

Students Perceptions of Social Media Integration into Academia

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Background / RQ

- Countries across the globe are introducing social media into the classroom for interactive components of class content
- Social media allows for collaboration among classmates and between Universities
- Social media can be a distractor for some students
- Social media has been identified as an academic enhancer and academic distractor
- RQ1: To what extent should social media have a place in academic learning?
- RQ2: What are college students' perceptions of incorporating social media into academic learning?

Methods

- Two, 40-minute focus groups involving 4 & 5 participants
- Semi-Structured interviews regarding personal social media use, perceptions of social media, & [perceived & recounts of] social media use in the classroom

Results

- Three major themes were identified
- 1. *Content of media* helps researchers understand where users spend their time. Participants revealed their top reasons for use
 - Entertainment; Information; Politics
- 2. *Perceived strengths of social media* allows researchers to understand the positives students see in social media. Participants shared their top perceived strengths
 - Adaptation; Preferred Learning Methods; Communication

Results Cont.

- 3. *Perceived cons of social media* indicates to researchers where to be cautious in how and to what extent educators should employ social media into the classroom. Participants shared their top perceived weaknesses
 - Distraction; Perception Changes

Conclusion

- Rather than focusing on “positives” and “negatives” separately, educators should find a balance that works for their classroom setting
- Looking at other countries’ failures and successes can indicate the best plan of action in implementing social media
- Students perceive social media to allow them to connect “on their own time,” but limits need to be set into place to avoid distractions