Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate student teachers’ perceptions of social media. Social media has today’s teachers communicate, spread content in new learning environments. By using social media, teachers have found new platform to improve teaching and learning in and out of the classroom. The investigator has taken 180 student teachers from B.Ed. colleges in Thanjavur District of Tamilnadu, India by using simple random sampling technique. For collection of data the investigator has used perceptions of social media scale constructed and standardized by him and t-test has also used for analysis and interpretation data. The result of the study reveals that student teachers have positive perceptions of social media. This trend is seen in respect of the sub-samples, too. They believe that it is an innovative and best resource in promoting teaching and learning activities. Therefore administrator, policy makers, and educators strive to provide an environment that allows student teachers to integrate this resource in their pedagogical practices.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media is a most popular communication system. One third portion of people in the world is connected by social media. It has built the relationship through sharing useful information. Social media literacy can be defined as the process of interacting with media content and critically analyzing it by considering its particular presentation, its underlying political or social messages. Social networking websites is the technological tool used by internet users to as a platform to develop eventually mutually relationships for personal interests, business, games or academic purposes (William, 2009). According to Murray and Waller (2007) social networking websites as virtual communities for people interested in a particular subject or just to hang-out together. Social networking sites let users upload their content to the Web in the form of text, voice, images, and videos (Rainer & Watson, 2012). The most popular social
networking sites are Face book, MySpace, Flickr, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter. Twitter is the one of the top content-sharing tool for personal, professional, and classroom use (Schmucki, et al, 2009). Since Twitter was launched in 2006, teachers worldwide have introduced it in innovative educational practices (Castaneda, Costa, & Torres Kompen, 2011). Social media has today’s teachers communicate, spread content in new learning environments. By using social media, teachers have found new platform to improve teaching and learning in and out of the classroom. If the teacher do not know what to make of social media, or fear it, or misconstrues its uses, it will be failing to integrate social media in teaching and learning process. So teachers must learn social networking sites. Research revealed that social chats allowed the development of related skills and knowledge, and was an important precursor to more formal learning (Maher 2009). Due to lack of training, many teachers do not use social media. Teachers should develop social media literacy to promote discussion outside of the classroom. Merchant (2011) suggested that effective use of social media in a classroom context will involve learning from, about, and with social media so teachers have a better understanding of the practices associated with texts.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Janet (2012) conducted a study on pre-service students’ perceptions and experiences of digital storytelling in diverse classrooms. Managing diverse classrooms is one of the main challenges for all teachers. Digital storytelling can help manage such classrooms. It facilitates the convergence of four student-centered learning strategies: student engagement, reflection for deep learning, project-based learning, and the effective integration of technology into teaching. A qualitative research approach was employed whereby twenty-nine written stories and a recording of a focus group interview with purposively selected participants from the group was the data collection technique. The results indicate that the digital storytelling approach exposed the students to new media literacy which prepared them for the rich and diverse contexts which they will encounter in their teaching.

Hossain and Kamrul (2014) studied about Students’ perception of social networking for academic purposes in Bangladesh. They conducted by 480 self-administrative questionnaires given to a sample of students from the business faculties of different public and private universities in Chittagong. The purpose was to aggregate respondent’s opinions on the uses of their favourite social networking site(s) and their impact on the students’ academic performance. Most of the respondents report a positive impact of social networking on their academic purposes and there is a favourable perception of social networking taking different nuances. Hence, there is a need for higher education policy makers in Bangladesh to properly connect the students’ (especially undergraduate and postgraduate) involvement in social networking with their academic purposes to enable the current generation to fully take advantage of the technological advances that are changing the educational landscape.
III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Social media is used mainly to share information to far and wide places of the world. It acts as the medium of mass communication. Social media provide conversations between teachers and students extend after classroom discussion and exchange content. Social media is as a powerful tool for teachers’ professional development, both in initial and in-service training courses. Junco (2012) discovered that social media provides one of the best platforms for academic discussion and knowledge exchange. Social media is a great online resource for the transformation of ideas and expands learning beyond the classroom. Sobaih et al. (2016) found that social media can potentially benefit teaching and learning. Some people wrongly thought that social media transferring misinformation and unusual presentation in order to create the misunderstanding for the use of social media. But it is important sources of education. Teachers and also students chats various discussion and debates from social media which are extremely important and useful for them. So, social media is technically called passive agencies of education. They indirectly influence the attitude, behaviour and belief of the teachers and students. Hence the researcher has made an attempt to study the perception of social media of student teachers.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives formulated by the investigators for the present investigation:

1. To study the student teachers’ perceptions of social media,
2. To study if there is any significant difference between the male and female student teachers in respect of their perceptions of social media,
3. To study if there is any significant difference between the graduate and post graduate student teachers in respect of their perceptions of social media
4. To study if there is any significant difference between student teachers having internet facility at home and not having internet facility at home in respect of their perceptions of social media.

V. METHODOLOGY

- **Research design**- The investigator adapted normative survey method to pursue his study.
- **Sample and sampling technique**- The sample comprises 180 randomly selected students’ teachers from 3 B.Ed. College in Thanjavur District selected by lottery method.
- **Tool**- perceptions of social media scale constructed and validated by the investigator used for collecting the data. It included 20 items from strongly agree to strongly disagree; it measures in three dimensions such as understanding, utilize and belief of social media. For the present tool validity was established by taking the opinion of experts and teachers who were active social media users across various faculty and
relevant changes were made hence the tool has got content and constructs validity. Reliability was found by crobach’s alpha (0.72) and tool was found to be reliable.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data was analysed through descriptive as well as inferential statistics. The normality of data is assessed by calculating the values of mean, median, S.D. In order to study the significant difference in perceptions of social media with regard to gender, qualification and internet facility at home t-test was employed.

Table-1: Significance of the difference between the means of the perceptions of social media scores of the various categories of the sub-samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’ Value</th>
<th>Significance at 0.05 level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entire sample of student teachers</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>72.94</td>
<td>16.16</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male student teachers</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>82.63</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female student teachers</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>69.07</td>
<td>16.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student teachers</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>70.23</td>
<td>17.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate student teachers</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>81.31</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student teachers having internet facility at home</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>81.97</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student teachers not having internet facility at home</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>70.52</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following inferences are drawn from the Table – 1. In respect of the entire sample and their sub-samples of the student teachers, all of them have positive perceptions of social media as their mean scores were above 60. This trend is seen in respect of the sub-samples too.

From Table -1, it has been inferred that, there is a significant difference between the male and female student teachers (‘t’ value =7.19), graduate and post graduate student teachers (‘t’ value = 6.14,) and student teachers having internet facility at home and not having internet facility at home (‘t’ value =6.52) in respect of their perceptions of social media.

VII. IMPORTANT FINDINGS

The following are the important findings obtained from the present investigation:

1. The entire samples of the student teachers have positive perceptions of social media. This trend is seen in respect of the sub-samples, too.
2. There is a significant difference in perceptions of social media between male and female student teachers. Moreover male student teachers are found to be better than the female student teachers in respect of their perceptions of social media.
3. There is a significant difference in perceptions of social media between graduate and post graduate student teachers. Moreover post graduate student teachers are found to be better than the graduate student teachers in respect of their perceptions of social media.
4. There is a significant difference between student teachers having internet facility at home and not having internet facility at home in respect of their perceptions of social media. Moreover student teachers having internet facility at home are found to be better than the student teachers not having internet facility at home in respect of their perceptions of social media.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Social media as a technological tool will shape the future of learning and bring with it new opportunities in academia (Siemens, Gasevic, & Dawson, 2015). Social media is a valuable supplement to teaching and learning activities. The result of this study showed that student teachers have positive perception of social media. They believe that it is an innovative and best resource in promoting teaching and learning activities. Therefore administrator, policy makers, and educators strive to provide an environment that allows student teachers to integrate this resource in their pedagogical practices.

IX. REFERENCES

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