Using Microblogging as a Social Media Tool for Discussions in Higher Education Classrooms

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Abstract

Through this qualitative study, researchers explored how preservice teachers’ roles and functions vary when participating in both instructor-directed and student-directed microblogging discussions about children’s literature on the microblogging platform, Todays Meet. Preservice teachers from three universities participated in an instructor-directed within university microblogging (WUM) discussion as well as a student-led across university microblogging (AUM) discussion with preservice teachers from the other two universities. The researchers developed a three-pronged framework based on the work of Java et al. (2007), Ebner and Maurer (2008), and Gao et al. (2012) to analyze the microblogging interactions in the WUM and AUM groups. Findings revealed that the AUM discussions tended to have more depth and moved away from the provided questions. Additionally, the participants demonstrated all the functions and roles of the microblogging framework in the AUM opposed to the WUM where several were absent. In this study, microblogging provided an opportunity for an interactive experience and the social construction of knowledge among preservice teachers.

Keywords

social media; higher education; microblogging

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References

Social media has taken many sectors including the higher education by storm. They include instructors’ slowness in adopting technology as an educational tool, decisions related to educational technology and its place in the curriculum and more importantly, Tess (2013) argues that integration of social media is a choice made at the instructor level rather than at an institutional level. The author tweeted multiple media. This is an important aspect of microblogging in education because it challenges students to direct colleagues and in some cases the instructor to “audio, and video that might help them understand the settings and context of assigned texts” (Jones, 2015:102). The author also encouraged students to share a wide range of multimedia via their blogs and Twitter. 14. Microblogging platforms used in education photo: http://www.heikkironkko.com/images/yolehti_jaiku.jpg. 15. Overview of the Microsphere Timeline Mar 2006 Oct 2007 Dec 2007 Jan 2008 Mar 2008 Jul 2008 Sep 20084 platforms in Tops 100 Tools for Learning 2009/2010: Twitter, Cirip, Yammer, Edmodo Elizabeth Koh, An overview of microblogging, http://www.slideshare.net/elizabethkoh/an-overview-of-microblogging, slide 16. 16. How microblogging tools work1. 29. good points: Classroom community Collaboration Project Management Assessing opinion Conference / research Virtual classroom Learning experiences Personal Learning Network Exploring the language Reference services http://www.flickr.com/photos/pandemia/354115976/sizes/l/. Get advice on using social media marketing in higher education, based on the Students Online: Global Trends report. While some of the prospective students interviewed were skeptical about social media for universities as solely a marketing tool, most candidates accepted that social media for universities has its uses, particularly as a channel through which to seek and share ideas and inspiration. From the survey results it’s clear that official university websites and university rankings websites reign supreme for prospective students looking for information.