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Pedagogical Innovation with Social Media: A Case Study of Student Engagement, Digital Literacy, and Teaching Transformation in Post-Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT: The study examines the revolutionary role of the social media in the post-secondary education as a way of inspiring a new pedagogical concept. The study guides are based on a qualitative case study and selected hybrid communication course at a university in South Asia. The authors investigate the impact of such platforms as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok on student learning, digital literacy, and teaching. Data triangulation using reflections of the students, faculty interviews, and logs of social media activity were used to present an all-inclusive picture of this transforming educational environment. These results show that when the use of these platforms is made structured and purposeful, then it can make possible a participatory culture of learning, development of teaching the digital skills of critical thinking among students, and a fundamental decomposition of the roles of teaching. Still, there are some obstacles like digital distractions or unfair preparation in technology and moderation that make the implementation difficult. The current paper offers original empirical data to the emerging body of literature on technology-enriched education, and especially by providing a study directed at the application of social media to the pedagogical contexts of the global south that essentially has its academic landscape marked as flowing and resource poor.

Keywords: Social Media, Pedagogical Innovation, Digital Literacy, Student Engagement, Higher Education, Teaching Transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The incorporation of e-technologies into the learning process is no longer an improvement of the traditional teaching but a deep change of the paradigm of educational process. And in this newly mapped landscape, social media sites are growing to be fully appreciated not only as a communication medium, but as a collaborative learning setting and as a knowledge co-construction site [1]. As colleges and universities are trying to stay relevant in the new digital-first reality, pedagogical potential of such channels of communication Facebook, YouTube, or TikTok should be closely investigated in academic circles [2].

A transition to social media-mediated learning gains prominence especially against the backdrop of the

COVID-19 pandemic that led to the emergence of an unprecedented transition to distance and hybrid education. Although Learning Management Systems (LMSs) provide well organized digital spaces, social media facilitates more informal and learner-centered interactions [3]. Nevertheless, the implementation of such instruments entails the re-conceptualization of the epistemological basis of pedagogical practices: the shift of focus of the pedagogical intervention towards the participatory, dialogical models of learning that enables students to be the co-constructors of the knowledge [4]. These dynamics are critically reviewed by this paper by using a case study of a university in South Asia in the context of using social media in a hybrid course of undergraduate communication. In the case analysis, three fundamental dimensions are explored with regard to the impact of these tools on the student engagement, development of digital literacy, and transformation of pedagogy. By doing this, the paper fills the major gap in the literature as the theoretical hypotheses do have their basis in the real experiences in education [5].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Evolution of Social Media in Education

The pedagogical affordance of Web 2.0 tools has also come more frequently to the scholarly discourse around educational technology state that social media is a third space between informal and formal learning that offers a flexible space where knowledge may be exchanged [6]. In comparison to the fixed form of learning, the social media facilitates interactive and user-contributory content and interaction [7, 8]. Also add that the pedagogical construction of the platform determines the educational opportunities of social media. The issues of distraction and privacy still exist but the most problematic one is not the platform but the instructional-design that the usage of the platform is based on [9].

Student Engagement and Motivation

The commitment of the students is convincingly considered as an indicator of performance at the educational establishment. In line with this, established a positive relation between organized Twitter use and GPA scores of students and they attributed that to improvement in peer interaction and reflective learning [10]. Engagement is complex, including behavioral, emotional and cognitive and social media presents opportunities

related to these [11]. Furthermore, contact through social media does not stop with passive intake but it can apply to active knowledge building. Virtual discussion boards enable a prolonged conversation and ideation whilst social media such as YouTube enable student-generated learning materials. This goes in line with the manipulated taxonomy where creation is ranked as the highest level of cognitive competencies as proposed by Bloom [12].

Digital Literacy in a Post-Truth Era

The use of digital tools effectively is not the only acquisition based on which the digital literacy concept can be defined today; further ideas are critical access to the contents available online, ethical digital citizenship, and multimodal communication [13]. Misinformation and Internet surveillance have exploded in their prevalence, and educating responsible habits of students in online space is becoming an immediate priority nowadays [14]. Argue that the digital practices of students in their daily life are not necessarily applicable in their academic life in the dimension of digital literacy [15]. Rather, these skills must be developed through some sort of pedagogical intervention, which emphasizes the relevance of the issue concerning the incorporation of digital literacy in the curricular model [16]. Also, the issue of media literacy must be placed in the socio-political context. Students need to learn more about the effect of algorithmic curation, filter bubbles, and digital monopolies on the information ecosystems that they find themselves in. This critical understanding moves the level of digital literacy above functioning to the level of emancipation [17].

Pedagogical Paradigm Shift

Vygotsky social constructivism and connectivism theories developed by Siemens stress the role of interaction and connected learning in the process of creating knowledge. It is based on these theories that offer the supporting framework upon which social media is transforming the roles of Pedagogical roles. The role of instructors is transformed to inquiry agents instead of knowledge givers and learning is a socially contextures activity [18]. Also, the theory of critical pedagogy introduced by Giroux urges educational workers to problematize the ideology under the assumptions of digital platforms. The question is who possesses the content? Who is benefiting out of student data? Such a systematic examination of the political economy therefore

requires a sophisticated analysis of educational technologies to be integrated with social media [19].

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
The in-depth and context-specific examination of pedagogical innovation with the social media will be performed through the use of the qualitative case study research approach [20]. The case study methodology is especially appropriate in studying complex forms of education in the real-life settings.

Setting and Participants
This investigation was carried out in one of the private universities in Bangladesh involving traditional undergraduate communication course with 45 students being offered by two instructors in the form of a hybrid course. The Elements of design of the course were revised with the perception of using social media as one of the most powerful teaching tools [21].

Data Collection
Evidence indicated triangulation of data: - Pedagogical intentions, challenges and perceived outcomes were explored through interviews with the instructors. Experiences involving engagement and learning were retrieved through student focus groups. They were interviewed and their social media artifacts (posts, videos, discussion threads) were collected to perform thematic analysis. - Classroom interactions and the use of digital tools were recorded with the help of field observations [22].

Data Analysis
NVivo software was applied in performing thematic coding along the outline such that it followed the six-step method of [23]. The codes were polished as a result of repetitive conversations with fellow researchers to guarantee inter-coder reliability. Engagement, literacy and pedagogical transformation themes are under which the themes were divided.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Student Engagement Redefined
Asynchronous communication was promoted by involving Facebook Groups as a means of weekly discussion and allowing the students to post thoughts and messages indirectly, without the presence of direct judgment with real-time responsiveness. Project based learning was done using YouTube and students contributed multimedia projects that were reviewed by other students [24]. The students said they felt more conspicuous in the learning process. Students who were shy did not perform so well with direct classroom discussions as opposed to social media. These findings are similar to the ones forwarded by, who suggest that social media magnifies marginalized voices, in academic context [25]. Moreover, the improvement in metacognitive awareness was caused by peer-to-peer comments on Instagram and TikTok. Students started thinking not only of what they learned, but also on how they learned, which improved their self-regulation capacity [26].

Critical Digital Literacy in Practice
Students were able to learn how to source materials and critically evaluate them, how to communicate multi-modally and how to maintain a digital identity [27]. As an example, there was an assignment to make the story on Instagram summary of a news article and its credibility estimate. Not only was the activity used to analyze comprehension but critical thinking and ethical reasoning [28]. Ruling out the possibility of human imagination, namely, teachers noticed the significant difference in students' capabilities of distinguishing between reliable sources and effectively expressing their voices in different digital forms corroborating the arguments of that digital literacy could be developed through deliberate instruction [29]. In addition, learning resources focused on digital annotations and collaborative edit options (e.g., Hypothes.is, Google Docs) were introduced to students and increased their ability to engage in both synchronous and asynchronous co-construction of knowledge [30].

Transforming Teaching Roles
The teachers have changed their roles to become the facilitators of learning. Due to the open-ended tasks in the social media assignments, they had to allow students to become the masters of their own learning. One of the instructors opined that she had to believe in the process. It was not easy in the beginning, but it was ultimately self-liberating" This learning change is similar to the tenets of connectivism in which learning is dispersed, non-hierarchical and networked [31]. They were turned into not only consumers of knowledge, but creators of

knowledge, a process that seldom happens with traditional didactic teaching [32]. In addition, the teaching design of the course applied the principle of flipped teaching, wherein lectures were recorded in advance and exchanged through YouTube, and synchronous activities were dedicated to the discussion and problem-solving. This model took advantage of the affordances of social media and utilized instructional rigor [33].

Challenges and Tensions

Although, a success on the whole was achieved, there was digital fatigue and distraction, as well as uneven attendance. The issue of digital equity had arisen: those students who had no constant internet connection or a machine had a disadvantage [34]. The need of moderating the social media spaces demanded extra labor, and instructors realized a high learning curve in changing the evaluation strategies. Such results resonate with Selwyn *et al.*, who warns about the dangers of making educational technologies too romantic, ignoring the structural inequalities in place [11, 35]. Also, a small group of students was concerned about monitoring and data protection in commercial systems. Although the institutional LMSs provided more control, they could not foster much engagement due to the non-interactivity. A tension between being open and being safe is not resolved [36].

CONCLUSION

The work confirms that social media can play the role of a change agent in pedagogical innovation in higher education when used purposely and with the critical mind. The case demonstrates how platforms, such as Facebook and YouTube, when integrated in the curriculum design process, boost engagement of students in learning, develop digital literacy, and initiate the re-evaluation of the role of educators. Nonetheless, technological access is not enough to engage in productive consumption of social media in educational context. It needs vision pedagogy, the backing of the institutions, and a continuous reflection. Faculty need to be prepared with the skills needed to negotiate digital pedagogy, and students need to be scaffolded in learning good, ethical, and reflective digital practice [37]. The implications of these findings are related to the necessity to support the understanding of digital literacy as critical consciousness rather than a repertoire of technical skills. Instead, the

educators have to assist the students in brokering socio-politics of the digital mediums and also contribute towards democracy in the digital culture. Long-term effects of social media incorporation, disciplinary differences, and the interaction between digital accesses should be studied in the future. With higher education constantly modifying, as it advances to operate in a digitized realm, reimagining pedagogy, through the prism of social media, is not only novel--it is vital [38].

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