

THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract:

Social networking is becoming increasingly widespread. There are many networks that gather users to publish, share, comment and collaborate as individuals and/or in groups. In an attempt to support networking and teaching, social networks are also being introduced into the pedagogical process to bridge the gap between it and the young population. YouTube has become particularly popular with teachers, providing open resource video content that can be used during lectures to efficiently introduce new topics or as background for various assignments (discussion, essay etc.). In recent years, research has provided impressive results – Klobas et al. (2018) researched compulsive YouTube usage and how it influences academic motivation. Newport (2019) reflects on our relationship with social media and other technologies that impact how we live and do things; impacts which are clearly visible in students who are continuously connected to social media.

At the beginning of the Business Informatics course, an obligatory course at undergraduate study programme, an e-survey was carried out to collect data about how students (n=110; 86.4% of the first-year undergraduate students participated) use technologies and social networks. We collected data about students' behavior on the web too. Smartphones are the main devices used among students, not only to access social networks but also for school work. Among social networks YouTube is the most frequently used social network (M=4.8 on 5-degree scale; 5=regularly, 1=never), followed by Instagram (M=4.6) and Facebook (M=4.5). YouTube is used for different reasons. Students most frequently use YouTube for entertainment (M=4.5) and, a welcoming finding, for learning (M=4.2). In the survey some questions about possible addiction to YouTube were included and compared to the students' achievements on the study programme. We found that students' achievements correlated significantly with a variable compounded from five questions about YouTube addiction ($r_s = -0.249$; $p < 0.005$) and a variable about following web news ($r_s = 0.321$; $p < 0.001$). The results show that students who express signs of addiction achieved lower results than students with no signs of addiction. Students who follow news in local and foreign languages find it easier to achieve better marks than those who do not. The results on a potential negative impact of using open resources from YouTube on student achievement need to be taken seriously and advice given by Klobas et al. (2018) need to be taken into account. The open resources have to be selected thoughtfully and carefully.

Keywords: Social media, YouTube, academic results, higher education, open resources

References

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