

A Qualitative Study of the Use of Social Media by Staff in the Faculty of Education, Kuwait University

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Abstract

The use of social media as a learning tool in the Faculty of Education, Kuwait University, was explored by interviewing a purposive sample of ten staff, including the head of department, a head of division, six associate professors, and two technicians, of A thematic analysis of the qualitative data provided empirical evidence to support the conclusion that all of the staff perceived that the use of social media may potentially benefit the learning performance of students in a sex-segregated education system. The results of this qualitative study reflected the results of a quantitative study previously conducted in Saudi Arabia. The perceived benefits of social media use included stimulating inter activity with peers and teachers and active collaborative learning and enhancing student engagement Three of the staff suggested that fundamental Arab/Islamic ideology (e.g., gender segregation) may act as a constraint. The staff also reported certain technical difficulties that could be easily resolved by the controller of the educational technology centre at Kuwait University. Currently, there is no formal framework with written guidelines to inform staff and/or students at Kuwait University about the benefits and risks of using social media. The results of this study point towards the need to develop a formal framework with written guidelines, taking into account the need to support Arab/Islamic ideology in a sex-segregated educational system.

Keywords: social media, qualitative research, learning performance, sex-segregated education, Kuwait University