

Social Media as Economics Learning Media in Higher Education: An Empirical Study at Universitas Negeri Semarang

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Abstract: Learning in higher education currently utilizes information technology, including social media. Economic learning in higher education should make use of social media to improve the quality of learning. This study aims at revealing the practice of social media employment for economics learning in Economic Education Study Program of Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES). The quantitative descriptive analysis approach were used in this research. The respondents of this research were faculty members and students of Economic Education Study Program of Faculty of Economics UNNES. Interviews, questionnaires, and documentation were employed to collect the data. The method of data analysis was descriptive analysis technique. The results show that lecturers in Economic Education Study Program of FE UNNES have used social media in economics learning. Lecturers and students access their social media through smart phones. Social media often used are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Whatsapp. The utilization of social media is intended to support lectures in class and interaction between lecturers and students. Lecturers use Instagram accounts to facilitate students in publishing the completed tasks or work. YouTube is used as a learning resource to gain inspiration or ideas and to publish works. Facebook is used as a media of communication between lecturers and students. However, Twitter is the most rarely used social media in economics learning at FE UNNES. The last result shows that faculty member and student of FE UNNES also use whatsapp for both learning and communication.

1 INTRODUCTION

Recently, the study of the use of computers is still focused on internet searches, e-mail and games. The very rapid changes of technology and mobile phone create new social media categories, which provide the means to communicate and build relationships (Ruleman, 2012). Recent studies have shown that nowadays many students are accustomed to using digital media and developing new learning styles that certainly rely on social media and the Web. Internet-based learners have degrees of proficiency, competence, and adoption rates. Strategies and best practices are then explored to address how social media can be employed by educators to accommodate the heterogeneity of digital learners and involve new learning styles (Bodle, 2011). Technology creates students' experiences in the classroom to be more interesting and innovative, so that it possibly makes students more interested in the learning process. Social media is able to develop students' critical and creative thinking skills. Social media also allows

effective engagement between students and teachers and between students. It can even handle cross-cultural understanding (Tadros, 2011).

Learning in college should have used information technology (social media, internet, and others) well. At the present time, students are the generation of Internet literate and quite rely on social media through their own smartphones. Learning in college allows them to flow into a new phase. The facts about internet and social media users in Indonesia mention that learning should be able to anticipate the development of the internet and learners in using internet and social media. (Ruleman, 2012) explained that emerging social networking technology had become ubiquitous. Educators must pay attention to the impact of education and how technology can be used to provide services. (Bharucha, 2018) revealed that a number of universities in India has employed social media in pedagogy. They face the challenge of how to harmonize it with the curriculum effectively. Social media will continue to play an important role in education sector.

(Bharucha, 2018) stated that based on connectives theory, social learning is related to the use of social media technology. A learning theory that explains how the internet has generated different and varied opportunities to learn from the internet and from others. Learners are given full scope to explore the web and share what they find with networked communities. (Ruleman, 2012) found that the faculty member use social media for receiving RSS alerts download music/videos, posting to a blog, social book-marking, and online photo sharing. Facebook is very familiar social media used by faculty member and student. Skype is the second one.

Social media and web utilization in business and economic learning is considered to be slow. Technology-based learning is only used as a supplementary of face-to-face learning or conventional class. In many business schools, "face to face" learning is considered to have more quality than the on-line learning approach (Thomas and Thomas, 2012). A blended learning approach can be used for vocational learning. The key idea of blended learning is to combine several learning approaches to improve students' practical experience and as a result it will increase their involvement (Poon, 2013). Social media technology is part of the routine of modern society in various ways. If students do not see value in using virtual learning environments and learning platforms, then the technology will be considered to be obsolete (Garcia and Silva, 2017).

(Ford, Bowden and Beard, 2011) investigated two social media (social bookmarking and micro blogging) that can be used to encourage collaboration and become very important in contemporary higher education. A case study on the use of social media at Bournemouth University shows how these two social media have produced benefits. Social media is used to improve academic excellence and encourage efficiency in overcoming funding constraints and demographic changes. (Garcia and Silva, 2017) described that students consider the use of social media to be more interesting and informative. Students feel more comfortable when using social media to undergo academic activities rather than using the information system provided by the university. The results of the study of (Bikanga Ada, Stansfield and Baxter, 2017) determined the positive attitude of educators and students in using mobile devices and social media applications for learning and teaching purposes. (Lim *et al.*, 2014) also elaborated that many students and instructors have begun to explore and accept the use of SMT as a tool to engage with their institutions and their colleagues for teaching and learning purposes in Malaysia.

The use of social media in economics learning has been proven through research. The results show that the use of social media can improve the quality of learning process and outcomes. (Stainbank and Gurr, 2016) found that time spent on the social media use did not distract students to prepare accounting courses in the first year. Students have a good perception of the use of social media to provide career information. However, it is not beneficial for teaching and learning purposes. (Dwiharja, 2015) argued that accounting learning can employ e-learning design. The application that can be used is edmodo. Further implications in Edmodo's use are in addition to improving efficiency, as well as levelling the walls of space and time constraints. (Erika, Yanto and Kasidi, 2018) found that there were significant differences in learning outcomes of accounting lessons by using social media Facebook. He provides recommendations to teachers to be able to use social media in learning process and provide materials and tasks so that the students could have feedback more immediately and make the learning process more effective and efficient.

Based on the observations of researchers, the use of social media is still not maximally done by young lecturers and senior lecturers. Lecturers would rather use traditional learning strategies (lectures and discussions) than use information technology. (Kardoyo *et al.*, 2017) conducted a study dealing with utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) by the lecturer of Faculty of Economics UNNES, and the results showed that there is only little number of lecturers have employed ICT in supporting the class. Several lecturers use blogs or websites. Similarly, the use of e-learning is not maximized. Other results indicate the use of Facebook is quite intensive by lecturers. While (Anissa *et al.*, 2017) found EF UNNES lecturers attempt to use Whatsapp to support classroom learning, especially in Business English class. The results show that there is a significant influence to improve students' writing skill as well.

This paper tries to explore the practice of utilizing social media for economics learning in universities, especially in the Economic Education Study Program, Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Semarang. It is expected to know how often and what sort of social media used by lecturers and students. Moreover, the researcher would like to explain the form and types of social media used for economic learning.

1.1 Learning Strategy and Categories of Social Media

Utilization of ICT in learning in Indonesia has a long history. The initiative in organizing educational television and radio broadcasts as an effort to disseminate information to educational units that spread across the archipelago is a manifestation of awareness to optimize the employment of technology in helping the learning process of the community. The main weakness of both radio and television broadcasting is the absence of instantaneous interaction. Broadcast is unidirectional, from learning resource or facilitator to the learner (Kustini and Nurkhin, 2011). ICT-based learning is divided into two groups, namely computer-based learning and electronic-based learning. Computer-based learning is learning that uses computers as a tool. Through this type of learning, the teaching materials are presented through computer media so that the teaching and learning process becomes more interesting and challenging for the students (Wena, 2009).

Some researchers use the term social media technologies (SMTs) in order to describe the platform more thoroughly, such as Facebook, web-based applications, and others (Smith, 2017). The evolution of applications and internet's possibilities resulted in the rising and in the improvements of technologies that are more interactive and accessible. The variety of social media platforms and the growth of its popularity provide several possibilities in new forms of this technology use (Garcia and Silva, 2017).

In general, social media technologies (SMTs) can be grouped into seven categories: text-based, media sharing, social networking, mobile-based applications, virtual world and games, synchronous communications and conferencing applications, and mash-ups. All these platforms have different functionalities and purposes to suit the needs of students in this digital environment with the tools giving students the ability to set up their own personal learning communities within the Internet environment which would allow them to stay connected to the topic of their interest (Lim *et al.*, 2014). There are some categories of social media. Table 1 shows the categories of social media investigated according to (Valtonen *et al.*, 2010).

Table 1: Categories of social media investigated.

Categories of Social Media	Social Media Technologies
Blogs	Blogger, WordPress
Wikis	Wikipedia, Wikimedia
Google Apps	Google Calendar, Google Docs
Image sharing	Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest
Social bookmarking	Delicious
Social networking	Facebook, Google+
Social news sites	Reddit
VOIP & Instant messaging	Skype, Google talk/chat
Do-it-yourself networks	Ning
File sharing	Dropbox, Google Drive, BitTorrent
Video sharing	YouTube, Vine
Location-based applications	Foursquare, Google Maps
Microblogs	Twitter

Source; (Valtonen *et al.*, 2010)

1.2 Social Media Utilization for Economics Learning in Higher Education

Utilization of social media for economics learning is an implementation strategy of ICT-based learning, especially electronic teaching (Kardoyo *et al.*, 2017). Lecturers can convey various types of materials and other learning activities through interaction with students by using social media. The reality shows that students are the most active users in social media. Lecturers must be able to take these opportunities as well as challenges. Lecturers who are less able to play a role in making use of information technology will be increasingly left behind and will tend to be uninteresting.

Utilization of mobile devices (smartphones & tablets) in the field of learning continues to grow, including in the higher education learning (Nurkhin, Arief and Kardoyo, 2015). Students' interaction with smartphone is excessive. Many lecturers and practitioners have been trying to develop the concept of m-learning to take advantage of the interactive features that exist on the smartphone. Through mobile-based applications, students can learn and complete the tasks from the lecturers concerned. Through the applications, lecturers can provide materials and practice questions and evaluation features. (Mehdipour and Zerehkafi, 2013) explained that mobile learning in classrooms often has students working interdependently, in groups, or individually to solve problems, to work on projects, to meet

individual needs, and to allow for student voice and choice.

The next development is the utilization of social media for learning. Social media tools give students the ability to think critically and creatively (Tadros, 2011). SMTs enable the sharing of collaborative activities not only in social life but also in educational field and, now increasingly, in business contexts (Lim *et al.*, 2014). There is a significant relationship between certain ways of making meaning and specific social media use, giving the less perceptions and uses of SMTs in learning. These findings provide for SMTs outside of the formal curriculum (Smith, 2017).

(Lim *et al.*, 2014) stated the successful adoption of SMTs in HEIs will depend on many factors. Students, academics and the institutions themselves will all have views and practices that are not necessarily align. Thus, innovative institutions need to understand the critical success factors and the barriers that restrict the implementation of SMTs within the HEI to take advantage of the opportunities offered by SMT's in higher education. There are various forms of social media utilization for learning in college. Characteristics of social media for undergraduate learning (Smith, 2017) are collaborating to create documents online; sharing information online; tracking and managing your academic schedule; building relationships with peers; posting / re-posting media or information found online; creating media to share online; and commenting on media or information found online.

2 METHOD

This research was regarded as quantitative descriptive. This research would reveal the facts more deeply about the practice of social media utilization for accounting learning. The research was done during even semester academic year 2016-2017 and odd-even semester 2017-2018 in Economic Education Study Program of Economics Faculty, Universitas Negeri Semarang. Research respondents were lecturers and students of Economic Education Study Program.

The data collection techniques used was interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Interviews and questionnaires were used to obtain facts and perceptions of lecturers and students on the practice of using social media for economics learning and to expose opinions about the benefits and constraints encountered. Questionnaire method was used to discover the data quantitatively. The use of

social media was measured by using likert scale 5 points, ranging from very often - never, and strongly agree - strongly disagree. Interview method was used to confirm the respondent's answer in the questionnaire. Documentation method was used to observe social media that have been and are being used by lecturers to support accounting class. Social media observed were Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Whatsapp. The data obtained were analysed by using descriptive analysis technique.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Description of Respondent (Lecturer)

Description of respondents (lecturers) in this study appears in Table 2. Description by gender, length of teaching, and teaching subjects. Table 2 shows that most respondents are woman (12 people or 57%). The teaching duration of most lecturers is 6-10 years and 2-5 years, there are 6 people or 67%. The average lecturer teaches the economics courses and the education subjects (economics learning).

3.2 Utilization of Social Media for Economics Learning

Table 3 shows the utilization of social media for economics learning. Lecturer of Economic Education Study Program in FE UNNES believes that social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and what Sapp) can be used in economics learning in universities. This is shown on the result score that shows the number 4,00. Respondents' answers use a scale of 1-5. However, not all lecturers are able to use it.

Social media that is often accessed for economics learning is What Sapp and YouTube. This appears at the highest score of 4, 29 and 3, 90. Lecturers frequently use YouTube for learning and using what Sapp for discussion and communication. While Twitter became a social media platform that is almost never used for learning. The score is only 1, 29. Lecturers quite often use Facebook and Instagram. Scores obtained for Facebook utilization is 2, 95 and Instagram of 2, 19. Lecturers access social media accounts through smartphones and computers (notebooks). YouTube is more frequently accessed through the computer while learning in the classroom. While other social media more accessed through

smartphones. Whatsapp is instant messaging platform that often used at anytime and anywhere. whatsapp is easy to use and more accessible and interactive.

Table 2: Description of respondents (Lecturers).

No.	Description	Total	Percentage
1.	Gender		
	Woman	12	57%
	Man	9	43%
	Total	21	100%
2.	Teaching Experiences		
	Less than 2 years	0	0%
	2 – 5 years	8	38%
	6 – 10 years	8	38%
	More than 10 years	5	24%
	Total	21	100%
3.	Teaching Subject		
	Educational Subject	2	10%
	Non-Educational Subjects	8	38%
	Both	11	52%
	Total	21	100%
4.	Concentration		
	Accounting Education	8	38%
	Office Administration Education	7	33%
	Economic and Cooperation Education	6	29%
	Total	21	100%

Utilization of social media for learning include tasks, discussions, quizzes, learning resources, and playing YouTube videos can see in Table 4. Lecturers used YouTube as learning resources and as publications media of students’ work (see Figure 1). Most lecturers use YouTube during classes in class. YouTube presents many options, both as a source of lecture material and for ice breaking in the classroom. Instagram is also used for publication media of students’ work and students’ task. Forms of YouTube utilization can be seen in Figure 1. Instagram utilization for learning can be seen in Figure 2. Based on researcher observation, Facebook is not utilized for learning for the last two semesters. Some lecturers have taken advantage of Facebook but it has been questionable for now. This is as highlighted by (Ruleman, 2012; Kardoyo *et al.*, 2017). Faculty member and student would rather use whatsapp for speedy communication. They can do anything like sharing files, photos or videos. They argued that whatsapp is a platform that is very easy to use, and it can be used by using either smartphone or computer. They found many features in whatsapp that are more interactive and useful. Table 4 shows detail description of utilization of social media for economics learning.

Table 3: Utilization of social media for economics learning.

No	Statement	Respondent’s answer	Explanation
	social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube) can be used for learning	4,00	Very useable
	having a Facebook account and use it for learning	2,95	Often utilize
	having an Instagram account and use it for learning	2,19	Quite often to take advantage of
	having a Twitter account and use it for learning	1,29	Almost never take advantage of
	using YouTube for learning	3,90	Very often utilize
	using Whatsapp for learning	4,29	Very often utilize

Table 5 also shows that lecturers found some obstacles in using social media for learning. The smoothness of the Internet network (access) becomes a common problem, when they use YouTube as learning media in the classroom. There is a lecturer who considers the employment of social media is very time consuming. It is because the lecturer will open one by one student account when they are sending assignments. Lecturers also assume that interaction with students become meaningless when using social media. Unfamiliar with social media is also a constraint faced by lecturers.

Students’ response to social media use is analysed in both good and positive categories. The students believe that the use of social media is interesting and fun. This is understandable because the students are the largest users group. Students are accustomed to social media. They are very active in using social media than any other age group.

Based on the results of interviews with students, Instagram is the most favourite platform used by students. Although most students state that the reason for using a social media is more likely to make friends. Instagram is currently considered to be the

most attractive social media and presents more interesting features. Beside the photo and video uploading feature, there are also live features on Instagram. These features become trend setter of other social media. Instagram is also regarded as a

must-have account because there are many artists who interact with their fans via Instagram. Furthermore, numerous Instagram accounts used as an online shop media and more attractive than Facebook.

Table 4: Detail utilization of social media for economics learning.

No.	Description	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	Youtube	Whatsapp	Overall
1.	Gender						
	Woman	3,11	2,22	1,11	3,78	4,00	2,84
	Man	2,83	2,17	1,42	4,00	4,50	2,98
2.	Teaching Experiences						
	Less than 2 years						
	2 – 5 years	2,63	2,38	1,13	3,88	4,25	2,85
	6 – 10 years	3,88	2,38	1,63	4,38	4,63	3,38
	More than 10 years	2,00	1,60	1,00	3,20	3,80	2,32
3.	Teaching Subject						
	Educational Subject	3,00	2,00	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,20
	Non-Educational Subjects	3,43	2,14	1,29	4,00	4,71	3,11
	Both	2,67	2,25	1,33	3,67	3,92	2,77
4.	Concentration						
	Accounting Education	3,75	2,88	1,75	4,13	5,00	3,50
	Office Administration Education	1,86	1,43	1,00	3,71	3,86	2,37
	Economic and Cooperation Education	3,17	2,17	1,00	3,83	3,83	2,80

Table 5: Forms, obstacles, and student.

No	Statement	Respondent's answer
1	Utilization form of social media in learning	Tasks, discussions, quizzes, learning resources, Playing YouTube videos, consultation
2	Obstacles faced in the utilization of social media in learning	Less interaction, Internet networking, time consuming, unfamiliar
3	Student response to the use of social media for learning	Good and positive, very interesting and fun, more interactive

Other result shows that students also argue they like to use whatsapp for interaction with lecture or other students. Whatsapp can deliver message to someone immediately and more simple. By using whatsapp group, student can discuss anything or deliver some information. The same finding is also found by (Anissa *et al.*, 2017).

Most of the students think that YouTube is becoming the next and most interesting social media. The video-based platform offers millions interesting videos, for both lectures and other purposes. Furthermore, only few students who have a YouTube channel. This means that only several students upload their work on YouTube. Students are only as users and video viewers on YouTube.

Facebook's social media is becoming increasingly unpopular among college students. Facebook is considered unattractive, old-fashioned, and "the past". Students no longer use Facebook for social networking. They rarely open their accounts. They think that Instagram is more fascinating although actually sometimes Facebook has more interesting features. This may be in accordance with the opinion of researchers that Facebook is now more widely used by adults. Young people do not like it. Social media Twitter is not popular among college students. This is the same as lecturers. The 160 characters (currently expanded) social media platform is not interesting to most students. Only a small number of students are using Twitter.



Figure 1: Utilization of YouTube for publication of student work.

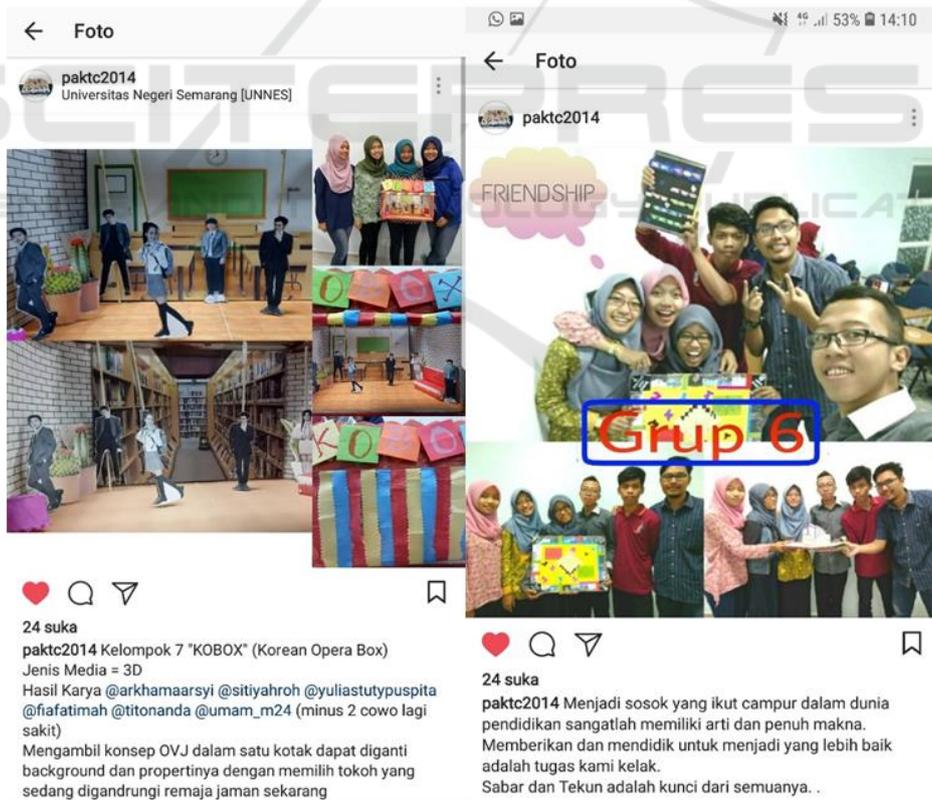


Figure 2: Instagram utilization for publication of class assignments.

The results showed that some lecturers in Economic Education Study Program of FE UNNES have used social media for learning although have not been optimal yet. YouTube and Instagram become the most used platform. While Twitter become social media that is almost never used. This condition is nearly the same as that is experienced by students. Lecturers are able to choose and use social media based on access level by students. The survey also shows that the age group of students becomes the group that most often accesses social media than any other group. (Garcia and Silva, 2017) pointed out that student groups have been able to take the benefits of using social media for their lectures.

Forms of social media utilization for learning are still "limited". The results of this study are still in line with the findings of (Thomas and Thomas, 2012). Lecturers have not used social media greatly, especially YouTube, Instagram and Facebook. The interaction of lecturers and students is not so visible on the results of students' post. For example, after a student uploads a video on YouTube, there is no positive feedback from lecturers or other students. Sometimes lecturers only like and share. Comments given by lecturers will be able to provide positive feedback for students. Especially by subscribing the video, it will increase the spirit of students to learn and do better in the future. Finally, the students just fulfil the obligation of study.

The lecturer also does not have a YouTube account or channel. The writer does not notice the lecturer who has YouTube channel. Lecturers never seem to upload something on YouTube. That is, lecturers only rely on the willingness and ability of students. Though the work of lecturers which is uploaded will also affect the spirit and motivation of students in producing more attractive work. Lecturers should also be able to produce some interesting video as a students' source of learning and interaction media.

The researchers also did not find intensive use of Instagram for learning. Students only post pictures / photos as a class assignment. For example, the task of accounting learning media that utilizes images as a medium of social service by providing words of motivation or advice. There is no visible works of lecturers in similar postings. This will cause the students' negative perceptions of their lecturers. Lecturers are deemed incapable of giving concrete examples. They can only give instructions to the students.

Inadequate utilization of social media due to the ability of lecturers needs to improve. In fact there are lecturers who are not accustomed to Instagram and

YouTube. The use of social media is still considered to be time-consuming activity. Social media is an opportunity as well as a challenge for lecturers to develop lectures to be more attractive, open, fun and meaningful. Students do not really care about the enormous internet quota when accessing social media. This is almost the same as found by (Stainbank and Gurr, 2016) which states that social media access time by students does not interfere the time of study in regular classes.

4 CONCLUSION

The social media utilization for economics learning in Economic Education Study Program of Economic Faculty UNNES is categorized quite often. This means that lecturers have not been able to maximize the benefits of social media to support learning activity in the classroom. Instagram and YouTube are social media platforms that are often used by lecturers and students. Whatsapp is instant messaging application that is often used for discussion and communication between lecturers and students. The social media employment for learning conducted by lecturers in Economic Education Study Program are in the form of task, discussion, quiz, learning resources, and playing YouTube videos. Lecturers found some constraints in the social media employment for learning such as the less interaction, internet network, and time consuming, and unfamiliar. The other result shows that the students give positive responses. It is an opportunity as well as a challenge for lecturers to develop further learning strategies that use social media. Students consider learning be more interesting and fun. Utilization of other instant messaging platforms (telegram, blackberry messenger, or Facebook messenger) can be collaborated with the most popular social media among students, namely Instagram. Lecturers can also develop internet-based learning media through e-learning or mobile learning.

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