahead and analyze material. From perspective intersectionality, a series recommendation prepared for college tall For consider institutional strategies and supports use of social media in context learning and teaching.

**Keywords:** social media; learning; teaching; higher education

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern technology has history long innovation in education high (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Use the right technology can increase learning with facilitate application existing practice in a way more effective or with reform practice. Although technology embedded in a way deep and real in culture learning in the environment virtual learning, integration, and implementation technology new can so more difficult because digital confidence and skills are difficult measured and built in scale big. Technology potential change impact to education, one of them is enhancement experience learning stare advance through tool communication and behavior asynchronous (Chen, 2018; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004); simulate or repair environment, develop behavior or create opportunity For testing and discovery. Introducing technology or maximizing opportunity participation synchronous and asynchronous (Hrastinski, 2008) or facilitate online teaching (Murphy, Rodríguez-Manzanares & Barbour, 2011) can also push classroom learning stare face: before, during, or after class. With development online tools and technologies, social media considered as tool main support activity study student with learning while valuable work (Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2016) and learning independent (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2011). By overall, the affordances of social media possible user for connect and interact with others without looking obstacle time and geography. Social media sites popular such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn are designed to be intuitive and accessible accessed fully from any internet device. Social media users is participant active in social media culture that makes content artificial users (van Dyck, 2009) and have ability For make multimedia objects using photos, videos and audio as well upload it to social media platforms. Many traits networking social has push communication message complete brief with visual attachments, memes, and animated GIFs for add or replace message written, which often conveys emotion or understanding culture (Miltner et al., 2017). Cha, Kwak, Rodriquez, Ahn, and Bulan (2007) argue that artificial video content

uploaded user to YouTube has change method we watching videos and television; provides engagement data like views, ratings, stars, and likes showing popularity content (Puttuva, 2020).

User can look for videos about topic particular and creating opportunity Study they alone. Application of social media in learning can said ad hoc, no can predictable, complex, and often focused on enthusiasm-driven innovation (Liu, Geerthuis, & Grainger, 2020; McLouglin, Lee, 2010; Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2012) instead support and implement in a way coordinated between institution. Facilitate learning social is something complex and demanding development connection social media and selecting appropriate platforms (Sturmer, Ihme, Fisseler, Sonnenberg, & Barbarino, 2018) with or without support institutional. Although pedagogy is an integral part of studies this, no There is considerations given for expand initiative the or give support appropriate and necessary institutions. Therefore that, focus study this is take more views wide.

Use of social media in college tall should considered from a number of corner relevant point of view regarding yourself, curriculum or the department concerned, and the institution education. Each perspective This own mutual consideration competing: demands, needs and desires (good for context nor individual) of perspective the. Explore different perspective this disclose problem conflict, dependency and need special. Question his research are: factors, experience and perception what influences use of social media in the learning process teach college tall? What impact college tall to practice academic and supportive development digital skills?

## **METHODS**

The purpose of study this is for possible discussion and debate structured that will give answer natural and detailed to question open is important. Before do research, employee of Nahdlatul Ulama University Blitar asked agreement ethical for collect anonymous data from group target. Participant taken from group lecturer previous academic has finish online survey about use of social media in experience they are in education tall. Participant convey in his opinion, there is who uses it in a way active and successful in teaching, temporary there are also those who admit it reject or "closed". For facilitate group focus in a way effective, the sample is also limited to the recommended number (Krueger & Casey, 2001).

First focus group consists from four academics women (group 1, codes F1 to F4) and the second focus group consists from five academics men (group 2, codes M1 to M5). The constitution of each country only based on attendance participants, and complete gender segregation random. Although difference between group seen and reported in results, we don't endeavor make gender attribution. Second group the covers various discipline knowledge cross departments and disciplines knowledge, without overlapping overlap or overlapping overlap. Age participant no still, however distribution experience varies than five years first start career academic until pension beak time and part.

Same interviewer submits six question to second group in 60 minutes. There isn't any exception for questions here, interviewer control talks and only interrupt for repeat question or continue to question next. The exact words used for compile every question a little modified to suit with discussion previous and second group focus shown the questions are written on A4 sheets while requested for ensure that all participant use and see the same words.

Sixth question the shared become question engagement, questions probing, and questions go out:

Question beginning:

1. What does "social media" mean to you?
2. What your experience using social media for development your professional (CPD)?

Question study:

1. What influences your decision to use social media in teach?
2. Based on response survey, trust self staff and students identified as obstacle in using social media for learning and teaching, and a lot of you who identify matter this as a problem. Problem trust self what you have and what helps you cope lack of trust yourself that you or your students have in the beginning?
3. If we [the university] don't support development of social media as a university, what the impact?

Question closing: (so participant can give comment more relevant further before close discussion group focus)

1. There's something else you 'd like to share about social media and its use in education tall?

Second group asked questions by the same interviewer, recorded the audio and then transcribed by an independent transcriber. A observer from group research is also present, however he no interrupt discussion group focused or give comment. Focus group obtain different responses based on connection social and professional between member more groups and contexts wide where they are operating (Cyr, 2016). Therefore that, analysis this study characteristics specific from comment individual, interaction between member groups, and compare them, interaction groups and their characteristics, as well comparison its relevance between second group.

Transcript entered to in a spreadsheet for analysis thematic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After comment reviewed For First time by all member team researchers, every comment given code based on facilitators, barriers, beliefs self, attitudes, strengths and weaknesses. Comment then chosen for quoted based on representativeness in discussion general and content thematic certain. Third member team researcher participate in coding and checking comment. Analysis done in workshop format collaborative, where discussion become base review thematic. After results and discussion written in article this, done review end to original audio recording for ensure presentation balanced theme.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### *Results*

#### *Group Differences*

Dynamics group, or attitude collective of each group target, really different. Discussion group 1 was impressed open, opportunistic and full of desire know, meanwhile discussion group 2 was impressed more practical and skeptical, though instead without appreciation. Group 1 answered question the with optimistic, though they show caution. They create understanding together about social media based on benefit share social, community, communication and intimacy, as well feeling personal:

*"... This is my friends, this is my family, but of course just for I'm two years old final this is also about academics and learning my personal, and I think that is network big that I am have that goes beyond today 's universities this."*(F2). They understand that although use of social media considered:

*"Another thing that must be done done and checked, you know the burden"*(F3)  
Acknowledge that Regular participation is possible leads to participation various type

community: personal, professional and thematic communities that ask questions what are we do whereas No. 1 No have it:

*"I often think you know what are we going to do if we don't have it because we always are have it"*(F3) On the contrary, period the beginning of Group 2 is reach agreement about function and purpose Actually from social media based on task, with reason that social media is:

*"Place where people can communicate"*(M2)

This matter Then leads to more insight exploratory critical more Good idea"hidden"interactions, noting clicks, views, likes, and searches for inform personalized content, meaning:

*"This is more from simply interactive, according to me, this interactive secretly, if that's the right word."**"You are engaged, are you? You truly engaged or no"*(M3)

Perspective Questions This produce rich and extensive discussion on both group about various topic, which we believe seen from one or third perspective different:

1. Perspective Personal - Confidence individual about social media, expectations, observations obtained through experience personal, thought, and research. Perspective this covers evaluation values, opinions about tool, approach, or consideration ethical about tool or approach. Here, perspective professional they overlapping overlap as individual them as researcher in discipline knowledge specific roles and roles they as a teacher.
2. Perspective pedagogical - What is important and prioritized For discipline This when consider social media learning in curriculum? Is use tool This standard industry? Well validate behavior professional (guidelines special industry for online behavior) or utilise opportunity through research, networking, or visibility individuals and presentations as a professional (staff or student). This also includes teacher relationship with students, the role of mentor or tutor.
3. Perspective institutional – e.g infrastructure, policies and guidelines, support For students and staff.

During analysis thematic, is logical for organize and present conclusion based on this perspective.

### *Scope*

Focus this study always on social media use in learning and teaching. However, in discussion group focused, some participant want to disclose worries they about promotion course, blurred limitation marketing course and its impact to planning, support and training employment. Although considered as aspect important, aspect this it turns out part big is outside scope this article. Impact from elements the only seen in the relationship with use of social media in learning and teaching.

### *Perspective personal*

#### *Strength opinion*

Although individual from second group express and justify opinion they during discussion, one participant takes clear attitude, mention he really believes it self-conscious and competent, however morally opposed network social, and hopeful that institution will take not quite enough answer for this question role. Studying time about social media:

*"I think Lots things that happen on the network social contradictory with good education,... I participate full in a number of things and avoid other things"*(M4).

There are opinions that There is various aspects of social media, from the good to bad, and Facebook operates on a"bad"scale:

*"I think If We start with idea whether you can interact with something or no, then you can start think about scale from Good until bad, with Facebook being the worst*

*Because For that's business That created. misleading and everyone who interacts with Facebook believe that Facebook is for them, and vice versa, Facebook exists For make money, to gather information about people individual and collective. So obey I There is something, not at all networking social, but in some networking social. social media, is a very deceptive crime” (M4).*

More views strong is that in a way institutional we need consider implications ethical from social media provider:

*“I want to we as institution speak clearer about things like it is more reflect attitude This is because frequently displayed as something very positive or at least No dangerous” (M5).*

Development professional and modeling behavior. Participant explain How values personal and experience professional with social media can influence development professional and context teaching they with take notes that along walking time:

*“... I used principles this and me use it in teaching me, until principles this is very helpful me grow as a teacher.” (F2).*

Use of Twitter for network professional and share information proven useful in expand information and share it with other people in form network. They stressed impact development professional they to student:

*“I mean, I am understanding it in two ways, first is I try make network, network professional in the field studies or profession, and try bring other contacts from universities and professionals else, so There is sort of That. network there. But then you start share information you can develop, but There are other fields in which you have field studies or teaching and you discover article and you can use social media as a medium for That. ... I added knowledge I with find articles this, the later I ask for shared to other people, ... This is growth for students and also for I Because I Study from what happened.” (M4).*

*“I'm getting more often use [Twitter] to development professional I for build network, for networking, and if matter That beneficial for student I at the same time, I No will say that This is something coincidence, but we did together” (F1).*

In conclusion is that use the professionals are also helpful for students who can combined in network the same social, combination journey individual and joint:

*“I follow scientist else, me follow various institution governments and organizations government, and me want to get information latest about what happened, learn it more next, and then spread it to the students.... the question is about development professional me and also about students.” (F1).*

#### *Networks and relationships*

There are three position different in 'following' students and navigating connection online professional. There is a view for guard limitation professional with No follow student:

*“I'll be right away realized that you don't can follow students on Twitter because the things they are say it on Saturday night at four o'clock morning and taste rather stiff”. (F1)*

*“If people come out on a Saturday night or Friday night and them A little drunk and doing something missing OK, it's hard for interesting back, that is is bad thing. probably the biggest problem because once it's there, it stays, even if you try to take it back, it can take a long time and it'll be out and as soon as it's retweeted or reshared, it's gone”(F4)*

The opposing view is that by following students and then using real experiences as learning opportunities to model professional attitudes, ethics and good behavior for students. The academics described their role in guiding students to become professionals, developing their professional communication skills and using experiences for learning opportunities:

*“...some students have written inappropriate tweets and we have resolved them very quickly, you know they have the guidelines in place, ...we do it in a very nice way, we will have a chat with the student and explain the reasons...why they didn't do that and said, would you like it if we went on (Twitter) saying, 'I just tagged this trash essay with an x'... So, they really appreciated the fact that we had that conversation. (F3)*

*“I follow the students because you can see what they are saying, and you can use it as a learning tool.”(F2)*

*“What influenced me was following some students on Twitter, so it's like some students will follow you, you follow them back and you have some kind of interaction with them and see how they use it and I think a lot of them forget that it's a public, kind of broadcast, you know what they write is published out there, anyone can read it. Some of the things they write are, it's just, you know it's really unprofessional, let's put it that way, it's confusing, you know some of it, they don't see themselves as young professionals, they see themselves as teenagers who are still use Twitter as a social activity, and it is, but if they want to be young professionals, I feel like I have a kind of duty, not an obligation, but I feel like I have to try and direct them a little bit and encourage them to use it more professionally. (M2)*

*“[We] have a personal Facebook page, but we also have a professional Facebook page. Now I'll be happy to take students on the professional path, but I won't take them on the personal path and I do something similar with LinkedIn, and yeah, I'm in, maybe I'm not doing as much. with that as I should have done, but I accepted students there, especially when they were final year students when they invited me.”(F4)*

As well as a moderate position on following students on certain social media tools when they are seen to convey professional goals:

*“I accept students, especially when they are final year students when they invite me.”“I said if you ever tweet professionally, I will follow you, let me know and I follow a few graduates who have graduated, so I think it's important.”(F4)*

### *Time*

Much discussion related to time as a resource and groups explored the issue of time from a variety of perspectives. The always-on nature of social media and maintaining work-life balance were raised as factors that increase stress and impact openness to engage with social media. Successful use of some tools in some contexts may require a high level of engagement, and this may not be possible. There is a feeling of reluctance to engage with social media because of its time-consuming potential:

*“I try and keep my job as 9–5 as possible.”(M3)*

*“I'm already very busy and I think I'm going to stress because I have to keep adding to it, I can't just leave it there, I have to keep adding to it.”(F3)*

There is pressure and reluctance to join some social media sites, and anxiety about it becomes another thing to manage and devote time to. A participant has created an account but is not doing anything with it, even though they realize it would be a good idea to spend time developing their profile for the sake of course promotion:

*I almost accidentally did it and now it's negative because my profile isn't always updated”(M3)*

*“[with] LinkedIn you represent the university and yes, of course we should all have an up-to-date LinkedIn profile, I'm surprised some of us don't have one, I think that's really important.”(M2)*

This raises concerns as LinkedIn use shifts from personal and individual use to its use for formal promotion of courses and institutional representation. This shift in emphasis impacted staff and moved LinkedIn toward labor-creating, rather than labor-saving,

activities. There are concerns about the time required, but also the responsibilities that may be associated with this:

*"I have a lot of things I need to do as a course leader and here's another one that will take x number of hours, where am I going to get those hours? And I find this with the many technological tools that we are encouraged to use, but they don't save labor at all, they actually create labor and the question you're asking is, what's the balance, what's in it for me? gain from investing all the time in it and for me the benefit will be in the course, that is, it will be beneficial for the university. So how can universities help you take the time to build that profile?"(M4)*

*"I use social media a lot professionally, but it's not in my work plan, you know, it's all too extra and it takes a lot of extra time."(F3)*

Twitter 'skimming' behavior for information discovery was not seen as an important part of professional development, however skimming and selecting relevant information for later use was considered useful by participants although they admitted that they only revisited around 10% of the resources saved:

*"You open it and the first thing you see is a link to an article...to me that's the beauty of Twitter," "when you're sitting on the bus, or sitting for ten minutes. ...an excellent example of general interest."(M2)*

*"I probably revisit, I think about a tenth of the things I keep and mark them in some way" "I can leave something for years and then at some point something becomes a priority". (M5)*

One participant described how social media had changed their approach to accessing news and personalizing the digital version related to their interests. While this requires an investment of time to set up, it is important to note that this does not necessarily increase the time available once established.

#### *Confidence, visibility and overcoming obstacles*

Participants identified challenges to their self-confidence and their willingness to be visible on social media platforms. Uploading content online carries with it the risk of staff feeling or being judged for their contributions and the potential impact of online exposure.

*"...they're really afraid of being judged or actually they're really afraid of saying something that then gets retweeted and retweeted and then it all goes pear-shaped and I just say to them, yeah don't say that, I mean you know, don't say that. -trash tweets."(F1)*

*"... suddenly what I wrote in a tweet had 100,000 likes, it was really scary, it's the only time that happens... You can then understand why people think, wow, I have no control over that... so it's kind of scary". (F1)*

#### *Pedagogical perspective*

Participants reported that they were most influenced by examples of successful practice and where they could easily identify the benefits to their students and the broader learning community. If they see the benefits of social media, they will follow these examples:

*"I want to use those principles in the classroom to try to engage students in conversations, so they take tried and tested things that work and try to engage them. And similar to Facebook, other people were already using it, so we thought, let's try this in the classroom." "Once they have successful experiences, their confidence will grow, and they will be encouraged to continue developing their practice. (F2)*

#### *Inclusive practice*

Participants' considerations regarding inclusive practices changed how they engaged students in social media-rich activities, or influenced whether they used them:

*"[I] have three girls who are [of a particular religion] and are very worried, not only about social media, but worried about what if someone wears something inappropriate", in this case, the tutor ensures that social media use is not the only way to interact, this is not important to judge "it is an optional thing, so that people do not lack social media". (F3)*

#### *Confidence*

When levels of self-confidence are high, there appears to be a lack of empathy among those who experience barriers to using social media regarding the tool, as well as its potential use:

*"I always feel a little embarrassed when staff ask me to show them how to use Twitter because it seems very intuitive, like asking someone to show me how to [make] toast, you know how to make toast, it's not that difficult, but there are obvious there is a barrier when people approach it for the first time." (F1)*

While it was clear that students were seen as confident users of social media for their personal needs, this was not always the case for their professional use in the course. Participants discussed the challenges of building students' self-confidence, especially when they are not directly with students in the classroom:

*"It's like they're going to be published... suddenly they think, oh I have to act like a student here, my tutor will read it, ... what if I say something stupid?" (F3)*

*"they don't see you smile and nod and [say] yes, that's great and encouraging." (F3)*

The participant in question gave an example of managing this through modeling and then providing a positive response when students communicate and deal with online situations effectively.

#### *Goals and values*

Although the benefits of using Twitter and Facebook in learning were not consistently understood or appreciated by focus group participants, there was clearer agreement regarding the benefits of LinkedIn as a professional network. Participants noticed increased use of LinkedIn by their peers, one of whom described how the majority of staff in their area use LinkedIn and encouraged their students to do so as well to build their professional networks:

*"When they do placements and get recommendations from places like that, that's how they build their professional profile, so we see LinkedIn as a tool for long-term development." (M4)*

There is debate about the perceived value of different types social media. It states that concrete evidence is needed regarding the benefits for students, how and why social media tools are used, and examples of the benefits of using these tools. One participant was very confident about this:

*It is not enough for you to imagine the things that are possible with this technology. I am very aware that there are many possibilities that arise when we use this technology,...when we, as is often the case in education, we are given these tools and we are told,"it gives you these benefits"and there is no evidence of what even for that statement. ... I find that this is a common attitude in education and the problem is that as individuals, we have a responsibility to go along with what's happening with little support and until someone can actually say, look, here's the proof that this really makes a difference, I will remain skeptical." (M4)*

The discussion also raised the issue of blurring boundaries. Most can see the varied purposes of a professional social media tool (LinkedIn), but there are concerns when its use changes from learning applications to university business-oriented applications. For example, using LinkedIn to promote courses to prospective students. This again brings back



who is responsible and how much time is allocated to carry out this work and overlaps with institutional perspectives.

#### *Institutional perspective*

When asked what the consequences would be if we did not support the development of social media as a university, the participants clearly stated that social media should not be supported just because it is a popular tool among students, but that social media should be used to provide benefits for education and learning.. student experience:

*“So we have to find ways to harness that and use it for the benefit of education and our students, I totally agree with that, but the argument is actually more nuanced than just saying, they use it, so we should use it.”(M4)*

#### *Priorities and resources*

There is a clear tension between engagement with existing technologies (such as using virtual learning environments) and exploration of new or emerging technologies that can enrich or enhance the learning experience. The open availability of social media tools and the need for professions or disciplines to use these tools are seen as strong incentives to use these tools, but this creates tension with institutionally supported tools:

*“So the question is what support will be provided, some are interested and some like it, they embed it in their modules and it will work like I use Twitter, but others, like you, will continue to use [institutional virtual learning environment] tools, which is fine.”(M1)*

There is a consensus that it is often unclear which technologies are officially endorsed and endorsed. Guidance on how social media can be used and incorporated into modules is also required in the same way that virtual learning environments are used. It is understood that not all social media can be covered, and priority needs to be given.

*“I can call [technology-enhanced learning support] and say you know, come and help me with [virtual learning environment] and... he's obligated to do that, but if I call him and say you know, I want to set up Twitter for the course I, I don't know if he should do it or not, you know there's a gray area there, it's not as clear as the more institutionalized areas.”(F1)*

The availability of support staff who know and understand the various tools available is seen as an important element of support at the institutional level. Participants felt that such support was important for the development of social media for learning but the impact of such support was difficult to measure:

*“If we don't support the development of social media, fewer people will use social media for learning purposes, but the impact is difficult to measure.”(M5)*

#### *Responsibility, security, and inclusivity*

The issue of distributed responsibility arises when social media gives us a way to engage students, prospective students, and so on: through professional environments like LinkedIn where we each have autonomy over our profiles, the second group identifies that a bad profile may have a negative impact. on the course itself, creating a bad impression and losing potential students who may not take the course:

*“I had a bit of trouble with LinkedIn because the module uses LinkedIn so I had to sign up... students started inviting me to LinkedIn, so I thought, yeah, I'll turn it on, but I didn't put it in. The full profile is there and I'm the course leader, so people -people keep looking at it and I still haven't put a complete profile up there, so it kind of backfires, because I don't want to spend my time doing anything else. object. So once again I got into it almost by accident and now it's becoming negative because my profile isn't always updated.”(M3)*

The current lack of good practice can mean that institutionally we are missing opportunities and not meeting the expectations of our students. For example, how mobile technology is used by our students. There is a tension between security and support for tools hosted or supported by universities vs external tools that tend to offer more flexibility.

capability and authenticity but without any control or support:

*“So it is necessary, [VLE] support needs to be extended to other products, but it is a question of adoption at universities. (M1)*

VLEs are described as more inclusive in the sense that all students in a group will be given access to the VLE and the tools it contains, whereas not all students will want to engage with social media tools for learning, or indeed, at all.. Likewise, students can practice their social media skills within the VLE in a safe way:

*“It's much safer if we do this on Blackboard and not on something the whole world can see.”(M4)*

Distance students, in countries with limited access to social media platforms, may be disadvantaged by the use of social media tools outside of university-controlled digital platforms. Participants expressed concerns over the lack of institutional control or responsibility over external and open social media tools as well as potential issues of cyberbullying, unprofessional behavior, and lack of privacy.

#### *Digital environment*

The concept of social media as an institutional environment (learning or otherwise) was explored by both groups. Online social media spaces are as valuable as physical spaces and can be utilized by an institution, they are seen as having the potential to expand and increase connections to our physical spaces. Participants commented that investing in social media could provide benefits for some parties compared to building additional space:

*“I think this is overlooked and actually it probably makes more economic sense to expand [the use of social media over bricks and mortar] because you don't have to buy bricks, you know you've got it there”and”There's a lot of talk about real buildings, but there isn't much talk about social media and social profiles there, at least that I've heard.”(F3)*

#### *Institutional competition*

Regardless of the platform used, justified and proven use in the 'interests of education and students' is considered essential. Understanding how students use (or could use) their mobile devices to support their learning was raised as a relevant area, and there was concern that if the use of smart technology was not identified and acknowledged by an institution, or there was no urgency to use the relevant technology, then there is a risk of losing students to other universities that appear to value digital technologies more openly and visibly. - Of course.

*“...if we don't do things now with social media and technology...we're just going to get left behind and you know students won't come here, they'll vote with their own feet, they'll do the same thing. going to [another university]”. (M2)*

#### *Institution profile*

It was recognized that not using social media would impact our institutional profile and reputation and therefore risked significant financial impact with reduced marketing and student recruitment impact:

*“This is about attracting students and generating revenue for institutions, whether this will have a major impact on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, I don't know.”(M5)*

Participants were concerned that the institution was missing opportunities to maximize social media reach and missing the potential for course teams to take ownership of some of their course promotion:

*“The opportunities [lost by not] presenting ourselves as a university...are very frustrating and often I meet people in other parts of the University who will say, oh we have a really good course but we don't recruit and say, well what do you do... it's not in their hands, they don't feel ownership over that type of marketing.”(F3)*

Participants clearly understood that although there is potential tension between an academic viewpoint and a marketing viewpoint, both groups need to work together to avoid the risks of using social media without support or guidance:

*“[if] one of the roles of a course leader is to market the course ... this requires support and the course leader shouldn't be left to his own devices and say 'why isn't your LinkedIn page attracting 20 people? student a year?'”. (M4)*

The agreed point is that there should be broader support and not the responsibility of additional individuals who are unknown or under-resourced. There was frustration at the lack of boundaries or consistency in the approach to social media use at the institution:

*“There's no royal order, but then again you don't know where the lines are.”(M3)*

## **Discussion**

Focus group conversations revealed a complex picture of the interdependence and overlap between personal, pedagogical, and institutional perspectives. Each perspective, and its intersectionality, evolves as technology, behavior, and infrastructure advance. These findings suggest that personal perspectives, interpretations and understandings often provide pathways for individuals and inform their pedagogical practices, a view found not only in relation to social media (Balakrishnan, 2017) but elsewhere in ‘quality’ discourse higher education (Kayu & Su, 2017). Institutional perspectives can be conflictual and reactive rather than proactive because they lag behind individual perspectives, but institutions must be responsible and considerate when supporting and guiding staff (Bonzo & Parchoma, 2010). Imagine each perspective slowly developing over time, weaving together, and sharing environmental changes or social and digital dimensions will be very helpful.

### **Personal perspective**

Focus group discussions illustrate that each individual has a personal perspective on social media and its value. Personal views, beliefs and priorities are formed through experience and exposure wherever they occur (both in professional and personal life). Our value judgments tend to adapt or be strengthened by experience or by listening to the experiences of others (Jung & Ro, 2019). Personal perspectives and enabling and inhibiting attitudes (Sullivan & Koh, 2019) can close or open the gates to using social media for learning, and inform our approaches to sharing, learning, promoting, and developing good practices in others and ourselves. A common perception from focus groups was the need to separate personal and professional online identities and interactions. A perspective shared by students (Maloney, Moss, & Ilic, 2014) and recognized by our participants for their role in providing examples of good online professional practice to and with their students.

Perhaps an interesting finding is that many of the reported potential negative aspects of social media use were not identified as common issues by the participants. A number of negative impacts of social media use have been suggested: information overload, communication overload, lack of self-regulation, burnout, depression, narcissism, stress and decreased academic achievement (Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2016; Whelan,

Islam & Brooks, 2020). However, the emphasis of concern in this discussion is much more aligned with the appropriate use of social media platforms and maintaining the confidentiality of professional identities. completely curated and detached from the individual (Carpenter, Kimmons, Short, Clements & Staples, 2019). Such views may be a result of the questions being open-ended and the main thematic questions asked about staff and student self-confidence, rather than other negative or positive experiences of social media in learning and teaching.

The pressure of academic workload and time available to try new things were reported as major barriers to interacting with new technologies by Regan et al. (2012) And Haber and Mills (2008) in relation to online teaching more broadly. However, the quality of online learning activities can be better than other modes and provide involvement of all students, not just more confidence, as can be seen in face-to-face learning activities (Cheston, Flickinger & Chisolm, 2013). The experiences of those involved in the focus groups highlighted that if they felt positive about their social media skills, they were more likely to take ownership of further skill development regarding social media and digital learning.

#### *Pedagogical perspective*

The *pedagogical perspective* is largely influenced by personal viewpoint (student or staff) and our willingness to explore or experiment; also by the work and learning landscape, it is shaped by consideration of factors such as the ethics of social media companies (Jacobson, Gruzd & Hernández-García, 2020) and the potential of the online environment. The pedagogical perspective was clearly the least challenging perspective for the participants. Where they can see the perceived benefits and perceived usefulness (Sullivan & Koh, 2019) for learning and student engagement and ownership of learning (McLoughlin & Lee, 2010), and especially when colleagues point out good practices they can follow; this gives them the confidence to try different things and then continue to develop their practice. If there are concerns, it is worth noting an inclusive approach to using social media and understanding that some students may choose not to engage with some aspects of social media due to their personal perspectives and potential complexities or perceived barriers (Purvis, Rodger, & Beckingham, 2016). When participants had self-confidence, they tended to be less empathetic towards those experiencing obstacles even though the challenge of building students' self-confidence was a major discussion point.

Different types of social media have different perceived value in relation to learning and teaching. Evidence of their benefits for learning is critical and when social media tools are perceived as social tools (i.e. Facebook) compared to professional tools (e.g. LinkedIn) considerations of blurring boundaries are raised (Maloney et al., 2014). Likewise, when professional tools have a secondary goal of rep-functional and marketing value for the organization, there are time constraints and expectations to maintain a profile, something that is unrelated to pedagogical practices or student experience. Although, again, positive examples and experiences can be seen or drawn upon (Chen, 2018), both academics and students are more open to using social media for learning where they may have categorized the tools for non-learning purposes only. It is proven that when staff and students have analyzed the affordances of social media for learning purposes, and made their own choices and adaptations, any social media tool can be used effectively for learning (Missing, 2020).

#### *Institutional perspective*

The main themes highlighted by the focus groups relating to institutional enablers and barriers focused on achieving clarity regarding institutional approaches as well as whether and how social media use is supported by those institutions (Balakrishnan, 2017). Specific guidance on how to effectively apply social media to the learning experience,

particularly with case studies and examples, is key to enabling new users of social media for the purpose of enhancing the learning experience. Therefore, institutional support for developing learning and teaching in social media-enhanced learning should be characterized by support and delivery of clear, tangible and specific staff development targeted at social media use (Jenkins, Browne, Walker & Hewitt, 2011). Likewise, the tension between social media for institutional marketing and courses needs to be clarified and supported to avoid unnecessary tensions in learning and teaching (Konstantinida & Zinck Stagno, 2011).

The *institutional perspective* is responsible for providing appropriate fertile ground for personal use and pedagogy that is safe, supported, and guided as appropriate (Stathopoulou et al., 2019). Institutions benefit from good personal practices and pedagogy, even though such practices often provide or contribute to barriers or undermine those practices (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Institutional strategies often align with the use of new technologies to support learning, certainly at the author's institution, our strategic ambition to become a leading applied university implies that students will benefit from contemporary and functional learning experiences, as well as applied and contemporary uses. social media contributes to this. All Higher Education Institutions in the UK have strategies to achieve graduate outcomes that effective use of social media will contribute to positively (Killian et al., 2019). Therefore, the sector needs to move away from just talking about trend-driven tools and approaches and conveniently ignoring social media as a learning tool. As educators, we should believe that smart digital technologies are an integral part of the learning experience and this became abundantly clear when the global Covid-19 pandemic impacted higher education in 2020 (Crawford et al., 2020). Institutions must be progressive and forward-thinking so as not to lose their competitive advantage as an organization or the competitive attributes of their graduates in a modern and evolving workplace.

Institutions must be clear about their expectations of social technologies in learning and as part of the student experience and how this differs from the use of social media for digital marketing (Camilleri, 2019 ; Konstantinida & Zinck Stagno, 2011). This will impact institutional attitudes towards the role of digital in the learning offered to students (Stathopoulou et al., 2019). Supported pathways where the use of social technology is critical include: time, training, skill development, and rationale; besides ensure good practices in personal data management, human resources, support, ethics and conduct policies. Clarity on this is needed when there is a potential overlap between personal ownership of social media and professional ownership. The motivation to explore social media is in a gray area as universities feel the information provided by universities is insufficient to demonstrate the benefits and impact required to do so. Make a decision about Which tools or approaches to use requires clarity about the range of tools supported, provided, or approved at an institution. Staff and students need guidance on how they make appropriate decisions for their needs and to be given a space where open discussions about social media in learning can take place (Manca & Ranieri, 2015).

#### *Perspective intersectionality*

The use of social media in learning and teaching makes us navigate new technological dimensions in practice, and this has a series of personal and institutional requirements. The dimensions of public face, expanded classrooms, new behaviors, new expectations, different roles, articulating ourselves as individuals, and institutional presentation are clearly complex and multifaceted (Liu et al., 2020). Appreciate that actions such as connecting with students in your course or module on LinkedIn versus friending them on Facebook, can have different implications and outcomes. The need to have a public face and digital identity owned by individuals and institutions requires an advanced understanding of how to manage online behavior and experiences. For many staff at higher

education institutions, this is still relatively new, despite the availability of many social media channels over the past two decades (Missing, 2020). Personal perspectives on using social media professionally can vary depending on the individual, from a very important part of their job to something they haven't really considered. Individuals find themselves living the rules of public engagement, sometimes feeling vulnerable, but sometimes feeling empowered. Meanwhile, institutions increasingly value online professional representation, and the need to protect themselves from negative publicity (Konstantinida & Zinck Stagno, 2011).

Tensions may exist between personal and professional practices, as well as underlying beliefs and principles (Carpenter et al., 2019). Staff and students may feel compromised enough to challenge their personal stance, or be resigned to it, while others will stand firm on theirs. If the pedagogy demands or suggests the use of certain tools or approaches that require adjustments to personal principles, a safe or guided path must be clear for teaching staff and students. Most importantly, individuals in the higher education community must be supported to have an open attitude towards the use of social media for learning and appreciation. A different position to the one they already hold (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Ownership and responsibility for implementing social media for learning is likely best placed at the course level where effective use of social media can be undertaken with a local understanding of staff and student structures, boundaries and expectations. Where necessary and when possible, use of social media should adhere to the standard approaches or expectations of appropriate professional bodies (O'Regan, Smithson & Spain, 2018) but provide opportunities to put them into practice and facilitate critical awareness of professional and personal identity. If such standards do not exist, facilitating critical exploration of what should be done in a safe learning environment should be a priority for tutors.

#### *Limitations*

The voices of two focus groups of educators were considered and analysis of the group discussions was taken to represent the views of academics at UK Higher Education Institutions. An unintended consequence of self-selection based on individual availability is gender bias within the group; one is all women and the other is all men. It was felt that the participants who contributed to the focus groups were those who supported the use of social media, or were otherwise critical of its use for various reasons. To some extent, there was concern that the focus group discussions would be led by more vocal people and participants tend to seek validation from each other (Jung & Ro, 2019). Unable to hear individual reactions or be influenced by what others say, middle ground voices may not be represented. However, The debate within the group was also quite critical and evaluative regarding the use of social media and the limitations of social media. These groups are neither enthusiastic nor overly biased in their views. A critical viewpoint may highlight further considerations regarding the need for institutional support for social media use to be introduced into their practice.

#### *Recommendations and future research*

In the new context of Covid-19 and the rapidly accelerating need for the use of digital technologies in learning and teaching, it is likely that there will be further changes in the perception and use of social media for learning in higher education. There is potential to expand this research to a wider audience to identify further implications for practice. Expanding further would allow exploration of the key issue of how institutional support can provide support to overcome the barriers and barriers experienced by staff. A scoping exercise can provide a useful collection of good practices that others can then consider.

Additionally, ethical issues raised regarding privacy, data collection, and use of information collected from social media sites require further attention. There is an opportunity to provide detailed guidance for educators and all social media users to ensure individuals are properly informed and aware of how they can take ownership of how information can be used.

Based on thematic analysis and interpretation of focus group discussions and in conjunction with other research evidence, we present several institutional recommendations to support the development of the use of social media for learning and teaching in higher education.

We recommend that institutions provide:

- 1 A clear statement of support and expectations for the use of social media within the university community
- 2 Specific support and guidance for the use of professional networks that develop the professional identity of staff and students.
- 3 Principles to consider when using social media for learning and teaching.
- 4 A protocol to guide how social media accounts are best managed for groups and peer learning.
- 5 A guide to dealing with online behavior and encouraging positive and professional online interactions.
- 6 Share examples of pedagogical use of social media in practice.
- 7 Support appropriate risk-taking in the exploration of emerging social media technologies.

## CONCLUSION

There are three competing demands, needs, and desires from the three perspectives of self, subject/profession, and institution. There are many overlapping and common elements in this perspective. A strong influence on the use of social media for learning is personal (individual staff member) use of social media. Objections and barriers to a staff member's use of social media are difficult to overcome simply by understanding the potential benefits of using social media with students. These barriers and barriers are likely to become stronger and can only be effectively challenged through a clear institutional framework of support and development.

The ubiquitous nature of interactions on the web and rapid technological change make social media indistinguishable from standard internet practices. Therefore, it is inevitable that human behavior evolves as the way we interact and communicate with each other changes.

However, few of us question the ethics or consequences of change for individuals and society, and the views of those who challenge accepted norms may seem extreme or alarming. Institutions must take responsibility as a community of staff and students to remain carefully critical, not simply uncritically adopt emerging social behaviors as mainstream. We must increase critical awareness as part of the learning design process, and encourage holistic thinking, including sustainability, ethics, impact, and personal boundaries.

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