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Is social the new smart?

Factors influencing students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes

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Is social the new smart? : Factors influencing students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes

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Abstract:

The versatility and pervasiveness of social media websites in human life have created an opportunity to employ them in several contexts other than the merely social ones. In particular, social media have been being used by students as an additional tool to help with their studies, even when academic institutions usually provide them with educational systems (also known as learning management systems). The prime goal of this paper is to investigate the factors influencing students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes, an inquiry about which insufficient research has been performed to date. In this investigation, an initial framework was proposed, refined and extended in agreement with the qualitative data collected from the interviewee group, which was composed of students from Lund University. The results of the conducted interviews not only confirmed most of our tentative factors but also provided us with unexpected elements that students take into account when deciding whether to use or not to use social media with academic intentions. The final outcome is a simple framework which explains the phenomenon within its context and which, as a side effect, provides some insights into what aspects to consider when developing educational systems targeting students.

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1 Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of our research area (social media usage for academic purposes), and it continues to describe why this topic is relevant to the information systems field, what is the origin of the research question and what is the fundamental purpose.

1.1 Background

Educational organizations and the learning process, in general, have been highly salient in every culture since the commencement of modern civilization (Grendler, 2004). At present, such learning is being aided by technology and information systems. For example, learning management systems (LMS) were specifically designed to implement an infrastructure that took care of all the activities related to the educational process (Watson & Watson, 2007) and, since they are in charge of the distribution of course academic content (among other tasks), students are naturally encouraged to use the LMS of their respective institution (as opposed to external LMS).

On the other hand, Web 2.0 tools, in general, and social media applications, in particular, have been invading every activity of contemporaneous society. Social media has become a ubiquitous phenomenon in recent years, and some surveys report a penetration as high as 84% among teenagers in the United States (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). As a matter of fact, social media is already affecting and permeating many aspects of human society, ranging from personal development to professional or academic growth, social media have proven itself to be ubiquitous when it comes to potential use cases. For instance: 1- in the area of collaborative projects, wiki pages are helping teams to direct collective effort efficiently and to obtain a better result than if each of their participants worked in an isolated way. 2- in the business area, blogs (the social media replacement for personal web pages) are helpful for enterprises which want to keep customers and employees up to date with the latest news about them. 3- for the general public, content communities (such as Youtube) and social networks (such as Facebook) are an example of how social media can be employed to syndicate information that delivers value to their users. 4- in the entertainment industry, virtual games worlds and virtual social worlds are also generating new possibilities of interaction for their users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

In the specific case of education, it has been found that, in the United States, 41% of college students use social media to “study or work on class assignments” (Caraher, & Braselman, 2010). Furthermore, 64% of the same sample reported using social media to keep in touch with classmates and to coordinate study or work sessions for their course assignments. Nonetheless, since social media was clearly not created with educational purposes in mind, we find it interesting to investigate what factors influence students to use it for educational purposes. By understanding the factors that affect student decision to use social media for academic purposes, universities and teachers can identify better communication channels and learning methods to increase the richness

of educational experience. Moreover, learning management systems vendors can develop a better understanding about students needs and preferences based on the identified factors. In fact, it is possible to state that the characteristics showed by social media applications are overlapping some of the features typical of traditional learning management systems (Wang, Woo, Quek, Yang, & Liu, 2012).

Up until now, academic literature provides a general understanding of why and how this is happening, as well as what are the consequences of the adoption of social media by the general public (Salehan, Kim & Kim, 2017). However, the literature has focused so far on explaining the general usage of social media, rather than inquiring into particular niche cases. This created an opportunity to investigate the motivations behind social media adoption in environments where it was not expected. An example of such environments is the educational one, where academic institutions already provide students with information systems specifically designed to support learning (also known as learning management systems) and where social media applications were not supposed to be necessary.

Taking these circumstances into account, it is our interest to investigate the factors impacting the student's decision to use social media to support their learning process and their academic usage of it.

1.2 Problem area

As previously mentioned, social media is permeating many aspects of human activities. For example, people are already using social media to improve their personal and professional performance (Salehan et al., 2017) and there is evidence that, when used for learning purposes, social media increases engagement and academic performance among students (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013; Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011). In fact, and according to Tess (2013) and Garrigos-Simon et al. (2015), the advantages of the usage of social media websites (such as Facebook and Twitter) in enhancing student learning experience and outcomes are well researched and documented. Although a wide body of literature discusses what the motivations of students for academic usage of social media are, most of the literature is based on quantitative studies that support theory testing, not theory building. Moreover, the research discourse of academic usage of social media is significantly limited (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014), and focused mainly on Facebook (Junco, Heiberger & Loken, 2011; Mbodila, Ndebele & Muhandji, 2014; Han, Volkova & Corley, 2016). Therefore, we argue that there is an interesting opportunity to research academic usage of social media in a qualitative manner to increase our understanding, while considering other social media applications such as WhatsApp and Google Docs. This phenomenon becomes even more interesting when it is taken into account that many universities already provide students with learning management systems (Machado & Tao, 2007), which are supposed to be thoroughly designed to support education, but yet, students complement their learning experience with social media. By understanding the factors impacting the academic usage of social media, institutions, universities, and teachers can better tailor the learning experience for the students, establish new

communication channels and develop a rich understanding of students learning preferences and hence build a richer academic atmosphere.

“Drawing from best practices in both online and face-to-face methods, blended learning is on the rise at colleges and universities as the number of digital learning platforms and ways to leverage them for educational purposes continues to expand.” (Becker et al., 2017)

1.3 Research question

Based on the previous background and problem area, we pose the following research question:

- What are the factors influencing the decision of students to use social media for academic purposes?

1.4 Purpose

The intended consequences of this thesis are to examine the factors that are leading students to utilize social media in their academic context on their initiative (as opposed to being an academic requirement). We believe that, by understanding the reasons why students voluntarily participate in social media applications for academic purposes, contribute to the design and development of more engaging educational systems and help educational institutions and teachers to better understand the potential of social media for academic purposes. Therefore, the main product of this thesis is expected to be a list of factors influencing students decision to use social media for academic purposes. As a side effect, the result of this study is supposed to be used by software developers or academic institutions as a list of guidelines or recommendations to identify the weaknesses of traditional learning management systems about their goal of engaging the academic community.

Our study took this particular case as a phenomenon and employed current literature as a lens to identify several factors impacting the decision of students to make academic usage of social media. Eventually, this led us to the endeavor of proposing a theoretical framework which explains why students opt to use social media as a tool to support their learning.

1.5 Delimitations

Inside the boundaries of this study, the concept of social media has been given a broad definition. Specifically, this research has embraced the definition suggested by Esteve Del Valle, Gruzd, Haythornthwaite, Paulin and Gilbert (2017), who stated that social media is every service whose foundation is the World Wide Web, exhibits web 2.0 capabilities and allows users to generate content. Therefore, websites offering services such as blogging, collaborative document writing or social networking are all considered social media in the context of this thesis.

Additionally, this study concentrated on the topic of social media usage from the students' perspective instead of the one experienced by professors and other university staff. Moreover, Ph.D. students were excluded in this study due to their more research-focused and job-like academic programs. Lastly, due to time and budget constraints, it was decided that only students from Lund University were going to be taken into consideration as a source of information.

2 Literature review

This section presents the theoretical foundation upon which our research framework was built. It answers the question of “what is social media?” in the context of this thesis and shows several concepts found in the literature regarding our research question. In Figure 2.1, the IS body of knowledge was depicted as a raining-knowledge cloud, whose drops are collected and filtered through an analysis funnel. The result of such analysis was our initial research framework, which was placed at the end of this chapter in the form of a summary of the main factors shaping the core of our investigation: utilitarian motivations, hedonic motivations, social motivations, university/teacher support and technology characteristics.

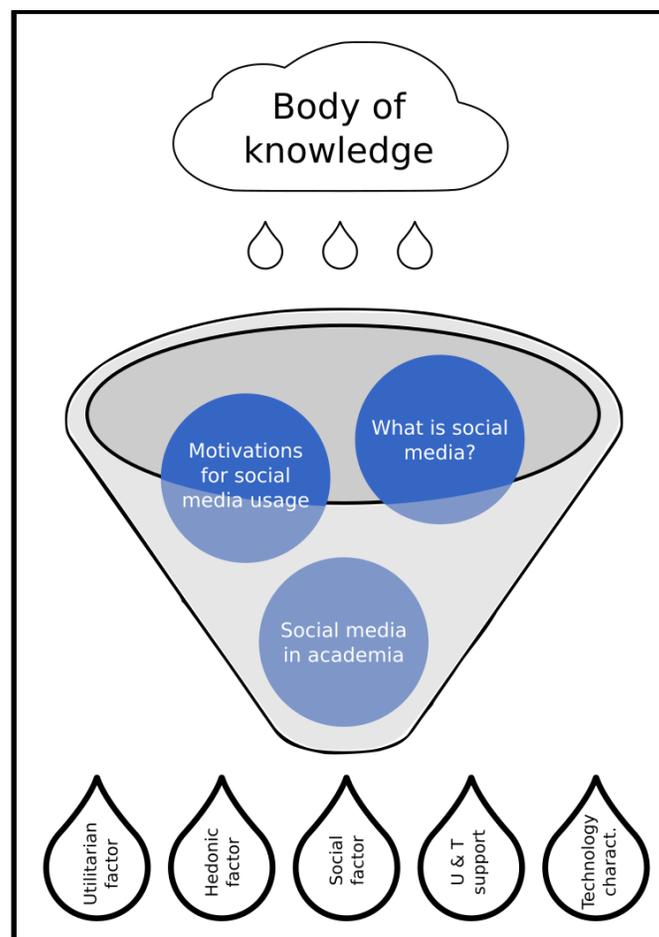


Figure 2.1: Diagram depicting the literature review workflow.

2.1 Social Media (SM)

In this thesis, the definition of social media is the one suggested by Esteve Del Valle et al. (2017, p. 164), which states that social media is “any website or web-based service that includes web 2.0 characteristics and contains some aspect of user-generated content.” However, to complement the

latter broad interpretation, it has also been taken into account the four commonalities (or shared features) found in several literature definitions of social media by (Obar & Wildman, 2015):

- Social media are based on the Internet and the Web 2.0 philosophy.
- Social media rely on the content generated by their participants (in preference to the one generated by a sponsor organization).
- Social media require their users (individuals and groups) to create a profile.
- Social media applications encourage the emergence of networks by allowing their participants to connect with each other.

Therefore, the concept of social media embraces not only the traditional social networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) but also collaborative tools (such as Google Drive and Google Docs) and other types of similar applications, which perfectly comply with the conditions to be deemed as “social.” Furthermore, the diversity of applications that can be considered “social media” is what motivated White (2014) to classify them in seven categories (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Taxonomy of social media. Source: (White, 2014)

Purpose of social media	Description	Example
1- Social connections	Staying in contact with family and friends	https://www.facebook.com/
2- Multimedia sharing	Sharing pictures or videos online	https://www.youtube.com/
3- Professional	Creating connections between professionals	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/
4- Informational	Providing answers to general everyday problems	http://www.diychatroom.com/
5- Educational	Facilitating collaboration among students and teachers	https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/
6- Hobbies	Connecting people with shared interests	http://www.ohmybloom.com/
7- Academic	Establishing connections among researchers	https://www.academia.edu/

Nevertheless, these seven types of social media are not mutually exclusive and, as pointed out by Boyd & Ellison (2007), many current social media applications provide the generic functions of sharing information, establishing connections and uploading content.

2.2 General motivations for using social media

Regarding the motivations for the usage of social media, Salehan et al. (2017) found in the literature three main categories of reasons why people use social media on a regular basis: 1- content gratifications, 2- process gratifications and 3- social gratifications. The first one refers to the value that users obtain by consuming interesting information from the social media (Cutler & Danowski, 1980). The second one is about the enjoyment of using the Internet in itself (for example, the pleasure of browsing the web) (Swanson, 1992). Finally, the last one represents the rewards that people obtain when they interact with others (Stafford, Stafford & Schkade, 2004).

In relation to content gratifications, Salehan et al. (2017) also identified the following subcategories: 1- utilitarian gratifications (or when the user employs social media to complete tasks) and 2- hedonic gratifications (i.e. when the objective of using social media is merely to generate pleasure). However, this does not mean that a person cannot use social media for both purposes since they can perfectly coexist. For example, a person might use Facebook at work to collaborate with their colleagues or to arrange meetings and, at the same time, employ Facebook to find entertaining videos.

Even though there is no explicit classification for process gratifications in the literature, it is possible to infer two taxonomies from the description proposed by (Cutler & Danowski, 1980): 1- tension avoidance motivations and 2- sensory stimulation motivations. Some examples of activities driven by process gratifications are the usage of television for political information consumption without any desire to actually engage in politics (Cutler & Danowski, 1980) and the usage of mobile phones as a mean to occupy oneself (i.e. kill time) (Song, Larose, Eastin & Lin, 2004).

On the other hand, social gratifications for using social media can also be divided into two main subcategories: 1- vertical social motivations and 2- horizontal social motivations (Salehan et al., 2017). The former is about keeping strong connections with people who are already acquaintances to the social media user (for instance, family and friends). The latter refers to the usage of social media to create new connections and to get to know new people with shared interests (i.e. expanding the network). As it was the case with content gratifications, both types of social gratifications can be used at the same time, since they are not mutually exclusive. However, depending on the nature of the social media application, it might be the user is encouraged by one social motivation over the other. For example, among Facebook-like social media, vertical motivations are noted to be more frequently present than horizontal motivations (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

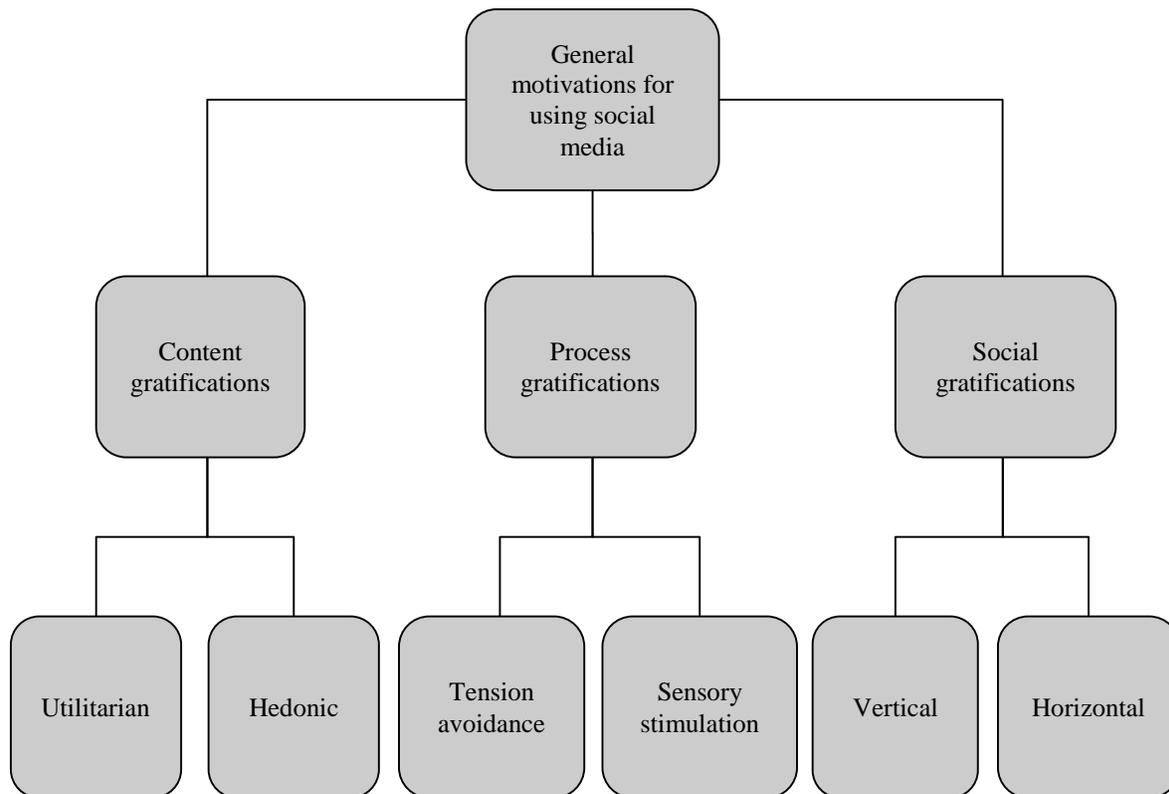


Figure 2.2: General motivations for using social media. Source: (Salehan et al., 2017)

On the question: how do people use social media? There are two main categories of activities that a social media user can perform, according to (Salehan et al., 2017): 1- sharing and 2- collaborating. The first one refers to the phenomenon of people distributing information to make it reachable to others (Olorunniwo & Li, 2010). Uploading a video to Youtube or posting a comment in Facebook are both examples of information sharing. On the other hand, collaboration occurs when a group of users has the disposition to work together towards the achievement of a common goal (Seonghee & Boryung, 2008). For instance, two or more people writing on the same document is a typical case of social-media-based collaborative behavior (Blau & Caspi, 2009). Nonetheless, Salehan et al. (2017) also points out that, even though sharing and collaboration are different activities, they are mutually reliant and, in some cases, one leads to the other.

2.3 Social media in academia

Even though there is evidence that general use of electronic media negatively affects the academic performance of students (Jacobsen & Forste, 2011), it has also been found that, when used for learning purposes, social media has a positive impact on students' academic outcome (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013). One of the reasons for this phenomenon is that social media usually encourages students to interact and to improve their relationships while strengthening their collaborative skills and increasing their motivation to learn (Salehan et al., 2017). For example, if a student has a problem, he/she can make it publicly known on a social media tool and obtain feedback from other users (Salehan et al., 2017). Eventually, such student might be able to solve the problem in less time than if he/she had done it by himself/herself. Moreover, in the case of students with an

introverted personality, social media helps them to reduce or eliminate social anxiety when certain activities, such as giving an opinion or asking a question, are required. Moreover, if it is also taken into account that many social media applications are freely available, then there is little surprise as to why they are intruding on the market of institutional learning management systems (Brown, 2010).

A number of frameworks have been developed to understand the motivations/factors of social media usage by students. For example, Al-Zedjali, Al-Harrasi & Al-Badi (2014) proposed a conceptual framework that includes (i) *student-related factors* (such as social influence, perceived ease of use or perceived enjoyment), (ii) *institution-related factors* (such as instructor influence or institution regulations), (iii) *SNS-related factors* (such as attractiveness or cost-free status) and (iv) *discipline-related factors* (such as course discipline). On the other hand, Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) suggested an engagement framework that embraces additional elements: (i) *institutions* (policy or support), (ii) *faculty* (support or encouragement/involvement/relationship), (iii) *technology* (external or internal), (iv) *peers* (involvement/relationship/responsiveness/culture), (v) *content* (relevance/resourcefulness), (vi) *privacy* (relationship/content) and (vii) *interest* (social interest/academic interest). Subsequently, Alhazmi, Rahman & Zafar (2014) proposed a more parsimonious version of the model, including only the following factors: institutional, technological, faculty and peers. The study conducted by Han, Volkova & Corley (2016) about social media usage among PhD students identified three components: (i) *personal purposes* (such as sharing academic achievements, updates and thoughts), (ii) *social purposes* (such as making connections and engaging with students) and (iii) *general purposes* (such as seeking academic studies and keeping up to date). Salehan et al. (2017) introduced the MPP (motivation-participation-performance) framework to study the motivations leading to participation in social media and what is the impact on the performance. In particular, they identified social, hedonic and utilitarian motivations as the main drivers behind participation in social media.

However, despite the existence of these frameworks, most of the research has concentrated its efforts on a specific academic level such as graduate students (George & Dellasega, 2011; Han et al., 2016) alone or undergraduate students (Asemah & Edegoh, 2013) alone. The consequence of this is that the findings have generalizability issues and, therefore, they limit our understanding of the factors affecting students' decision to use social media in the academic environment. Not only has the unit of analysis been limited and constrained to a specific taxonomy, but also most of the research has been quantitative in nature (Junco et al., 2011; Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013; Han et al., 2016; Guto, 2017; Salehan et al., 2017), thus promoting theory testing, rather than theory building (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Additionally, most of previous research provided us with a bounded view by examining only the factors that motivate students to use social media on the individual level (ignoring organizational and societal level) (Lau, 2016) or by only investigating how students use social media to collaborate and to share without considering the factors (Bosch, 2009). Furthermore, most of the research has centered on Facebook and Twitter. Thus the role of other types of social media such as WhatsApp, Telegram or Google Docs has been disregarded (Junco, Heiberger & Loken, 2011; Shah, Subramanian, Rouis & Limayem, 2012). Taking into account

these facts, we discovered that there was a knowledge gap in respect to what factors influence students decision to use social media for academic purposes and which we aspired to fill.

By borrowing Salehan et al. (2017) motivation concepts (*social motivations, hedonic motivations, and utilitarian motivations*), we synthesized similar aspects from several frameworks under the single umbrella term of “factors.” Moreover, we recycled the “*technology characteristics*” and “*university/teacher support*” ideas from (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014; Al-Zedjali et al., 2014) in our literature review and used them as two of our primary factors. The result of this process was a condensed research framework of five main factors, which were used as the lens to analyze and research additional literature sources (as will be illustrated in the following section of this chapter).

2.4 Proposed research framework

This section shows the outcome of importing concepts from a vast body of literature and relating them to the five main factors that shape the theoretical backbone of our study. In the end, we proposed a unified framework aiming at comprehensively explaining the phenomenon of academic usage of social media by tertiary education students.

As previously mentioned, we imported three concepts from the MPP model into our research framework. Specifically, we imported the following three factors: 1- *utilitarian motivations*, 2- *hedonic motivations* and 3- *social motivations*. To formalize the term “motivations,” we resorted to the definition proposed by Bolar (2009) as follows: “*a motivation is a collection of traits to elicit, control and sustain behavior required to achieve a certain need or purpose.*” Moreover, we identified two additional factors from the literature: 4- *technology characteristics* and 5- *university/teacher support*.

2.4.1 Utilitarian motivations factor

Salehan et al. (2017) describe *utilitarian users* as goal-oriented users and decision-effective users who employ social media for strictly beneficial purposes, such as job searching, collaboration or self-marketing. Perhaps unsurprisingly, utilitarian motives are said to be one of the key drivers for students to adopt social media in their academic activities. In general, students use social media to solve exams together, to produce knowledge by discussion and reflection, to collect research data from the crowd (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Guto, 2017), to broadcast and to market academic research, to keep up with state-of-the-art academic research (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Han, Volkova & Corley, 2016), to self-market and to build brand, to look for jobs (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvestre, 2011; Nández & Borrego, 2013), to get relevant and resourceful content (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014), to get course material, syllabus and test scores (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013), to get a personalized learning experience (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013), to communicate and to interact with others (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Al-Zedjali et al., 2014).

From a participation perspective, social media applications promote knowledge flow, since they make it easy for people to share and find the required information quickly and accurately (Kim,

Kim & Nam, 2010). Also, the personal productivity of students is increased with social media as it allows them to share documents, to remotely discuss topics on chat, to share screenshots and to perform peer reviews (Kim et al., 2010). Furthermore, acquainted students, as social media users, can deepen their social life, to keep up-to-date with course announcements and to easily support each other (Salehan et al., 2017). Therefore, we concluded that academic participation could be intertwined with utilitarian factors.

The terms “**engagement**,” “students engagement,” and “academic engagement” are used interchangeably in this thesis. According to Alhazmi et al. (2014), engagement can be defined as “*the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience.*” Alhazmi et al. (2014) argue that social media can increase both 1- the behavioral engagement by making students participate with enthusiasm and 2- the emotional engagement by making the learning experience interesting and enjoying. Furthermore, Moquin (2015) describes how student affairs workers use social media to increase the engagement of students. In fact, a wide body of literature supports the notion that social media encourages the engagement of students (Junco et al., 2011; Chen & Bryer, 2012; Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013; Mbodila et al., 2014; Hassell & Sukalich, 2015; Han et al., 2016).

Sharing is another feature of social media that is well grounded in the literature. According to Al-Zedjali et al. (2014) and Guto (2017), students favor Facebook as it allows them to communicate and share documents. (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Nández & Borrego, 2013; Mingle & Adams, 2015) confirm this fact and adds that it also enables students to share ideas easily.

Social media tools such as Google Docs and Dropbox offer students the ability to create documents and collaborate on them (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Mbodila et al., 2014). Social media contribute to the learning experience by providing discussion wikis and feedback (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013; Guto, 2017). They also enable introvert students to collaborate (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013) easily and to solve examinations together (Mingle & Adams, 2015; Guto, 2017). Furthermore, they generate a more functional **collaboration** environment by allowing notifications and mentions (something that might not be available in traditional learning management systems) (Chen & Bryer, 2012).

Since social media allow information sharing, then the opposite task “**information consumption**” is also entitled to be among the list of activities that can be accomplished with it. For example, it is common for people to use social media to find captivating news or to consume multimedia content (Salehan et al., 2017). Interestingly, people consider the Internet to be as reliable as television or radio when it comes to information sourcing (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000).

2.4.2 Hedonic motivations factor

According to Salehan et al. (2017), hedonic users are people who are utilizing social media “just for fun.” In other words, the goal of their usage is merely for enjoyment and happiness. Indeed, it is interesting to find that hedonic motives play a role in motivating students to use social media for

academic purposes. Silius et al. (2010) argues that students use social media to combine study and leisure time because students can hold discussions with their colleagues on Facebook while also having the opportunity to look for pleasure. Hassell & Sukalich (2015) supported this idea by mentioning that students use Facebook to diverge from boring and challenging tasks to “take a break.” On the other hand, Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) states that social media changes the connection between the student and the teacher from a formal and rigid relationship to a more enjoyable and informal one. That is to say; social media websites bring together formal and informal learning (Chen & Bryer, 2012).

2.4.3 Social motivations factor

According to Salehan et al. (2017), *social users* are incentivized to build and enhance ties and connections with others when social media allows them to meet new people, develop their personal identity and acquire a sense of belonging. The literature divides social motives into horizontal and vertical ones (Salehan et al., 2017). Social horizontal motivations represent the natural desire of widening the spectrum of social connections by developing new relationships with new people (usually with similar interests, backgrounds and/or objectives). On the other hand, vertical social motivations refer to the urge of enhancing and maintaining existing social connections.

In general, the literature supports the fact that **vertical social motivations** are incentives to social media usage as indicated by (Salehan et al., 2017). Enhancing relationships with colleagues is a reason found by Al-Rahmi & Othman (2013), Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) and Rosli et al. (2016), while maintaining contacts was defended by (Shah et al., 2012; Nández & Borrego, 2013; Han et al., 2016). Moreover, Treem & Leonardi (2012) argued that social media “*improve existing associations*”.

Likewise, previous research suggests that **horizontal social motivations** do play a role in explaining the usage of social media. According to Shah et al. (2012), “Facebook increases the number and quality of connections in undergraduate students” and social media helps students to build new contacts, develop new relations and expand their friendship boundaries (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014; Han et al., 2016; Rosli et al., 2016). Furthermore, Treem & Leonardi (2012) argue that social media helps to start new associations.

On the other hand, literature has also emphasized the importance of **social influence** as a key factor to explain social media usage in academic environments. Rosli et al. (2016) have concluded that social media usage by students is a result of peripheral stimulation from both friends and the university environment. The research carried out by Mingle & Adams (2015) on college students found out that one of the main reasons for social media usage (namely, WhatsApp and Facebook) is to “follow the crowd” and to be compatible with what everybody else is using. Furthermore, the study conducted by Nández & Borrego (2013) about the users of the web portal academia.edu and twelve Catalan universities also indicated that the rationale “because other researchers are there” is one of the motivations for social media usage. This discussion led us to conclude that social influence is indeed a key factor in elucidating the phenomenon of social media usage.

Since our research question is related to the factors affecting academic usage of social media rather than its academic effects, we deliberately excluded the performance dimension encompassed by the MPP (Salehan et al., 2017). Specifically, we dismissed “Personal performance” and “Profession/Job performance” during the design of our framework, because we considered those variables resided outside the scope of our investigation.

2.4.4 University/teacher support factor

According to Alhazmi, Rahman & Zafar (2014) and Rosli et al. (2016), the concept of organization support (i.e. university support) is one of the factors for social media usage in academic settings. This idea was complemented by Chen & Bryer (2012) and Nández & Borrego (2013) when they pointed out that many of the individuals of their research complained about the lack of institutional support for social media usage. Furthermore, Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) proposed a social media engagement model for students, which contained professor usage as one of the factors influencing the employment of social media by students. Their findings indicate that the role of both faculties and universities in encouraging social media participation cannot be overlooked. For example, by posting Facebook updates or tweeting about courses, a faculty can drive the academic usage of social media. Moreover, Oppici, Basso & De Martin (2014) argue that universities can use social media as a channel to counsel students and as a platform to broadcast news. Finally, Lovari & Giglietto (2012) state that social media can be used as an interaction mechanism between university and students.

If a university, institution or faculty encourage students to take part in social-media-aided learning by, for example, fostering discussions in Facebook groups or polling pupils about courses, then the interest of students to participate in social media might increase (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Nández & Borrego, 2013; Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014).

2.4.5 Technology characteristics factor

Technology characteristics are one of the key factors affecting academic usage of social media. Some features include: mobility and the ability to get feedback easily (Mbodila et al., 2014; Rosli et al., 2016), higher user-friendliness compared to traditional LMS (Silius et al., 2010 ;Osatuyi & Passerini, 2016), higher flexibility compared to rigid LMS (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Rosli et al., 2016), higher familiarity (Silius et al., 2010; Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014; Mingle & Adams, 2015; Rosli et al., 2016), personalization and interactiveness of learning (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) and the cost-free status (Silius et al., 2010; Al-Zedjali, Al-Harrasi & Al-Badi, 2014). All the characteristics above make technology an important factor to consider when investigating the phenomenon of social media usage in academia.

Technology characteristics play an essential role in the acceptance or the rejection of social media by students (Silius et al., 2010; Chen & Bryer, 2012; Mbodila et al., 2014; Rosli et al., 2016). Depending on the usability and fit of the technology in question, people will be more or less motivated to adopt it. Indeed, a myriad of technology acceptance theories have been developed in

the IS literature supporting this notion. Some of the most representative examples are the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh & Bala, 2008) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

2.4.6 Summary

Table 2.2: Summary of factors influencing student usage of social media

Factor	Sub-Factors	Examples	Supporting literature
University / teacher support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication ● Broadcasting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fostering Facebook discussions ● Polling course evaluations ● Answering students' inquiries from Facebook accounts ● Twitter as news channel ● Interaction dialogs with students 	(Rosli et al. , 2016) (Chen & Bryer, 2012) (Nández & Borrego, 2013) (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) (Oppici et al., 2014) (Lovari & Giglietto, 2012)
Technology characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ease of use (Familiarity) ● Flexibility (Customizability) ● Convenience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mobility ● Ability to get feedback easily ● Funny and friendly usage compared to traditional LMS ● Flexibility compared to rigid LMS ● Ease of use and familiarity ● Personalized and interactive learning ● Free-of-charge feature 	(Mbodila et al., 2014) (Silius et al., 2010) (Osatuyi & Passerini, 2016) (Chen & Bryer, 2012) (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) (Mingle & Adams, 2015) (Rosli et al., 2016) (Al-Zedjali et al., 2014)
Utilitarian motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration ● Sharing ● Engagement ● Information consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solve exams together ● Discussion and reflection ● Collecting research data from the crowd ● Broadcasting and marketing academic research ● Keeping up with academic research state of art ● Self-marketing and brand building ● Looking for jobs ● Getting relevant and resourceful content 	(Guto, 2017) (Nández & Borrego, 2013) (Han et al., 2016) (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013) (Chen & Bryer, 2012) (Al-Zedjali et al., 2014) (Alhazmi et al., 2014) (Moquin, 2015) (Junco et al. , 2011) (Chen & Bryer, 2012) (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013) (Mbodila et al., 2014)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Getting course material, syllabus and test scores ● Communicating and interacting with others 	<p>(Hassell & Sukalich, 2015) (Han et al., 2016) (Al-Zedjali et al., 2014) (Guto, 2017) (Mingle & Adams, 2015) (Kietzmann et al., 2011)</p>
Hedonic motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Combining study and leisure time ● Blending informal with formal learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Converting formal teaching relation to informal 	<p>(Silius et al., 2010) (Hassell & Sukalich, 2015) (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) (Chen & Bryer, 2012)</p>
Social motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social influence ● Vertical social motivations ● Horizontal social motivations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining relations with colleagues ● Expanding connections pool 	<p>(Rosli et al. , 2016) (Mingle & Adams, 2015) (Nández & Borrego, 2013) (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013) (Alhazmi & Rahman, 2014) (Han et al., 2016) (Shah et al., 2012) (Treem & Leonardi, 2012)</p>

3 Methodology

In this section, we introduce the methodology followed by our investigation. We begin with the description of the data collection process (interview conducting), then we continue with the analysis while pondering over quality issues and finally we provide the reader with an examination of several research ethical considerations as well as a short discussion about reliability and validity in the context of our thesis. The seven stages mainly drive the roadmap of this chapter for qualitative interviews journey introduced by (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.1 Research strategy and research paradigm

Since the purpose of this thesis is to investigate what factors impact the academic usage of social media by students, a qualitative approach would be suitable as it would allow us to examine this behavioral phenomenon in its natural context and to understand how students act in this highly contextual domain (Recker, 2013). We believe that qualitative methods might shed some light on the dilemma since this kind of methodology is appropriate when the boundaries of the phenomenon and the context are not completely clear and aim to develop a greater understanding (Recker, 2013). Additionally, a qualitative method would complement the vast amount of existing quantitative research (which was evidently focused on theory testing opposed to theory building as most of the literature indicates). Furthermore, by using a qualitative method, we considered that we would be able to get a holistic view of the phenomenon and to extract additional findings, which were not covered by quantitative methods (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Our choice of a qualitative and interpretive approach is motivated by the aim of exploring a subjective explanation of the context and also by the intention of understanding the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Furthermore, in this thesis, we believe that the phenomenon of social media usage for academic purposes constitutes an example of social order and that it should be investigated from the subjective perspectives of the students (as main participants). As a consequence, interpretivism was selected as the main research paradigm of this study, thus discarding radical structuralism, radical humanism, and functionalism (see Figure 3.1).

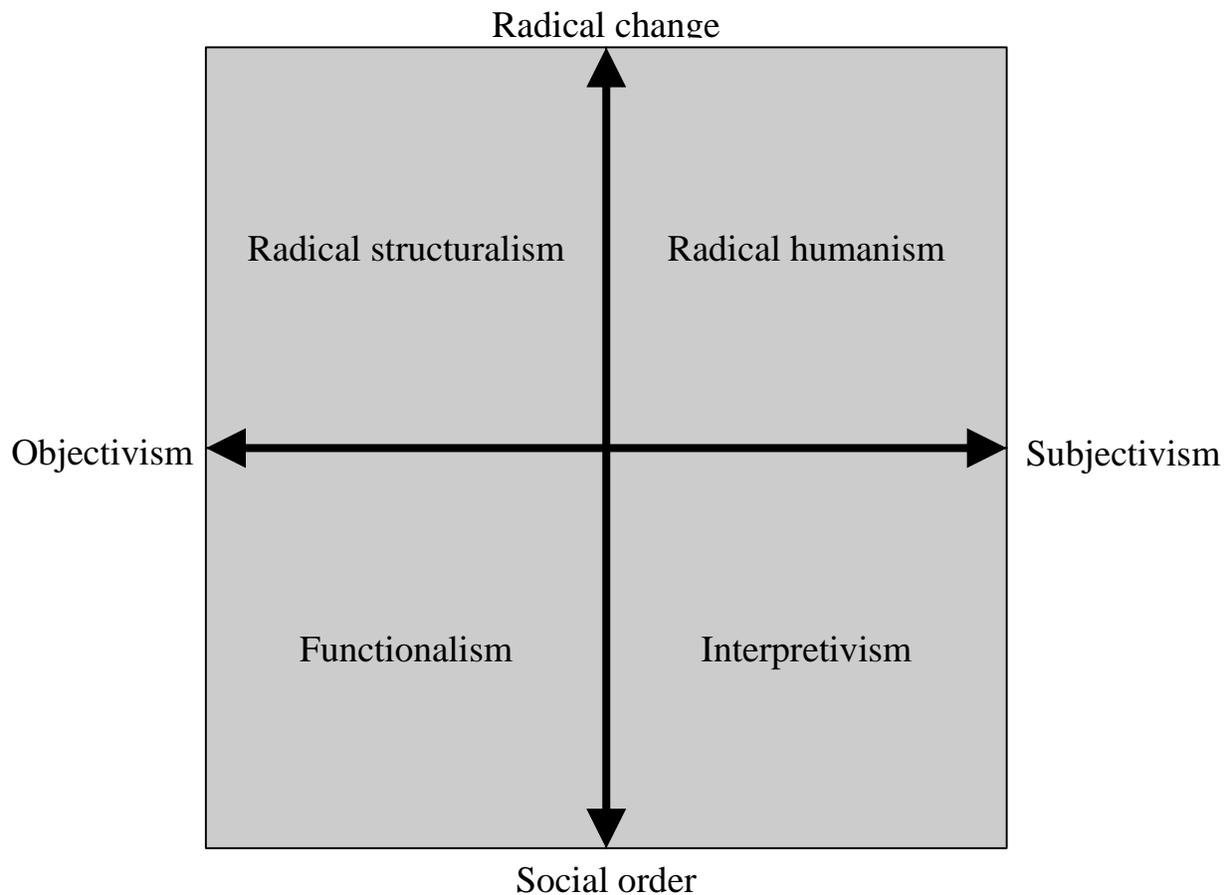


Figure 3.1: Framework to select research paradigm. Source: (Bhattacharjee, 2012)

It is appropriate to point out that this qualitative study contributes to the body of knowledge by giving new insights into what motivates students to use social media in their academic contexts. However, we acknowledge that, due to the highly contextualized nature of this study, generalization (or external validity) might be difficult to achieve. This has already been identified as a weakness of qualitative research in the past (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) and, therefore, we suggest that a careful analysis is performed by third-parties, before any attempt to apply this thesis' findings to external cases. To facilitate the understanding of our research process, we introduce the seven stage of the interview journey suggested by (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.2 Seven stages of qualitative interviews

The interview journey introduced by Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) advice that qualitative interviews should be performed in the following seven steps:

1. Thematising: consists of specifying the purpose of the research and describing the topic concepts before conducting the interviews.(Section 3.3 and Chapter 2).
2. Designing: consists of planning the design of the study to obtain the required knowledge, the main output here is the interview guide. (Section 3.4)

3. **Interviewing:** consists of conducting the interview based on the interview guide, while reviewing the interviews continuously to improve the subsequent interviews. Informants selection step is included here too. (Section 3.5)
4. **Transcribing:** consists of converting the speech interview to a text, to prepare the data for analysis.(Section 3.6.1).
5. **Analyzing:** consists of deciding which of methods of analysis are appropriate and coding. (Section 3.6.2)
6. **Verifying:** ensuring the scientific generalizability, reliability, and validity. (Section 3.7 and 3.8)
7. **Reporting:** Communicating the findings of the study applied and producing a readable product. (Chapters 4,5 and 6).



Figure 3.2: The interview path, according to (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009)

3.3 Thematizing of study

According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), thematizing is needed to establish the thematic basis for the conducted research to set the right means for data collection and analysis. Thus, a significant part of the thesis work has been already done before the interviewing phase where we formulated our research question and clarified the theme to be studied (Ibid). As a part of this step, researchers should be familiar with the topic as much as possible. This is done in the literature review step in chapter 2, we examined a vast body of academic literature and research, to discuss how students use social media, what methodologies were used, what models and frameworks exist, and what are the research gaps. The theoretical standpoints were specified in Table 2.2, and they served as a guide to direct our interview questions and as a basis of coding. Moreover, this made us more knowledgeable in the topic and able to ask better probing and follow-up questions to the interviewees.

3.4 Designing

The theoretical framework inspired the design of the interview guide we developed in Chapter 2, Table 2.2. We used the theoretical categories to formulate interview; this is illustrated in Appendix 3. To construct our interview guide, we followed the recommendations proposed by (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012):

Research should guide interview questions: 18 interview questions have been formulated based on the theoretical research framework we developed in in chapter 2. In this way, we guarantee that we are asking meaningful interview questions that are aligned with our research. The open-ended questions aim at confirming/refuting introduced propositions as well as obtaining valuable insights from the interviewee.

Using a script at the beginning and the end of the interview: at the beginning of each interview process, we introduced ourselves to the participants, we stated the purpose of our investigation, thanked the informants for their time and we pledged to confidentiality and research ethics. We wrote down demographics of the interviewees and information about the interviewer, interview location and time as illustrated in Table 2. At the end of the interview, we thanked the interviewees again for their time and informed of the possibility of further communication in case we need it.

Questions should be open-ended and expansive: to avoid binary (yes/no) answers, we followed Jacob & Furgerson (2012) advice by asking big, opened ended and expansive questions as to guarantee simple and direct questions, while still giving the interviewee the possibility to elaborate more in different directions and to explore uncovered aspects of the phenomenon.

Using warm-up questions to facilitate the interview: to warm up the interview and to build trust with the interviewee, we ordered our questions from the easiest to the most difficult ones as suggested by (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). This was achieved by asking some easy warm up questions at the beginning before diving into the more complicated questions.

Using prompts and on-spot questions: for each interview question, we identified a set of related keywords extracted from the literature. These keywords helped as a directing tool for our interview and as a mechanism to generate and prompt follow-up questions during the interview without losing the context. The generic way in which we designed our interview questions and the prompts we identified allowed us to ask any emergent question that we might have regarded as important during the interview.

Managing interview time: in order to not lose participants interest nor make them tired, we limited the number of interview questions to 18. This considering that each question would take 1 to 2 minutes. Our interview time goal is 30 minutes (including start and end scripts).

Practicing and reflecting on the interview: we passed the interview question to colleagues so that they acted as unbiased judges and we used their feedback to improve and further clarify our interview questions. Even more, we have done a pilot interview, which was short because we discovered that some questions were close-ended in nature, identified vague questions which could be misinterpreted in the future interviews, and irrelevant questions. The pilot interview proved very useful in improving both the interview guide and our interviewing style.

Consulting School Institutional Research Board (IRB): Refers to the fact that research ethics and confidentiality must be considered, we comply to this by creating an *Interview contest form*. It is a form used to state the following clearly:

- How the collected data will be treated (record and transcription)
- Offer the possibility of asking for amendments
- Who are the analyzers of the transcription
- The fact that we will publish the transcript anonymously

- The fact that recording will be kept.

Such form was signed by both the interviewee and the interviewer. These steps resulted in our final interview guide as presented in Appendix 3.

3.5 Selection of informants and interviewing

3.5.1 Selection of informants

We believed that the proper choice of information sources is critical to obtain accurate findings and conclusions. Therefore, we decided to follow the guidelines proposed by Tremblay (1957) regarding the selection of informants, so that the process was scientifically guided and grounded. Here we summarize the principles that we applied:

Role of students: the role of students in the society exposes them to the investigated phenomenon and, in that way, we ensured that the required knowledge was elicited during the interviews. In this regard, Tremblay (1957) suggests that the role of potential interviewees in the community should be used as an initial screening mechanism to discard irrelevant candidates. In particular, in our research, we selected bachelor students and master students as our key informants, because they are direct users of social media and, as such, they are expected to provide valuable information about the phenomenon.

Knowledge: the selected informant should be knowledgeable of the subject in the sense that they have a proper social media experience. Specifically, we require students to have at least three years of experience in using social media, before we qualify them as appropriate individuals to be interviewed. In other words, students who do not have prior social media experience and knowledge were excluded from our research.

Willingness: the chosen informants were asked to participate in our research voluntarily. We opted to choose only informants who were willing to share their experience, opinions, perspectives and views about how they use social media in their academic environment.

Communicability: having good English communication skills was a prerequisite for participating in this study. This was necessary to guarantee both the clarity and the coherence of the information during the analysis stage. As a consequence, we only chose informants who demonstrated a good command of the English language.

Regarding the process of contacting interview candidates, an invitation to participate in our study was published in a public Facebook group. Interested students were asked to fill out a Google form with their contact details in order to sign up for the interview process. In this way, voluntary participation was ensured. Afterward, a diversified set of students was selected taking into account academic level and current academic program. Table 3.1 provides the reader with an outline of the conducted interviews and their details.

Table 3.1: Summary of selected interviewees

Interview code	Interviewee gender	Interview duration	Academic level	Current academic program	Date
I1	Male	20 minutes	Master	Geographical information systems	2017-04-18
I2	Male	46 minutes	Master	Development studies	2017-04-16
I3	Male	18.5 minutes	Master	Information systems	2017-04-15
I4	Female	14 minutes	Bachelor	Biomedicine	2017-04-20
I5	Male	24 minutes	Master	International development	2017-04-20
I6	Male	34 minutes	Master	Biological physics and computational biology	2017-04-17
I7	Female	20 minutes	Master	Management	2017-04-17
I8	Female	25 minutes	Master	Information systems	2017-04-18
I9	Male	10 minutes	Master	Water resources engineering	2017-04-15
I10	Male	18 minutes	Bachelor	Development studies	2017-04-18

3.5.2 Interviewing

We applied Jacob & Furgerson (2012) recommendations on how to conduct a successful interview:

- (1) **Starting with a script:** we have begun all the interviews by reading the starting interview script, where we thanked the interviewees for their time and collaboration and asked for their permission for the interview being recorded.
- (2) **Collect consent:** we asked the interviewees to sign the interview consent form Appendix 2 we signed it too.
- (3) **Recording:** to mitigate risks, we implemented data redundancy and recorded the interviews using two devices: a mobile phone and a tablet. In this way, we guaranteed full recording of the interviews, even if some of the machines failed. This helped us to maintain continuous interaction and eye contact with the interviewees.
- (4) **Arranging the interview in a quiet place:** all interviews were conducted in quiet and isolated places to avoid interruption.
- (5) **Using counseling skills and keeping the interview focused:** we used follow-up questions, asked for elaborations and examples whenever we felt that the answer was vague or

unguided. Probing keywords defined in the interview guide proved very useful in doing this. It also helped us to make sure that our interview is focused and kept on track.

- (6) **Ending with the script:** we ended the interview by thanking the interviewees for their time and effort.

3.6 Data analysis process

3.6.1 *Transcription of the interviews*

To analyze the data, we had to transcribe the interviews first. To ensure a fast and efficient transcribing process, we relied on technology to automate a high percentage of the transcribing process. This was done by following the recipe below:

1. Convert the recording to MP3 format using an online website (<http://online-audio-converter.com/>) or audio editing software (Audacity).
2. Merge the MP3 recording with a random image to create an MP4 video. This was mainly done by using an online website (https://mp3toolbox.net/mp3_to_video).
3. The resultant MP4 video was uploaded to a private Youtube channel (to ensure data confidentiality), and it was left there for approximately 30 minutes (for further processing). Eventually, Youtube generated an automatic transcription of the interviews. In this way, our research was able to leverage machine learning algorithms to process the collected data.
4. The transcriptions were extracted in *.srt format (subtitles format) from the Youtube video by using <http://downsub.com> website.
5. The downloaded *.srt file contained timestamps and required cleaning before the analysis. “Subtitle Edit” software was employed to convert *.srt files into plain text files.
6. Next, “InqScribe” software was used to double-check the automated interview transcription results. This software allowed us to hear the transcription and to review the text simultaneously with the ability to stop/playback the audio without the need to switch between the text editor and the audio player, thus saving significant time and effort.
7. In the end, the text is spoken by the interviewee, and the interviewer was manually separated and explicitly distinguished.

This methodology saved significant time and effort and rather than relying on manual transcription; the resulting text file served as a basis for the coding process. This transcription led the separation of tone from content, thus transforming the interviews, which is considered a step in the analysis (Kvale, & Brinkmann, 2009). We reviewed the transcriptions of each other and gave comments to improve the interviewing style.

3.6.2 *Coding of the transcriptions*

As suggested by Kvale, & Brinkmann (2009), the coding method employed to analyze our interviews was chosen beforehand (as opposed to conducting the interviews first). As discussed

previously, the main factors identified from the literature served as a basis for both generating interview questions and coding the conducted interviews.

For the coding procedure, we utilized the NVivo 11 software and we started by each of us performing coding separately (coming up with new coding codes when needed). This process took three days and was the result of the careful reading and analysis of the transcriptions and the identification of common patterns/themes amongst data. The objective of this separate coding strategy was to obtain two different interpretations of the same phenomenon, since different readers usually produce different perspectives, as suggested by (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Additionally, this strategy allowed us to perform “researcher triangulation,” which has the advantage of both mitigating personal influences (bias) and exposing disparities in the thoughts of the investigators (Seale, 1999). Following this principle, we compared our individual codings in a face-to-face meeting and discussed both the differences and the similarities with the goal of reconciling points of view and proposing a unified analysis. The final coding structure can be observed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Final coding structure

Factor	Sub-Factor
Hedonic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternate between leisure and study time ● Stress mitigation and integration planning ● Integration events
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vertical social ● Horizontal social ● Social influence
Utilitarian factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration ● Engagement ● Information consumption ● Interaction ● Sharing
Personal concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distraction ● Privacy ● Self-discipline ● Mixing academic and personal life ● Physical contact ● Addiction ● Information reliability
University and teachers support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic policies (formality) ● Department sharing information/Interaction with teachers ● Teacher sharing information

Technology characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ubiquity ● User friendliness ● Familiarity ● Low cost or cost free ● Interactivity ● Openness ● Efficiency
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The following is a screenshot from NVivo software, which we used to process and analyze the collected qualitative data.

Name	Sources	References
Utilitarian motivations	10	126
Sharing	10	30
Interaction	10	31
Information consumption	10	26
Engagement	9	14
Collaboration	10	25
University - teacher support	10	38
Teachers sharing information	4	7
Interaction with teachers	5	5
Department sharing information	9	14
Academic policies (formality)	4	12
Technology characteristics	10	86
User - friendliness	8	16
Ubiquity	7	16
Openness	2	6
Low cost or cost free	1	1
Interactivity	0	24

Figure 3.3: Screenshot of the coding process in NVivo software

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. On the left, a table titled 'Internals' lists nodes I1 through I19 with their respective node counts and reference counts. The main window shows the text of interview I2, with several segments highlighted in yellow. A sidebar on the right contains a list of codes, including 'Efficiency', which is highlighted in orange, indicating it has been applied to the selected text segments.

Name	Nodes	References
I1	30	82
I10	24	84
I2	30	152
I3	21	44
I4	20	86
I5	26	106
I6	24	98
I7	25	108
I8	24	78
I9	24	60

Interview I2 text excerpts:

- Student: I use it. Viber, messenger
- Pedro: That's good. So please tell me and do you use social media when you have group assignments or group work?
- Student: yes, I many times because many students many of those have worked within groups find social media applications more convenient to working in groups. For example, messenger facebook messenger where you can come together in a group and start sharing if you're working on their on their own a topic an assignment you can work with **without having to meet you can only share your progress same** but also others Whatsapp so yeah it's quite convenient for students
- Pedro: okay so you use it the more or less like to coordinate
- Student: coordinate coordinate

Code sidebar (Efficiency is highlighted):

- Distraction
- Mixing academic and personal life
- Addiction
- Personal concerns
- Physical contact
- Technology characteristics
- Efficiency
- Colling Density

Figure 3.4: Using NVivo software to code “Efficiency” in the interview I2

3.7 Scientific quality

Since our study was interpretive by nature, we tried to be in agreement with the six interpretive postulates condensed by (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Specifically, we applied the following principles:

Naturalistic inquiry: we believed that the relationship between students and social media applications should be examined within their context, as suggested by (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this study, we did not subject the participants to isolated environments or experiments, even if it implied a reduction in the generalizability of our results. Instead, we conducted semi-structured interviews with students, which allowed us to gather detailed data about the phenomenon and the whole perspective that each student has on social media.

Researcher as an instrument: we, as interpretive researchers, interacted directly with the units of analysis (students) and their natural setting (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Since we conducted the interviews, we deemed ourselves as the main device for the data collection process, and it was our duty to employ our perceptual abilities to collect the appropriate information and to give meaning to it. Even though biases are common to every human being, we attempted to identify them with the aim of generating a relatively impartial view of the phenomenon of social media usage in academic contexts.

Interpretive analysis: in this study, we tried to make sense of the phenomenon in two stages (Bhattacharjee, 2012). First, we interviewed students to find out how they were exposed to social media from their subjective standpoints. Afterward, we interpreted the experiences of the students, and we attempted to come up with a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon by using both our personal views and our proposed research model. In other words, we tried to unravel the reasons behind the behavior of the students.

Use of expressive language: following the advice of Bhattacharjee (2012), we sought to analyze the language used by our participants (i.e. the students) and we documented it both in our results (chapter 4) and discussion (chapter 5), so that the readers of this thesis could understand the phenomenon through our own interpretation.

Temporal nature: despite this being recommended by Bhattacharjee (2012), we discarded the idea of studying the relationship between students and social media in the long-term due to time limitations. In other words, our study was cross-sectional instead of longitudinal. Nonetheless, we acknowledged that our research question was related to a social and dynamic phenomenon that changes over time and, therefore, we decided to rely on the literature to grasp an overview of the evolution of such phenomenon from the recent past to the present.

Hermeneutic circle: in this study, we iterated between the collected data from participants and its context as a whole with the aim of generating an agreement. As indicated by Bhattacharjee (2012), the result of such agreement is usually a theory that represents all the standpoints of the interviewees up to now. We stopped such iterative process when we noticed that the addition of new observations did not destabilize the relationship between them and their context (i.e., when the theory was “saturated”) (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

3.8 Ethical issues

For the purpose of guaranteeing ethics in our research, we diligently followed the ethical postulates compiled by (Bhattacharjee, 2012):

Voluntary participation and innocuousness: we declare that our interviewees were voluntarily involved in this study. We did not force any student to be interviewed and, even if they had initially accepted the invitation to participate, they were allowed to retire at any time during the process and with no retaliation from our side. Furthermore, we made sure that no student was harmed as a result of the interview that we conducted with him or her. In fact, to satisfy these conditions, all of our interviewees were required beforehand to read and sign a document detailing their right to not partake in the study and their right to retreat (such document is also known as “informed consent”).

Confidentiality: due to the delicate essence of our study and the fact that it might expose some current defects of L@L as the institutional system of Lund University, we believed that it was important to ensure privacy among our interviewees to avoid any retaliation. Unfortunately, we could not achieve anonymity in our in-person interviews, but we believe that confidentiality is enough to guarantee the integrity of the interviewees. This means that, although we know the identity of each of them, we will not reveal such identity in this thesis or in any other way.

Disclosure of information: as disclosing the purpose of our study before the interviews get started was not thought to cause any perceptible bias on the answers of the participants; we provided them with a short depiction when we were contacting or approaching them. We believed that being clear about the objective of the research from the beginning was essential for potential interviewees to decide whether they want to participate or not mindfully. As a matter of fact, it is a mandatory activity (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Analysis and reporting: it is not ethical that we, as interviewers and social researchers, manipulate or hide the data that we gather. Therefore, and to avoid this situation, we committed to revealing

all the information that was collected in this project, regardless of its detriment or usefulness of the goals that we have previously set. For example, if we encountered that some students did not employ social media at all in their academic context, that fact would have been included in this document along with the rest of the cases (even if it did not support our purpose). Other than being an ethical matter, we are in agreement with Bhattacharjee (2012) regarding the importance of openness in science as a debugging mechanism, which eventually protects other researchers from making the same mistakes. As a matter of fact, we believe that inconsistent data might contribute to the advancement of science in the sense that it generates new opportunities for research.

3.9 Research reliability and validity

Reliability is about the measurements of the constructs being trustworthy and congruous (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In other words, reliability answers the question: do we obtain the same results if we measure the same construct several times and under the same conditions? Taking this into account, we considered the following aspects to ensure that our research process was reliable:

1. All of the interviews included a brief explanation of the goal of the investigation and a definition of some relevant terms (e.g., social media).
2. The same interview guide (script) was followed in all of the interviews.
3. Based on the principle of dependability defined by Recker (2013), the transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed separately by us (the authors of this thesis) to check that we drew similar conclusions from the same data. This is also known as “researcher triangulation” (Seale, 1999).
4. Follow-up questions were planned in advance to ensure that the participants were not mistaken or misled.

On the other hand, **validity** is about the level to which a measure corresponds to the construct that it is intended to measure (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Three aspects must be present to guarantee validity in qualitative research: credibility, confirmability, and transferability (Recker, 2013):

Credibility: even though traditional triangulation was not possible due to the lack of external sources of information, we believe that, by having undertaken a meticulous literature review and by having strategically collected qualitative data relevant to our purpose, we have provided enough evidence to support both our research model and the interpretations proffered in the discussion section.

Confirmability: in this thesis, we have made available all the collected data (interview transcriptions) from students as well as all the inferences or conclusions drawn from such data, so that third parties could independently corroborate our research findings.

Transferability: in this study, we have also provided a rich and detailed description of the context, so that the characteristics of our findings could be employed in other fields of research. However, it is the responsibility of other researchers to determine the extent to which the features of our results can be applied to other cases, settings or domains.

4 Empirical findings

This chapter analyses the empirical findings of the performed interviews and exhibits them in detail. As summarized in chapter three, the questions of our interviews were strategically built based on our research framework, which embraced the following five main factors explaining the phenomenon: university/teacher support, technology characteristics, utilitarian motivations, hedonic motivations and social motivations. In this chapter, we employ these categories to introduce our observed findings and compile the answers of the participants about each factor.

4.1 Presentation of the empirical findings

The observed findings of this thesis are introduced in this section by narrating the key points that have arisen from the data of the conducted interviews using the summary specified in Table 2.2 (chapter 2), which consolidates the principal five factors of our research framework. Explicit and salient quotations are embedded where it is convenient under each of the factors. Afterward, the reader is provided with a comparative analysis of the interviewees' standpoints about the main topic. Additionally, every observed finding has an allusion to the transcription of the corresponding interview by indicating the number of the interview in Appendix 4 and the line number. For instance, a sentence pointed out as (I1, 12) is alluding to a sentence located on the line 12 of the interview number 1. Furthermore, multi-line references are also used in this chapter. For example, a reference to (I2, 34-40) is alluding to all the sentences in the interview number 2 which are located between the line 34 and the line 40 (inclusive). Finally, when several references support a statement, these will be separated by semicolons (;). For instance, using the two previous examples (I1, 12; I2, 34-40).

4.2 Hedonic motivations

Table 4.1: Salient quotations regarding "Hedonic motivations"

Sub-factor	Quotations
Stress mitigation and integration planning	"we use social media to plan the parties and trips after finishing the school" (I1, 68-69)
	"a couple of minutes with social media and to reduce the stress when I have like academic pressure" (I1, 38-39)
	"relieving stress when you are working hard on anything at the school" (I1, 160-161)
Alternating leisure and	"you may want to get a break" (I2, 204-205)

study	“you are sitting down reading and then you do not feel like reading anymore, so you go into some sort of social media and scroll down for a bit then as you get the energy again” (I5, 113-114)
	“I do not think being it on on a messenger on Facebook would make it more pleasant” (I7, 62)
	“a good study break to do personal stuff on social media” (I10, 54)

4.2.1 Stress mitigation and integration planning

There is weak empirical evidence supporting these sub-factors. One of the interviewees mentioned that relieving academic stress after working hard is one of the motives for using social media. Specifically, he expressed: “*it helps me when I have like a lot of academic work to do I use social media like a breeze*” (I1,37-40; I1, 160-162). Moreover, the interviewee mentioned that Facebook is used as a tool to organize fun and social integration events among classmates (e.g., parties and trips) (I1, 68-69).

4.2.2 Alternating leisure and study

Alternating leisure and study time is an activity that was mentioned 11 times in 7 interviews. The interviewee (I2, 164-166) conveyed the following: “*it really feel that social media is contributing to what i'm doing and cause you pleasure*” and that by taking study breaks, social media was able to give him/her pleasure (I2, 205). Furthermore, one of the students described the switching process between studies and leisure as an activity frequently put into practice by him, because it gives him a boost to continue with his studies: “*I have done that a lot of times I think everyone else here you're sitting down reading and then then you don't feel like reading anymore so you go into some sort of social media and scroll down for a bit then as you get the energy again to store something so yeah I would say that's true*” (I5, 112-115). Another student said, “*it serves a good study break to do personal stuff on social media*” (I10,54). However, some students do not think that social media makes their studies more pleasant (I7, 62; I9,47).

4.3 Personal concerns

Table 4.2: Salient quotations regarding “Personal concerns”

Sub-factor	Quotations
Addiction	“when you say social media it is like a negative impact of my life wasting time, addiction, spending a lot of time on it and something like that” (I1, 14-15)
	“there's a lot of the distractions on social media, and some of them can be even they are addictive” (I2, 166-167)

	“I guess unfortunately people would have become so dependent on Facebook” (I7, 168)
Distraction	“you end up watching something like something irrelevant” (I1, 64)
	“you use for example Facebook for you know discussing an assignment you end up somehow distracted by the homepage” (I7, 41-42)
	“there's a lot of the distractions on social media” (I2, 166)
Information reliability	“you come to know how to verify information” (I2, 124)
	“there is high high chances that we kind of get misled with some information” (I8, 109)
	“people seem to share a lot of things without really looking into it” (I4, 53)
	“I guess the best thing is to double check and do some research yourself if you come across difficult information” (I5, 98-100)
Mixing academic and personal life	“so teachers find it not so easy to have students following them on Facebook and Twitter” (I2, 281-282)
	“I am not sure if you want to if you want to have your teachers to be able to see everything that you do or uploaded” (I5, 184-185)
	“some people might find it I am intruding to their personal life I would definitely wouldn't want them to think that way” (I7, 113-114)
	“I would not like to have my teachers or my professors in my personal social media” (I6, 119-120)
Physical contact	“Personally, I am like face-to-face person” (I1, 85)
	“the relationship is better built if you speak to them in person” (I4, 84)
	“if you do not hang out with them I do not think the social media will change something” (I6, 208-209)
	“in order to really meet those people after know them the first time you have to you have to have a natural communication like physical communication” (I9, 61-63)

Privacy	“we have a group... a secret group created in Facebook on which we are sharing like... I do not know... articles and things that are that we are using for the University” (I3, 63-65)
	“you do not want your teachers to know everything about you” (I5, 190-191)
	“then you want to discuss only with these three people then you do not want to discuss... or to have a public discussion about it, so I do not know if Live@Lund has this facility” (I6,414-416)
	“there is this illusion that in the outside apps you have privacy actually when you also have no guarantee of it” (I2, 356-357)
Self-discipline	“it is not easy, and you need to have strong control yourself” (I1, 63)
	“I need to have some degree of discipline, you know because there's a lot of the distractions on social media” (I2, 165)
	“You have to restrict yourself only to what it is interesting” (I6, 438)
	“it becomes a bit of an addiction for some people, so I try and avoid it taking up my time” (I10, 41)

4.3.1 Addiction

Although students reported in general that social media is useful for their studies, some of them expressed their concern about social media being time-consuming or even having addictive properties (I1, 10). They even call it an “addiction” (I1, 14). Others conveyed that only some types of social media are addictive (I2, 166-167) and that it is up to each person to become dependent or not (I2, 197). Indeed, some social media applications are thought to be generating enslaving tendencies (I2, 198). This was backed by the fact that Facebook and Twitter are some of the most employed social media websites (I3, 21-22) and that some people become dependent on them to get information (I7, 168).

4.3.2 Distraction

Social media might sometimes be a distraction in the completion of tasks, and thus it increases the required level of willpower (I1, 63; I7, 41-43; I10, 39-41). It is easy for students to find themselves diverted by the vast amount of irrelevant information (I1, 66) and distractions (I2, 166; I6, 183-184; I7, 39; I8, 140) offered by social media. Some consider that it is important to know exactly what you are looking for before resorting to social media for academic purposes (I2, 174). Otherwise, they will be used by people in an inefficient way (I4, 11). On the other hand, the usage of social media should be avoided during attention-requiring activities such as lectures (I2, 192-193). Indeed, instant notifications from social media can be disturbing during academic tasks (I5, 267; I6, 82; I7, 69-70) and some prefer to turn them off (I5, 269; I6, 76).

Additionally, it is reported that students may go to their study group on Facebook, but they end up scrolling down on their news feed and consuming information that is not necessarily related to their initial task (I5, 71-73). In fact, some compared social media to a candy shop, where there are usually too many options to choose from, thus making it harder for people to make a decision about what to consume (I10, 153-154).

4.3.3 Information reliability

Students reported that social media websites have irrelevant or “junk” information and therefore it is important to know what they want from them (I2, 110-112). Despite this abundance of low-quality information, students manage to get by (I2, 127-128). Some ways to do this is by checking the trustworthiness of the information source (I3, 89; I10, 48-49) or the validity of the content (I8, 111-114). However, it is still a concern that most people are not critical enough with what they share (I4, 50-52) or the fact that they do not check it at all (I4, 53). Perhaps this is the reason why students are hesitant to quote or cite information from Facebook (I4, 57; I9, 42-43) and they state that if some data looks suspicious, there is a high probability that it is simply not true (I5, 96-97).

To make it worst, the information that can be uploaded to social media is unrestricted, and it is not peer-reviewed (I5, 83-85). However, some convey that it is precisely this freedom of social media what makes it a valuable tool to get insights and to get to know people, which would not be possible in other ways (I10, 164-167).

4.3.4 Mixing academic and personal life

Students, in general, are worried about the effects of mixing the academic and the personal life due to the usage of social media. They report that there should be boundaries or some mechanism that guarantees a respectful interaction (I1, 80-82). Additionally, some state that the relation student-teacher is complex and hierarchical and therefore it is not easy either for the student or the teacher to disclose personal matters to each other (I2, 279-285; I5, 184-186; I5, 190-191; I7, 113-118). Perhaps that is also why students prefer to relegate most of their interaction with teachers to the physical world (I2, 290-292; I6, 275) or to more professional means such as email (I4, 72-74; I4, 98-100; I5, 220; I7, 120-123). Whatever the mean of communication, students were categorical and emphatic about their decision of not connecting with teachers on social media (I6, 118-120; I7, 120-123; I7, 126-131; I8, 197-199) and some even reported that, when they were in high school, teachers were not allowed to connect with them due to institutional policies (I10, 106-107). However, they consider the student-student interaction in social media as normal (I4, 35; I6, 112-113). Furthermore, students would be willing to connect with former teachers (or ex-teachers) in social media if they have had a good relationship with them in the real world (I6, 309-311; I8, 208-210). Having said that, students convey that traditional learning management systems (such as Moodle or Live@Lund) are a good way to separate school from other aspects of their life (I4, 141; I8, 289-291; I8, 322-324).

4.3.5 Physical contact

Even though students stated that social media is useful for their studies, they also acknowledged that they still prefer in-person communication when it comes to group interaction (I1, 85) and that relationships become stronger when you do face-to-face communication (I4, 84; I6, 208-209; I9, 61-63). In other words, virtual interaction does not replace real-world interaction (I10, 136). In fact, some students argued that new social connections are mostly initiated outside the virtual world of social media (I2, 213-216). However, they recognize that virtual interaction might be helpful for people with shy personality since it allows them to start a conversation with others in a less challenging way (I5, 133-135).

4.3.6 Privacy

Social media seems to have an advantage over traditional learning management systems in the sense that it is possible to create isolated groups or chats, which teachers or third-parties cannot have access to (I5, 190-191; I3, 63-65; I6, 420-423). This has to do with the impression that students have of social media as a private environment (I2, 290-291; I2, 356-358), unlike institutional platforms which are controlled by universities (I2, 340) and where usually everyone can see other people's discussions (I7, 162-165). This causes students to minimize the usage of learning management systems (such as Live@Lund) and to relegate them to the activities that cannot be done anywhere else, such as downloading course content or submitting assignments (I2, 347-348). In general, students are very reluctant to allow their teachers to see the content they are generating in the virtual world (I5, 184-186), one of the reasons being that they are afraid of being judged based on such content (I6, 118-120). Instead, they prefer email for the student-teacher interaction, because it gives them a feeling of privacy or secrecy (I5, 220-221).

4.3.7 Self-discipline

Due to the distraction generated by social media and its opulence of information, students reported that it is necessary to have a high level of self-control (I1, 63) and self-discipline (I2, 165) to smoothly complete academic tasks. Some tactics employed by students to mitigate this issue are: trying to follow in social media only people or groups which are of academic interest (I6, 438) or limiting the overall time devoted to social media usage (I10, 41).

4.4 Social motivations

Table 4.3: Salient quotations regarding "Social motivations"

Sub-factor	Quotations
Horizontal social motivation	"one of our friends he created a small group and added seven or six people from our class" (I1, 88-89)
	"in my year when we came, we already knew each other by name at least and by photo" (I2, 381)

	<p>“when we started, for example, we were a lot of people from around around the world so we did not know each other and I was using the social media to recognize the people” (I3, 128-130)</p> <p>“I find someone interesting once, and I find that I really would like to communicate or to get to know them more I was at just hey I would add you on Facebook in that way I will make sure that I can access them” (I7, 91-93)</p>
Social influence	<p>“social media it puts all the pressure of you to do it also so that you do not feel left out or isolated” (I1, 103-104)</p> <p>“a lot of content at least in this moment not from part of the professor but just from my schoolmates from my classmates... yes... so that is I why... otherwise I think wouldn't use it that much” (I6, 136-138)</p> <p>“she had an older phone ... it was really hard for her to get along because all of us were using Messenger and so it was hard for her to be part of any group” (I2, 238-242)</p> <p>“if everyone and everybody is using it then I should use it too because otherwise I cannot I mean... I can reach them” (I3, 145-146)</p>
Vertical social motivation	<p>“you may find it convenient to continue talking and interacting and knowing more about each other” (I2, 214-215)</p> <p>“so social media to just bridge the gap between people and make them more closer” (I1, 78)</p> <p>“if you have a question about something school related you might go to them for opinions or reviewing or whatever so yeah it contributes” (I4, 80-81)</p> <p>“because we are connected all the time so we can chat with them... speak about anything connected to the University, to the academic program... so I think yes, it improves” (I3, 120-122)</p>

4.4.1 Horizontal social motivation

It was found that students use social media to coordinate non-academic events (specially at the beginning of their programmes but not restricted to it), which help them to get to know other students (usually with shared interests) and thus eventually growing their academic network (I1, 86-91; I5, 148-152; I6, 218-220; I9, 60-65). In some cases, social media and learning management systems allowed students to recognize their colleagues even before arriving in Lund (I2, 381-382; I8, 164-170). In others, social media helped international students to identify their classmates when they just arrived in Lund and needed to establish their first relationships (I3, 128-130; I6, 227-229). However, students reported that in-person communication is still important and that social media should preferably be used when physical contact is not feasible due to, for example, high

geographical distance between the individuals (I4, 84-86). On the other hand, social media is a great tool to create new social relationships if the person in question is shy or finds it difficult to start a conversation with new people in the physical world (I5, 133-135).

Social media may be an excellent complement to physical socializing, because it can be used as a mechanism to keep in touch with recent acquaintances (I7, 91-97), sometimes as a replacement for traditional contact information collection methods (such as a telephone number written on a piece of paper) which are susceptible to information loss (I10, 87-89). The latter also suggests that students see social media as a reliable (perhaps bulletproof) tool when it comes to information storage. Finally, social media also allow students to create relationships with teachers and colleagues from external universities, unlike institutional learning management systems (I8, 303). In some cases, social media has also encouraged the gradual appearance of study groups (I10, 59-61).

4.4.2 Social influence

Students report that social media has become a trend and therefore it influences everyone's decision to use it for academic purposes through "peer pressure" (I1, 98-101; I6, 137; I9, 69-70). One reason for this is that everybody wants to be up to date on what is happening in the group or the academic program and nobody would like to feel left out or isolated (I1, 103-104; I5, 161-163). Even students that do not consider society is personally influencing them recognize that it is a common phenomenon (I2, 237) and that when someone does not fit into the social media trend, he or she will find it difficult to catch up and to get along with his or her classmates, mainly because many aspects of group work are coordinated through social media (I2, 238-245; I5, 170-172; I6, 142-144). In other words, if someone wants to be part of a group, basically he or she has to use the same social media as his or her group (I2, 249-250; I6, 60-61; I8, 51-53). According to some, this influence is driven by obligation rather than inspiration (I2, 246-247; I2, 264-265; I6, 252-253).

However, this effect is bidirectional and therefore it is also possible for an individual to influence their peers. For example, if someone is using a particular social media application, his or her acquaintances might be encouraged to use the same application to contact such individual (I3, 136; I3, 145-147). Students acknowledge that the power of a particular social media website is precisely how many users it has (I4, 91-93; I8, 184-185; I8, 249). Indeed, the effect of peer pressure is so strong, that even people who have canceled their social media account in the past, due to its disturbances, eventually end up signing up for the same social media again (I10, 98-100). Some state that socializing is a human need and that social media is exactly the virtualization of such need (I10, 101-102; I10, 134-135).

4.4.3 Vertical social motivation

Students believe that means of communication such as email are not the most appropriate when it comes to strengthening human relationships (I1, 72-74). Instead, they think that social media is the catalyst that might turn formal classmate relations into real friendships because it allows people to get to know each other better (I1, 74-75). In other words, social media has the capability to "break

the ice” among people and to get them closer (I1, 78). Besides, it is a valuable tool to continue the interaction with a recent new acquaintance after the first encounter (I2, 214-215). Indeed, such follow-up communication improves the relationship regardless of the topic (academic or nonacademic) and might eventually result in future collaboration in school projects (I1, 221-224; I4, 77-81). It was found that social media is used as an instrument to ameliorate relationships with interesting people (I7, 96) and that sometimes it might even foster real physical encounters which might otherwise be unlikely to happen (I10, 90-93).

Students report that the fact of being easily connected all the time sharing personal details through social media might make the existing relationships better (I3, 120-122; I4, 151; I5, 129-131; I7, 78-79). Furthermore, exposing their lives in social media help them to find interesting aspects in other students, even if they did not frequently talk at the beginning or were not initially “compatible” (I7, 80-84). In other words, social media mitigates both prejudice and the “first impression” effect to a certain extent (I7, 85). However, they emphasized that the improvement through social media is only achieved in student-student connections and that it is not their desire to use social media to interact with teachers or supervisors (I4, 72-74).

4.5 Technology characteristics

Table 4.4: Salient quotations regarding “Technology characteristics”

Sub-factor	Quotations
Efficiency	“you can work with without having to meet” (I2, 54)
	“Sometimes it is very difficult to meet your group ... that is the only way you can meet them” (I9, 36-39)
	“less time spent on conversation and also getting responses and are easy” (I7, 153-154)
Familiarity	“Everyone uses Facebook” (I4, 44)
	“we are also acquainted with it we are also familiar with it” (I8, 80)
	“they rather to use social network that they already know, they do not have to learn anything new” (I6, 386-387)
	“Perhaps that is just like an old habit that you do not think about it to just do it you just go directly to Facebook” (I5, 230-231)
Interactivity	“More of interactivity between between the both side of like me and other people sharing information” (I1, 138-139)

	<p>“you can choose to have be notified when there's anything new shared, so you do not miss anything” (I2, 455-456)</p> <p>“they do not check their email regularly so it might be easier to just connect and talk on Facebook or WhatsApp” (I7, 26-27)</p> <p>“I do not know if Moodle has a chat function ... you cannot interact as quickly, so i think that is again they use Facebook for everything else” (I4, 135-137)</p>
Low cost or cost free	<p>“it is very cheap it is very fast, and it has high presence, so I feel that the social media has really made my life easier when it comes to studies” (I8, 90-91)</p>
Openness	<p>“in social media I can interact with my friends who are studying into other universities ... social media is quite open” (I8, 251-254)</p> <p>“a closed space of Live@Lund as students and teachers but now when you go to Twitter it is the whole world has opened up” (I2, 414-416)</p> <p>“Live@Lund is pretty close that is specifically for my master program” (I8, 322)</p>
Ubiquity	<p>“you can work simultaneously being anywhere anytime” (I8, 133)</p> <p>“when you have an app it is instant” (I2, 460)</p> <p>“Facebook... because you have the app I guess, and then you can have all the notifications in your mobile” (I6, 364-365)</p> <p>“it is accessible all the time since I am having my phone with me all the time that's that's the most important reason why I am using social media” (I9, 93-94)</p>
User - friendliness	<p>“if you think about the University portal is not that more like graphically attractive as Instagram or Facebook or Snapchat” (I1, 135-136)</p> <p>“Live@Lund is a... I mean first of all it is already a confusing website I am still having a hard time finding every document” (I5, 236-237)</p> <p>“Yeah, at least more friendly than Live@Lund” (I6, 452)</p> <p>“they are user-friendly, so you do not have to click a lot of things to find something” (I3, 194-195)</p>

4.5.1 *Efficiency*

It was found that social media is an efficient way of interaction because it allows students to work (or collaborate) in a group without physically meet and, the same time, they can keep others posted about their progress (I2, 53-55). This means that students can work in a distributed way and only get together sporadically (I2, 136-138), thus saving commuting time and avoiding real-world distractions. This is especially favorable when, for one reason or another, it is difficult for people to meet in-person (I9, 36-37). Furthermore, since its users frequently monitor social media, it is a more convenient and quicker way to coordinate group work (I5, 119-120) than traditional means such as email (I7, 150-153). However, they reiterated the importance of physical meetings and that social media is a complement rather than a replacement for real-world encounters (I2, 148-149; I6, 405-407).

On the other hand, social media is efficient in the sense that it enable students to choose the kind of information that they want to receive by allowing them to follow only the people or the groups they are interested in (I2, 398-400). Moreover, social media usually provides students with a summary of the most important information related to their friends and interests (I7, 170).

4.5.2 *Familiarity*

Since students have used social media before enrolling in university, they are more familiar with it than with traditional learning management systems (such as Live@Lund) and, therefore, they prefer social media when it comes to contacting their classmates (I4, 43-44; I8, 80). The reason for this is that they do not have to learn anything new when using social media (I6, 386-387). In general, students are very comfortable posting messages on Facebook (I4, 130), while they consider institutional platforms to be foreign or strange (I4, 134-135; I5, 236-237). To make it worse, such university platforms usually require people to log on each time before allowing them to perform any action, which evidently contrasts with the 24/7 log-in-free availability of social media applications (I4, 144-145). Indeed, students are so integrated with social media that it has been called a “habit” or something that people uses naturally (I5, 230-231; I5, 238; I7, 168), clearly leaving traditional learning management systems at a disadvantage. However, they acknowledge that some content is only available on such systems and hence they need to learn to alternatingly use both social media and the institutional platform throughout their studies (I8, 296-298).

4.5.3 *Interactivity*

Students highlight the increased interactivity among people who use social media (I1, 138-139). Such interactivity is perhaps fostered by the instantaneous characteristic of social media notifications, thanks to which students keep themselves up to date with what is happening (I2, 455-456; I6, 364-365). As previously mentioned, traditional learning management systems lack this interactivity due to their policy of always asking for login credentials before giving access to the information (I2, 456-457) and also their behaviour of always notifying people by using generic channels, such as email, which are appropriate in terms of formality, but not in relation to instantaneousness, since a typical user might receive a substantial amount of emails per day (I2, 464-466) and he or she might confuse academic notifications with spam (I2, 468-470). Indeed,

students report that they prefer to ignore all email traffic during the day and only check them in the evening when they may have the time to separate important emails from spam (I2, 476-478; I7, 26-27; I9, 76-79). Unlike email-based institutional notifications (such as Live@Lund or Moodle notifications) which make interaction slow (I4, 136-138; I7, 65-66), social media applications (such as virtual chats) provide their users with a high level of interactivity and instantaneousness (I4, 67-69; I4, 135-136). Such characteristics are welcome by students and eventually results in more frequent usage of social media (I5, 120; I7, 40; I7, 150-151; I7, 190-191; I8, 81-82; I10, 147). However, students also recognize that instant notifications can be annoying sometimes (I5, 274) and that they turn notifications off for certain types of social media applications (I5, 269-270). On the other hand, the lack of interactivity in learning management systems relegates them to the level of simplistic websites where course content can be downloaded (I5, 247-250). To make it worse, some systems such as Live@Lund neither generate email notifications at all by default nor provide applications for smartphones (I9, 96-97), thus killing interactivity and making students access every day to manually check if there is anything new (I5, 300-302).

4.5.4 Low cost or cost free

One student reported that it is an advantage that the cost of access to social media is very low (I8, 90). It is assumed that she was referring to data charges since many social media applications ask for no membership fees to join. Unfortunately, no further evidence about this factor was found in the collected data.

4.5.5 Openness

It was found that traditional learning management systems (such as Live@Lund) are closed and limited (I8, 254), because they only allow a student to interact with other students from the same academic programme or with his/her teachers (I2, 414-415), while social media websites are open to anybody and thus more information can be found in them (I2, 415-417). Indeed, Live@Lund has been called an “elitist system,” since only the highly educated people (i.e. students) or “elite” have access to it (I2, 422-423). Students report that in social media they can even communicate with students from other universities and exchange documents (I8, 252-253). However, they recognize that when it comes to handling sensitive information (i.e. grades), it is perhaps an advantage that institutional systems are less open than social media (I8, 322-325).

4.5.6 Ubiquity

Social media is everywhere and is easily accessible (I1, 135; I8, 80; I8, 133), while Live@Lund was not even mobile-friendly until recently (I2, 433). As a matter of fact, while the World Wide Web (in general) and social media (in particular) are migrating or have already migrated to native applications for mobile devices, Live@Lund is only accessible through the browser, thus discouraging students from using it and “going against the tide” (I2, 445-447; I6, 369-370; I8, 260-261; I9, 96-97). Social media having native applications can generate instant notifications regardless of the location of their users and, in that sense, they are more ubiquitous than browser-only institutional systems (I2, 460). Furthermore, native mobile notifications can be easily distinguished in-place, unlike email notifications which are preferred to be read later (I2, 470; I2,

476-477). In contrast, students believe that Live@Lund is simply not designed for ubiquitous interaction (I5, 247-250). On the other hand, students report that ubiquity is an attractive characteristic of social media and that, without it, they will probably not use it as often as they do (I6, 143-145; I8, 308-309; I9, 78; I9, 93-94). They just cannot imagine going out without social media on their phones (I7, 146-148).

4.5.7 User - friendliness

Students highlight the attractiveness of social media's graphical user interface and how it outranks the user experience (UX) of traditional learning management systems (I1, 135-136; I5, 236-238; I6, 452-453; I7, 160). Moreover, social media is easier to use (I1, 155; I3, 231-232) and usually provide students with native applications for mobile devices (I2, 446-447). However, they welcomed the fact that, at least, Live@Lund now has a responsive website (i.e. the website adapts itself to the size of the device it is being visited from) (I2, 433-435) and they hope that a native application is on the way (I3, 238). On the other hand, social media allow students to find the content they were looking for in a small number of steps (I3, 194-195). In contrast, they reported that with institutional platforms (such as Live@Lund) they require from three to five times more steps than social media to find the same content (I3, 217-219). Furthermore, Live@Lund demand that students check course announcements every day because it lacks notifications or they are not enabled by default (I5, 312). In some cases, students have to frustratingly check announcements on a course-by-course basis, because they are unaware of the "Feed" section existence (I5, 313-314). In general, people recognize that Live@Lund has usability issues (I8, 341) and that social media take advantage of them (I10, 126-127).

4.6 University / teacher support

Table 4.5: Salient quotations regarding "University / teacher support"

Sub-factor	Quotations
Interaction with teachers/teachers sharing information	"I mean haven't find any teacher who has used his/her Facebook account for this kind of stuff" (I6, 109-110)
	"Maybe it would help in a way... for example, we are going to be up to date for everything that is happening for example for a particular subject" (I3, 156-157)
	"I interact with my teachers on Gmail chat... something more official" (I8, 199)
	"he writes the exercises and the homework for the students to it and put it online, so they can submit it to Dropbox file" (I1, 114-115)
Department sharing information	"in our department, we have like this page run by the IT coordinator of our department he do not publish was so called academic material but he publish if there is like someone doing a Ph.D. defense, master

	thesis defense or like it there like a public lecture” (I1, 125-127)
	“we are always using some let's say for example we are using Facebook and if the staff is sharing information to the social media for example through Facebook we are going to be more updated to the things that are going to happen in the university” (I3, 186-189)
	“they have a Facebook page which people can like, and then they share news or like link to interest articles or for new thesis from master students and stuff like that but I do not think they upload any important information” (I5, 202-204)
	“my department I do not know, but at least the university they do and sometimes it is interesting information” (I6, 315-316)
Academic formality	“by the law or by the University rules everyone should have like a university email address which they can get information about the class or homework” (I1, 119-120)
	“from Live@Lund I get all the information, the official information for the courses, for exams, for the lectures for the homeworks” (I6, 401-402)
	“it is official character as the official interactive platform for students teachers and... of course it is a managed way and see timetable and so on that may partly discourage students from talking so much using it” (I2, 341-343)
	“There was a policy where the teachers could not be friends students on social media at all” (I10, 106-107)

4.6.1 Interaction with teachers/teachers sharing information

The interaction between students and teachers was mentioned five times in five interviews with contradictory findings. Part of the empirical evidence suggests that students avoid interacting with teachers through social media (I2, 274; I9, 73-74) and even that teachers do not use it (I6, 109-110). However, other students believe that this interaction might be helpful, especially when it comes to updating students on a particular subject of interest (I3, 156-157). Furthermore, another student reported interacting with teachers in social media when she said: “*I interact with my teachers on Gmail chat*” (I8, 199). On the other hand, a student-narrated a story about a teacher from his bachelor program who used to employ social media (such as Dropbox and Facebook) to upload assignments, homework and discuss academic matters with the students. The interviewee believes that the teacher-student interaction has a positive impact on their learning process (I1, 112-116). Interestingly, some teachers were found handing out educational material on Flipboard (I8, 242-244), which is a social media for news sharing. Finally, a student reported being engaged because his former teachers were sharing useful academic material on Facebook (I6, 296-300).

4.6.2 Department sharing information

The sub-factor of academic departments sharing information in social media was mentioned 14 times in 9 interviews. One of the interviewees stated that he relies on the department's webpage to get information about Ph.D. and MSc defense sessions, public lectures or open job positions, which are considered precious for him as future an alumnus (I1, 125-132). Another student declared that his department publishes calendars on social media targeting students (I2, 363-364), while other students think that the sharing of department-generated information would be useful for them as a medium to get updates and some helpful data (I3, 186-189; I4, 117-118; I5, 202-204). However, there is a perception that the department is not fully exploiting the potential of social media (I5, 208-209). One student stated that the university's Facebook page is more active than his/her department web page. However, the university is using the page to publish general information regarding courses merely and to inform logistics matters, such as scheduled building maintenance (I6, 315-316; I6,320-321; I6,332-335). In contrast, another student argued that Lund University's page contains a lot of useful articles (I7, 180-182). Interestingly, one student believes that the department/university page can be used to engage students in activities (I9, 87-89).

4.6.3 Academic formality

The academic policies have been mentioned 12 times in 4 interviews. One of the interviewees pointed that academic usage of social media might have some legal issues, as the teachers are supposed to use the official learning portal so that they guarantee the all students have access (I1, 117-120). The interviewee further argues "*the teacher can not measure how much the students can have access to this like material or online or like in the Facebook or in another like mean of social media*" (I1, 123-126). This is confirmed by another interviewee "*the official interactive platform for students and teachers*" (I2, 341). The same student states that Live@Lund (Lund University official learning management system) is still important because he/she expects every new announcement to be posted there, not in the social media, and that all students have access to it, since it is a community reserved for students and institutions (I2,307-312; I2,316-318; I6,401-403). A student even argues it is possible that "*also may be the policy of the school or university might not allow for that officially*" (I10, 113), he/she draws this conclusion by mentioning that he/she had a policy in high school which prevented teachers from being friends with students in social media (I10, 107).

4.7 Utilitarian motivations

Table 4.6: Salient quotations regarding "Utilitarian motivations"

Sub-factor	Quotations
Collaboration	"for example in Facebook, there is a group called Sudanese researchers initiative which is really big one of the biggest groups Facebook like where like a lot of Sudanese would have interest in research or academia are together" (I1, 43-45)

	<p>“many of those have worked within groups find social media applications more convenient to working in groups” (I2, 51-52)</p> <p>“you can also post thoughts and ideas of what to bring up in the meetings” (I4, 25-26)</p> <p>“social media and also we use the Google Drive and Google those two like Google Docs to write our final thing before editing it” (I9, 27-28)</p>
Engagement	<p>“if you follow the right pages and you enter the right groups you can really engage you with social media academically” (I2, 94-96)</p> <p>“Important information sharing, connectivity, engaging people” (I8, 132)</p> <p>“it kind of make it easier for me to engage in some studies and some group works” (I9, 46-47)</p> <p>“Overall I do think it helps that you can communicate and interact with the other students” (I5, 73-74)</p>
Information consumption	<p>“I was searching this like looking for something on remote sensing, and I found someone have a link to a blog in developed by one or the student in Italy” (I1, 53-55)</p> <p>“you use a hashtag about say ‘energy’ then you see exactly you filter information to limit it to exactly ‘energy’ what kind of what kind of information is flowing on ‘energy’ what people write what people say” (I2, 115-117)</p> <p>“it can help you learn things that you do not understand so well because if you have an interaction with another student's he or she can help you to understand” (I5, 257-258)</p> <p>“If all the information from that course is there, sure I will follow that” (I6, 247-248)</p>
Interaction	<p>“I update the group about my progress via the chosen social media platform like messenger” (I2, 139-140)</p> <p>“It is a medium... a way to interact virtually with some other people” (I6, 45)</p> <p>“I would say online or Internet best means of people interacting and communicating” (I2, 31-32)</p> <p>“we use WhatsApp and Facebook to discuss what we are going to do, mainly 34 by creating WhatsApp groups” (I9, 33-34)</p>

Sharing	“Whenever I know they will be like a scholarship chance or a new opening in a program I share it with other friends” (I1, 30-31)
	“we are sharing like... I do not know... articles and things that are that we are using for the University and for the learning process” (I3, 64-65)
	“there was another student in my class who decided to create a Google calendar and share it with anyone who wanted to use it so sometimes when the department is not offering a certain service other people will jump in to fill the gaps” (I10, 129-131)
	“It can sometimes be like hard to find in the library web research thing so often one of us finds it and then just post a link or upload documents to purchase a Facebook group, so we share the documents through that group” (I5, 64-66)

4.7.1 Collaboration

Collaboration factor has been mentioned 25 times in all ten interviews. Interviewees believe that using social media such as Facebook make it easy for them to collaborate since they use large scale Facebook group to solve problems (I1,43-46). The empirical findings also report that social media is useful for group work such as homework and projects (I1,79; I6, 165). Moreover, (I2, 52-56) mentioned that Facebook Messenger is a good tool if they work on a group assignment and that WhatsApp is used by many students too. The interviewees (I3,49-50; I8,47-53) also mentioned that Facebook Messenger, Viber, and WhatsApp are commonly used for collaboration. Students even use social media as a “brainstorming” and “idea generation” platform. (I4, 26) mentioned that “*you can also post your thoughts and ideas of what to bring up in the meetings.*” According to (I4,32-33; I9, 26-28; I10, 29-31), Google Drive and Google Docs are more used in essay-based assignments where the group needs to collaborate to produce a single written work. This is because “*it's usually easier to reach out through facebook than through emails or such when we use it it usually works really well*” (I4,60-61). Even students at the same class sometimes create a single Facebook group to collaborate (I4, 119-121). According to (I5,51-54; I9, 20-22), students use Facebook groups to plan their work, discuss tasks and post general comments. “Slack” (which is a type of cloud-based collaboration tool) is used by students too, though it is still considered new for them (I6, 65-67). Also, Facebook is used by students to arrange meetings (I6,428; I9, 20). Interestingly, students use Facebook groups also to communicate with their classmates for consultancy purposes (I8-153, 154).

4.7.2 Engagement

Engagement factor has been mentioned 14 times in 9 interviews. The findings regarding engagement were interesting: while (I2, 93-94) believes that social media cannot engage you academically in general, he/she believes it involves you only “*if you follow the right pages and you you enter the right groups you can really engage you with social media academically*” (I2, 94-96).

On the other hand, (I8, 132; I9, 46) believes social media is engaging and (I3,73-75) thinks that Facebook live streaming feature could be used to engage students. For example, streaming lectures can help absent students to attend it if even they are not physically present. Finally, the student (I5, 70-74) believes that social media could be more engaging in the sense that one can study and chat with friends simultaneously.

4.7.3 Information consumption

Information consumption factor has been mentioned 26 times in all ten interviews. (I1, 49-54; I1, 160) Mentioned that, when he faced a problem in processing data manually for his master thesis, he resorted to a Facebook group, asked a question and obtained an answer with a method to automate his task. Additionally, Twitter is used to find related topics. The student describes how he uses Twitter hashtags to limit his search results to the topic of interest, e.g. “energy” (I2, 114-116). Social media can be used as a source of information, helps students to learn topics that they do not completely understand. Besides, they learn from each other ideas (I3,84-85; I5, 257; I6,97-98). This is also discussed in (I4, 149-151), where she/he describes that, by following some Facebook pages, they found some reviews, journals and interesting facts. Furthermore, (I6, 246-247) mentioned that, if there are useful notifications about exams and teacher announcements, he/she will be motivated to use social media. Interestingly, (I6, 298-302) prefers only to have Facebook friends who post useful science-related material in social media. (I6,430-434) Describes how fun and useful information can be obtained by restricting social media to appropriate information: *“I was reading last time from this social media one discovery about a moon in Saturn that, well, I mean... of course they have discovered kind of a volcanic activity on their very deep eye layer around the planet”*. A student mentioned that Facebook easily keeps her updated and helps her to get more knowledge, news, and updates from the university page. In (I7, 172; I7, 193; I7, 192-196) the student concluded by saying *“it becomes like the main tool for me to get access to education material or articles”* (I7, 196). Moreover, asking questions and getting answers is also mentioned by (I8, 306). Especially, asking casual questions which are better answered by the students themselves (I10, 145-148).

4.7.4 Interaction

Interaction has been mentioned 31 times in all ten interviews. Facebook group chats are used for talking, planning tasks and reporting progress updates (I1, 160; I1, 23-25; I2, 139-140; I6,45; I9, 20-22). Students believe that social media is designed, by nature, to support interaction and communication: *“I think given its name "social" and "media" it's internet best means of people interacting and communicating”* (I2, 29-30) and they consider it as a communication mean and a good way to keep students connected: *“it's a connection for people through which they can communicate”* (I3, 20-21; I4, 14-15; I4,43-45; I8,36) and a virtual interaction medium: *“It's a medium... a way to interact virtually with some other people”* (I6,45), while another student says: *“social media now is my only way of communication with other people”* (I9, 104). Facebook Messenger helps students to discuss, to come up with ideas and to plan meetings (I5, 29-31; I5,73-74). One of the students argued that he/she prefers social media interaction for assignments, because it is easier and more comfortable: *“it's easier less time spent on conversation and also*

getting responses and are easy” (I7, 154) and *“if you're using facebook or if you're chatting with the closed group then it might be easier for you to be more comfortable”* (I7, 164-165). A student mentioned that they use WhatsApp groups for communication and interaction (I9, 33-34), while another one considers the ability to study together as a valuable trait of social media (I10, 165-167).

4.7.5 Sharing

The sharing factor has been mentioned 30 times in all ten interviews. Students use social media to promote scholarship opportunities, study programs and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (I1, 29-32). One of the students reports that he/she uses social media to share work in progress with his group, papers to whom may be interested and academic material in the news feed (I2,52-58; I2,74-77; I2,514-515). Students use a secret (or private) social media groups among them to share academic material and course literature (I3,65; I9, 24; I10,35). Facebook is used by students to share articles and related academic websites (I4,38-41). Some students mentioned that sharing academic material in Facebook groups makes it easy to find for other students and to post team work updates (I5,63-66; I7, 28). Students also share Business Insider articles, scholarships pages, and University page updates (I7,31-34; I7, 186-190). A student argued that with social media: *“You can share notes, you can share knowledge and you can share all these information in much faster way than it used to be”* (I8,91-93). Finally, students even share Google calendar for courses (if the department does not set them), opinions and insights (I10, 130; I10, 165-167).

5 Discussion

In this chapter, we discuss the observed findings of this thesis and their relation to both our research question and our research framework. In the end, we compiled all the factors in one table.

5.1 Hedonic motivations

Our findings suggest that social media helps some students to reduce academic pressure by alternating study and leisure time and by taking study breaks. It can be argued, based on Salehan et al. (2017) research, that the enjoyment and pleasure the student feels contributes directly to the overall student wellness to engage with social media for his/her studies, therefore, it is likely that this factor has some relation with the student engagement. Moreover, another interviewee claimed that they used social media to plan trips and parties, this usage can be considered both as a social integration factor contributing both vertically and socially to the interviewee social relations, but also may be regarded as a hedonic usage because the mere purpose is “having fun.” However, some students believe that social media does not make their studies is pleasant and they think work is work, even more, they consider social usage with academic require “self-discipline,” in that sense, hedonic motivation can be deemed to have relation with “distraction” concern.

5.2 Personal concerns

One of the novel findings of this study is the one related to the aspects of social media that people consider as worrying or disturbing and, therefore, discouraging them from using social media for academic purposes. This finding does not refer to the underlying cause of the problem, but rather to the fact that students are worried about it and, as a consequence, it acts as a negative factor for social media adoption. For example, it is already well-known that the Internet and social media might cause addiction in certain individuals (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011), but there are fewer insights into the level of awareness that such addiction has among people. Specifically, our investigation provides evidence of students acknowledgment of social media as an addictive (though useful) group of tools and their aversion to devote a high amount of time to them.

Likewise, it had already been proposed that some individuals prefer to stay away from social media to avoid distraction and procrastination (Hughes, Rowe, Batey & Lee, 2012). However, the studies were inconclusive on how widespread this conscientiousness was and how it affected the person’s decision about using or not using social media. Our study found that not only are students acutely aware of the distraction that social media causes on themselves, but also they describe some of the underlying mechanisms by which such distraction works. In particular, in this thesis, we found that the “candy shop effect” (i.e. the issue of having too many options to choose from) explains why students access social media with one task in mind and end up performing an entirely different one.

The content in social media is mainly user-generated, and hence it is important to measure its reliability (or credibility). Particularly, it has been found in the literature that content consumers employ at least three dimensions to assess the credibility of information: expertise, trustworthiness, and goodwill of the sender (Westerman, Spence & Van Der Heide, 2014). However, our investigation found that students base their judgment mostly on the trustworthiness of the sender and on the validity of the information. In other words, if the content comes from a reliable source and does not look “suspicious,” they consider it as credible. Additionally, the low quality of information in social media does not discourage students from using it as a source. Instead, they just try to avoid quoting or citing content from social media.

In the past, it has been found that, even though a considerable amount of students agree that social media can be a valuable tool for education (46.7%), only a few of them would be willing to use it to interact with teachers (22.6%) (Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman & Witty, 2010). In other words, social media is welcome in the classroom as long as teachers are not participants. This fact was confirmed by our empirical data with the main reason being that, due to the hierarchical nature of the teacher-student relationship, students prefer to separate personal and academic life. Furthermore, we found evidence that, when the hierarchy is removed from the equation (i.e. when teachers become ex-teachers), students were keen on adding some of their professors to their social network.

Since its beginnings, social media interaction (or online interaction, in general) has been considered of lower quality than its traditional in-person or telephone counterparts (Baym, Zhang & Lin, 2004). This reality was also verified in this study since students were emphatic about their belief that physical-world communication cannot be replaced with the social media one and that it is only with face-to-face interaction that human relationships mature. However, the collected data suggests that virtual interaction might help students with shy personality to start a conversation in a less intrusive way, thus supporting the idea of Sponcil, & Gitimu (2013) that social media provides a shyness-proof relaxed environment.

Privacy has always been a controversial issue when it comes to social media, since sharing information in an open or semi-open environment is made worse by certain features of virtual social networks that might allow unintended audiences to have access to such information (Ellison, Vitak, Steinfield, Gray & Lampe, 2011; Kietzmann et al., 2011). Indeed, our empirical findings reflected that concern when students conveyed categorically that they did not want their teachers to have access to their profile or their personal data because they believe such access might have negative consequences. Instead, email is the preferred medium for teacher-student interaction. This contradicts Roblyer et al. (2010) findings when they reported that privacy did not seem to be an issue for students because only 15.0% were worried. On the contrary, we concluded (based on our observed data) that privacy concerns are still a strong factor in social media usage in the classroom.

Being self-discipline a better predictor of academic performance than the intelligence quotient (IQ) score (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005), it was interesting to find in our observations that some students were worried about the effect that social media might have on the level of self-control that

is required to complete an academic task. Resorting to literature, it was discovered that 36% of those who tried to give up social media for a fixed period failed (Schoenebeck, 2014), so it led us to believe that self-discipline is a well-grounded concern. Indeed, our empirical data shows that students have tried to limit either the size of their social network or the amount of time they spend on it to reduce the level of willpower necessary to avoid social media distractions.

5.3 Social motivations

It was found by Salehan et al. (2017) that, in general, users employ social networking services to get to know new people and to grow their social network. However, little had been said about whether this motivation influences the decision of students to use social media for academic purposes or not. In other words, does horizontal social motivations apply to the academic context? Our empirical findings confirm that students use social media to grow their academic network, especially at (but not limited to) the beginning of their respective academic programs. Furthermore, this motivation is magnified when the students are international (rather than local) or come from different backgrounds due to the need to establish their first connections in the guest country. In agreement with Boyd & Ellison (2007), we found that people prefer to connect with other students on social media when they have shared interests. On the other hand, it was interesting to discover that some students got to know each other through social media even before arriving in the guest country or meeting physically, thus showing the influence of horizontal social motivations in its purest form. Additionally, our empirical data further confirms the fact that students (perhaps unconsciously) aim at improving their social capital by increasing both the quality and the number of connections in social media (Shah et al., 2012), since some of them exposed their desire to only connect with “interesting” people, academically speaking (including former teachers). Perhaps less surprising, we discovered that there is a strong horizontal social motivation to use social media among shy or introvert students because it allows them to start new conversations in a more impersonal environment, which in turn probably mitigates social anxiety.

In accordance with Rosli et al. (2016), our empirical data confirms that social influence (also known as “peer pressure”) does have an effect on students desire to use social media. In particular, individuals feel attracted to social media, because they do not want to be isolated from their academic group and they have an urge to be up to date with their classmates. However, in contrast to Rosli et al. (2016), we found evidence that students do frequently use social media for educational purposes. For example, many of them reported the creation of private social media groups to coordinate group assignments and collaboration. This means that, in the case of education, social influence is not related with “self-status seeking” as happens in other contexts (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009). Additionally, it also contradicts Han, Nelson & Wetter (2014) since most of our interviewees indeed conveyed that social media applications or websites do have value in the academic context and that such value is directly proportional to the number of people joining the social network. In other words, the sustainability of any social media relies on its ability to captivate its users and commit them to participate and promote the social network among their friends (Chang, Hung, Cheng & Wu, 2015). Our empirical findings indicate that an individual has no alternative, but to use the same social media application as his/her group and sometimes users

are aware of this obligation. Moreover, we found that, when one student, for one reason or another, does not comply with the “social media requirements” of the group, he or she will struggle to get along with the other team members and will find it difficult to be up to date.

It was found that vertical social motivation has a strong influence on students decision about using social media because it allows them to turn existing formal relations into friendships. Thus encouraging the emergence of academic camaraderie and further supporting the idea of Salehan et al. (2017) about social media strengthening the linkages of social connections. Taking into account that intimate relationships are more expensive to maintain in reference to the effort and time that they require (Stefanone, Lackaff & Rosen, 2011), our empirical findings suggest that students prefer to use social media as a cheap way to “keep alive” bondings with people they consider interesting and also as an “ice breaker” when they want to deepen their relationships with recent acquaintances. However, it was evident that students are unwilling to use social media to ameliorate their relationship with their teachers and that email is perceived as a considerably better option for teacher-student interaction due to its formality. In other words, the vertical social sub-factor is only a motivation when the target audience excludes teachers. The idea of interacting with social media with hierarchically superior people (teachers) generates rejection among students and probably does in other contexts such as the work-related one. On the other hand, it was found that students see this strengthening of the social connections as an opportunity for academic collaboration in the future, because, when they are allowed to select their teammates during group assignments, they usually choose to work with their closer friends or the people they feel more familiar with. In that sense, social media turns the classroom into a social game where students create groups, talk, coordinate meetings and share valuable information to achieve a common goal. Perhaps a similar behavior can be observed in the type of social game mentioned by (Salehan et al., 2017).

5.4 Technology characteristics

Our empirical data shows that certain technology characteristics encourage students to use social media. For example, as suggested by Mbodila et al. (2014), it was further confirmed in this study that familiarity with a technology results in higher participation from its users. Indeed, many of our interviewees reported to have used social media before starting their academic programs and, in that sense, we consider that there are significant opportunities to embed social media in the classroom. Moreover, taking into account natural familiarity of young students with social media, academic institutions should consider using it as their ally in the goal of reaching new pupils, thus complementing their traditional learning management systems, which, on the contrary, were found to be uncomfortable or foreign to many students.

Unsurprisingly, weak evidence was found regarding the low cost of social media as a factor stimulating students to use it for academic purposes. In fact, there is little room for differentiation, because many social media websites and applications are already free of charge. This perhaps reminds us of the Silius et al. (2010) experience at the Tampere University of Technology, where they learned that the cost-free status of an academic, social website does not generate enough motivation to guarantee its success. Instead, we have found in this investigation that it is precisely

the non-cost-related features of systems the ones that encourage a student to use it or not. This contradicts Al-Zedjali et al. (2014) conclusions about cost-free status being one of the main reasons for social media usage. We believe this contradiction is due to low internal validity in one of the constructs of Al-Zedjali et al. (2014) study and that what they were measuring is the adverse effect of the non-free status of social media on its academic usage (i.e. the opposite).

In particular, our empirical data suggests that ubiquity is an important characteristic when it comes to social media usage. Being readily available and accessible (Osatuyi & Passerini, 2016), social media creates the perfect environment for asking quick academic questions or for clarifying misleading concepts. Our participants confirmed that they significantly welcome the fact that social media provide native applications for their mobile devices because it allows them to get instant notifications independently of their location (unlike systems such as Live@Lund that, to date, only offer browser interaction). In fact, it has been suggested that this ubiquity and this high interactiveness of social media foster the emergence of shared mental models among students and positively impact their performance (Osatuyi & Passerini, 2016). As a matter of fact, Kietzmann et al. (2011) argue that: *“Should users prefer to engage in real-time, then the social media platform should offer a presence or status line indicator, along with a suitable mechanism through which these users can contact each other and interact.”* Therefore, we argue that the ubiquity aspect of social media increases the presence which has been argued by Kietzmann et al. (2011) and hence, as argued by the authors *“higher levels of social presence are likely to make conversations more influential.”*

On the other hand, it was found that it is not only the ability to be accessed everywhere what attracts students to social media, but also its open philosophy towards their users since anyone with basic computer skills and an internet connection can create a profile on almost any social network. This gives students the opportunity to obtain more information and knowledge than they would in a controlled setting (Chen & Bryer, 2012). This contrasts with institutional systems (such as Live@Lund) which are limited to members from the same university and which prevent them from establishing connections “beyond borders.” Indeed, our empirical findings showed that students do use social media to connect with colleagues from other universities. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why one of our interviewees criticized Live@Lund as a system with elitist practices in the sense that only privileged people (i.e. students) can use it and that the average citizen is denied access to the educational material in such system.

Regarding user experience (UX), our results agree with Al-Zedjali et al. (2014) about ease of use (user - friendliness) and attractiveness being factors that influence students on their decision to use social media. In particular, our participants stated how social media applications are easier to use than traditional learning management systems (such as Live@Lund). As previously mentioned, this is particularly the case in the event of mobile devices, since social media websites usually provide its users with enriched native applications. Furthermore, it was found that Live@Lund was considered by students as unattractive, weird, a system with usability issues, with a lack of instant notifications and which requires more steps from the user than necessary to complete a task (inefficient). This way of contrasting social media with dedicated institutional systems helped us

to recognize that students (and perhaps users in general) take usability very seriously and therefore it is an important factor for social media adoption in the classroom.

5.5 University/teacher support

Our findings have two folds, the first of them is strongly compatible with the literature while the second is considered novel. *Firstly*, department sharing and teachers interaction factors have been proved to be influential on the academic usage of social media. As introduced by Oppici et al. (2014) where they argue that social media is a news broadcasting platform, our findings reveal that the fact that Lund University is broadcasting news and updates on their web page make students follow the page and keep themselves updated. Even more, our findings disclose more aspects and show departments use social media to post jobs, Ph.D. positions, and thesis defense sessions. Moreover, our results confirm that some students experienced when social media was used as a medium for collaboration and communication with the teacher as argued by (Lovari & Giglietto, 2012). However, despite this, some students have the perception that their departments are not making full use of social media and believe they can exploit it better. This could be, for example, creating a special Facebook account where students can directly ask questions to the department coordinator and get interactive answers.

Secondly, our findings suggest that academic formality and institutional policies have an impact on the academic usage of the social media, one of the students argued that it is necessary for the teacher to be assured that all students will have access to the educational material and announcements if it is published only in social media. This is backed by the fact that the learning management systems are “the official literature source” and it is where students expect. Moreover, the fact a student pointed out that during his high school year there was a policy preventing students and teachers from being friends in social media (I10, 107), could open some door of research for us to investigate whether some institutions imposes some policies to restrict academic usage of social media.

Finally, our research findings suggest that interacting with teachers and privacy aspects are interrelated and that students prefer to keep their social media groups closed as it protects their privacy from teaching staff, in contrast to traditional learning management systems where discussions are open and easily accessible by students and professors. The empirical evidence in this aspect requires being investigated thoroughly in a separate research to get a clearer picture of the impact of academic policies of the social media adoption.

5.6 Utilitarian motivations

Unsurprisingly, utilitarian motivations are some of the most extensively supported aspects of our findings. Since social media websites are collaborative by nature (Nández & Borrego, 2013), they are appropriate for team-based tasks. Our results showed that students use Facebook groups to solve exams and therefore they are in line with the idea introduced by Nández & Borrego (2013) and (Guto, 2017) where they claimed that social media could be employed by students to solve or discuss exams. However, we found that the “brainstorming” and “idea generation” aspects were

novel to our research and had not been mentioned in the literature we reviewed. Moreover, the “communication” and “interaction” aspects that we encountered in the literature, involved only students from the same class (Nández & Borrego, 2013; Al-Zedjali et al., 2014). Nonetheless, our empirical data suggests that Facebook groups are not only used within one class of students. For example, some groups involve senior students as a mechanism to get advice and consultancy. This outcome further shapes our understanding of how the participation in social media (through collaboration) contributes to the academic experience of the students. Our gathered data also suggests that Facebook Messenger and Google Docs are some of the most commonly used social media applications when it comes to student collaboration. However, we did not find evidence supporting the self-marketing or brand building aspects introduced by (Nández & Borrego, 2013). We believe this is because their investigation was focused on social media usage by academic researchers, who evidently might be more interested in developing their personal brand or professional outlook.

The engagement of students in social media for academic purposes is debatable. On the one hand, future teachers believe that social media websites are a valuable tool to engage pupils due to their user-friendliness and usefulness (Sadaf, Newby, & Ertmer, 2012). On the other, some students believe that social media does engage them in their studies as long as they follow the right pages and they maintain self-discipline. Moreover, the suggestion made by a student about using social media live streaming feature as a method to broadcast lectures, opens new doors for employing social media in the e-learning domain. However, engagement should not be considered a separate entity, because it is related to the concept of addiction and self-discipline. What our informants believe is that engagement in social media might be simply a side-effect of an addiction issue which they do not perceive. Furthermore, it can be argued that the more self-disciplined a student be (avoiding being distracted by social media), the clearer it is the distinction between the concepts of addiction and engagement. We suggest that, if a follow-up quantitative study is to be carried out, then the operationalization of the concepts of “engagement” and “addiction” should be performed carefully to guarantee the internal validity of the constructs. Needless to say, the testing of the current theoretical framework is outside the scope of this thesis.

The utilization of social media as a direct or indirect source of information is well grounded in our empirical findings. Direct sourcing refers to the case when social media is used as a fountain of information by itself, whereas indirect sourcing alludes to social media being used as an intermediary tool which eventually leads to useful information sources. For instance, it has been mentioned how a student used social media to ask for information about a challenge he faced on a technical issue. This would be an example of direct information consumption and supports the idea of Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) when he says that social media is used by students if it has valuable content. Another example of using social media as a direct source of information is when one of the students reported using the “energy” hashtag to find all energy-related news on Twitter. On the other hand, some students reported employing social media to obtain information about journals, reviews, articles and other useful resources. The latter would be a case of using social media as an indirect information source, which is also mentioned by (Ibid), although they do not explicitly call it “indirect.” To the best of our knowledge, we are the first authors to classify social media as an

information source that can be either direct or indirect. Finally, two additional aspects are worth mentioning: first, it is critical to understand social media as a source of information in the context of information reliability. An individual's trust in social media depends on the truthfulness and verifiability of the source. This is supported by Alhazmi & Rahman (2014) where they argue: "*The frequent dissemination of updates with relevant, organized, authentic and resourceful content is what the students suggested would help them invest more time in academic activities on Facebook.*" Secondly, social media as an information source is always a side-effect in the activity of sharing. Evidently, it is not possible to consume private or hidden information. However, the reverse is not always true, since it is certainly feasible to have shared content without consumers (regardless of the reasons).

On the other hand, social media has created a virtual parallel world where students can easily interact and communicate with each other without changing their physical locations. The literature strongly supports our findings. For example, Nández & Borrego (2013) and Al-Zedjali et al. (2014) claimed that social media is suited for both scholarly communication and academic interaction. The empirical data reported that social media is used for meeting coordination and task delegation. Perhaps these aspects can be directly related to the technology characteristics factor, because it is precisely the features of social media the ones that allow communication in the first place (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Interestingly, it may be argued that there is a bidirectional causality relationship between engagement and interaction. In other words, student engagement can lead to student interaction and vice versa. Once again, a proper examination and testing of this relation would require quantitative research, and it is considered outside the scope of this thesis.

Finally, sharing in social media is an activity that is well documented in our findings. Students share a diverse gamut of types of content: from courses and educational material to progress updates and scholarship opportunities. It can be argued that social media characteristics and its connectivity make it a suitable platform to disseminate academic and research material, among other kinds of useful content. This is supported by (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013; Nández & Borrego, 2013; Han et al., 2016). For example, the ability to create secret Facebook groups by students (and without any professor taking part) make students feel private and less monitored, in contrast to traditional learning management systems, which are typically governed by the same academic institution the student belongs. Last but not least, it is worth to mention that the sharing concept is also closely related to the interaction one. Indeed, more often than not students interact and share simultaneously (e.g. taking advantage of Google Drive to collaborate on documents and, at the same time, using its chat to interact and communicate). Moreover, the sharing concept typically comes in pairs with the information consumption one, as previously discussed.

5.7 Consolidated factors

In Table 5.1, we show a unified list of the factors that influence students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes, and it is a compilation of the information presented in sections 5.1 to 5.6. By analyzing our qualitative data, we were able to classify each factor based on its type and strength of influence. A positive type of influence means that the factor fosters social media

usage for educational purposes. Conversely, a negative influence represents a factor that discourages students from using social media for the same purposes. On the other hand, a factor with a strong influence is considered to play a decisive role in the choice made by students. On the contrary, a weak factor only supports the decision and might be dispensable or redundant in certain cases. In general, utilitarian motivations, technology characteristics and personal concerns are deemed to be some of the most influential factors in the decision of students. Nonetheless, the fallibilist approach of this thesis leaves this consolidation open for future refinement (Seale, 1999). In other words, we recognize that both the type and strength of these factors might be found to be different in future studies or even that new factors might be discovered. From our side, we have made sure that the reader has all the necessary information to corroborate our findings and to apply them in other cases or settings, as suggested by (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Figure 5.1 presents a visual summary of factors influencing students decision to use social media; this is complemented by Table 5.1 where each sub-factor evidence strength is included. The evidence strength was decided in an interpretive and subjective manner.

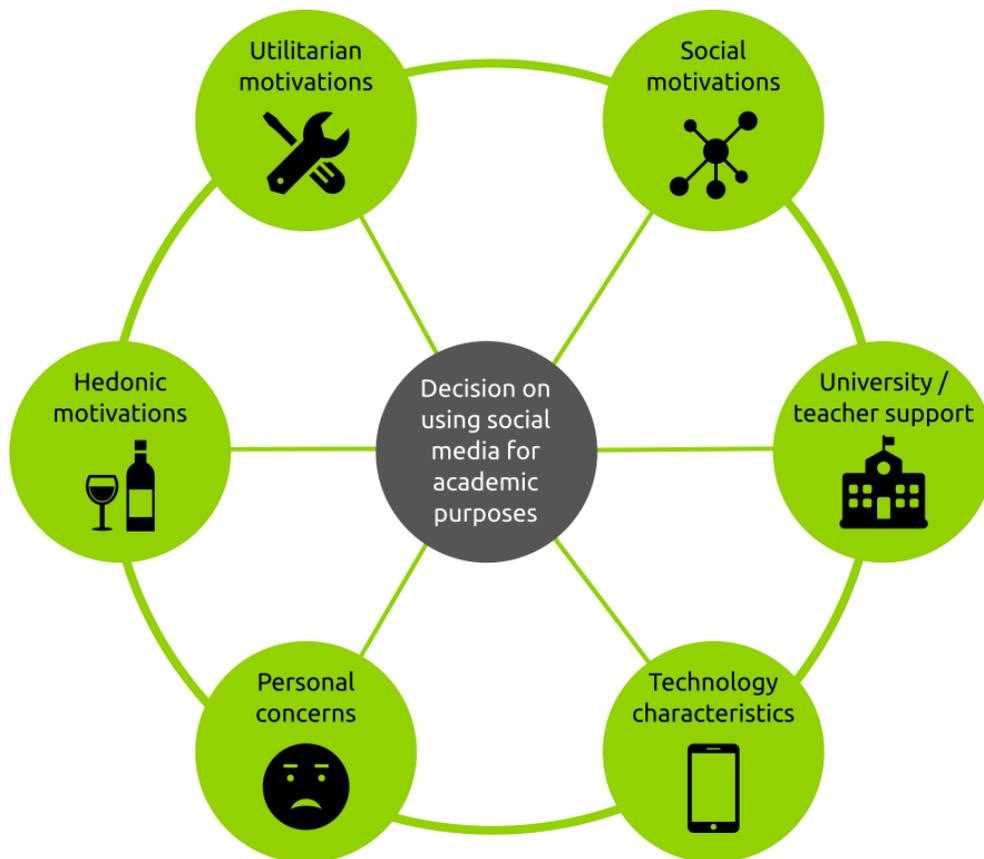


Figure 5.1: Final framework

Table 5.1: Factors influencing students on their decision to use social media

Factor	Sub-factors	Strength of evidence
Hedonic motivations	Stress mitigation	Weak
	Integration planning	Weak
	Alternating leisure and study	Weak
Personal concerns	Information reliability	Strong
	Mixing academic and personal life	Strong
	Privacy	Strong
	Addiction	Strong
	Distraction	Strong
	Physical contact	Strong
	Self-discipline	Strong
Social motivations	Social influence	Strong
	Vertical social motivation	Strong
	Horizontal social motivation	Strong
Technology characteristics	Efficiency	Strong
	Familiarity	Strong
	Interactivity	Strong
	Ubiquity	Strong
	User - friendliness	Strong
	Low cost or cost free	Weak
	Openness	Strong
University/teacher support	Teachers sharing information	Weak
	Department sharing information	Weak
	Academic formality	Weak
Utilitarian motivations	Collaboration	Strong
	Engagement	Strong
	Information consumption	Strong
	Interaction	Strong
	Sharing	Strong

6 Conclusion

The following section summarizes the main findings of this thesis and culminates this investigation with an attempt to answer the research question by employing the empirical findings. Here we also describe the implications that this study might have for practitioners along with current limitations and proposals for further inquiry.

6.1 Research question

The purpose of this thesis was to delve into the factors that affect the decision of university students about using social media for academic purposes. We did so by introducing an initial research framework with concepts extracted from the literature and then organizing them into five main categories or themes. Subsequently, we were able to collect qualitative data that supported our research framework to a greater or lesser extent. Also, we were capable of extending our initial proposal by inductively detecting a sixth factor in the gathered empirical data, thus concluding the study with a more holistic view of the phenomenon.

6.2 Outline of empirical findings

Our empirical evidence suggests that there are six factors influencing students on their academic usage of social media: hedonic motivations, personal concerns, social motivations, technology characteristics, university/teacher support and utilitarian motivations. Unsurprisingly, utilitarian incentives are some of the dominant factors, as students seem to be using social media to collaborate, engage, interact, consume and share information. On the other hand, there is weak empirical evidence supporting hedonic factors and few interviewees mentioned stress mitigation, events planning or study-leisure mixture as their reasons for using social media. Likewise, universities and teachers were found to play an insignificant role in persuading students to use social media. In contrast, social motivations (and their three sub-factors) were strongly supported by both the literature and our empirical findings, which insinuates that, despite its formality and individualistic appearance, the university is still seen by students as a social system.

Interestingly, the facilities provided by social media technologies also constitute an important factor for its adoption in the classroom. Not only are social media more efficient than traditional learning management systems in the sense that they allow students to do more with less (e.g. working in groups without a physical meeting), but they are also closer to students when it comes to familiarity, interactivity, openness, ubiquity and usability (user - friendliness). In general, it was thought-provoking to find that social media websites are, in many ways, superior to the systems that were specifically designed to support education. However, it is also sensible to acknowledge that social media applications are, by no means, idyllic academic tools (and they were not intended to be so). This fact is reflected on the several issues that students expressed being worried about and that we deliberately categorized as “Personal concerns” in this thesis. Taking the latter into

account, we suggest that social media should be deemed as a complement (rather than a replacement) to institutional academic systems. Additionally, social media might serve as an inspiration for any system aiming at generating an engaging experience among students.

6.3 Implications for academic institutions and practitioners

Our first practical suggestion for institutions and academic departments is that they might take advantage of social media to establish a new channel of communication with students. Indeed, universities tend to use email due to its formal status, but given the high penetration of social media into the student population, we believe that some experimentation should be done with less traditional channels. For example, departments can engage in interactive conversations with students and candidates. As previously mentioned, social media websites are not mutually exclusive technology, but rather they are complementary for learning management systems. Therefore, academic institutions might still benefit from a complementary (but strategic) usage of it.

Our second practical implication is for teachers, because they are in a good position to interact with students in social media, thus enriching the learning process. It is true that privacy is still a concern for the students. However, we believe it is possible to experiment with less intrusive social tools, such as Slack channels or Facebook groups, where teachers and students can share a common academic ground without becoming “friends” and without disclosing their personal life. In other words, if the right measures are taken, we are confident that it is possible for students and teachers to overcome the barrier generated by privacy concerns regarding social media.

A third practical implication involves LMS vendors: it is evident that social media has started to progressively take over many duties which were in charge of traditional learning management systems in the past, so we think it is advisable for LMS vendors to diminish their rigidity and to look for integration mechanisms with social media websites or applications. Otherwise, social media providers will probably continue to permeate the LMS arena in the future and to relegate even more institutional systems (such as Live@Lund) to the low interactive and download-only tools they are today.

Last but not least, the practical implication for students is that social media can be both beneficial and detrimental for academic purposes (as previously discussed). However, with proper usage and with user awareness of the common issues (such as addiction and distraction), social media can become a valuable complement to learning management systems and an important instrument for students to strengthen their learning process.

6.4 Limitations and further research

The selected informants in this research were limited to students from Lund University, and therefore it is possible that generalizability has been affected. Also, this investigation did not interview students from all the University departments, and it never intended to do so (due to time

constraints). Instead, we are confident that the collected data was enough to propose a comprehensive initial framework explaining the phenomenon (theory building) and that there is an opportunity for a subsequent study to quantitatively validate our findings (theory testing) by determining the exact correlation between the constructs.

Having said that, it is our opinion that future qualitative research should focus on refining and increasing the generalizability of our research framework by strategically selecting informants from other universities and other countries. It is also our suggestion that innovative data collection methods (such as recorded workshops with students) are tried in an attempt to extract new interesting findings.

Appendix 1 – Table of factors and generated interview questions

Factor	Generated interview question
<p><u>University/teacher support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify the role of social media in communication between university/teacher and students</i> • <i>Identify the role of social media in broadcasting from university/teachers to students</i> 	<p>Do you interact with your teachers in social media? If yes, how? If no, how do you think it can help?</p> <p>Do your teachers share educational material with you on social media? If yes, how? If no, do you think it can help?</p> <p>Does your department share news/necessary information on social media? If yes, how, you think it is useful? If no, do you think it can help?</p>
<p><u>Technology characteristics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify the characteristics of social media that are relevant to students regarding their academic activities</i> 	<p>Do you think some characteristics of social media websites makes them more attractive than other tools? Can you give some examples? Why?</p> <p>Do you prefer to use social media to support your studies instead of L@L? In what cases? Why?</p>
<p><u>Utilitarian motivations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify how students use social media to collaborate</i> • <i>Identify how students use social media to share</i> • <i>Identify how students use social media to engage into studies</i> • <i>Identify how students use social media to consume useful information</i> 	<p>Do you use social media in your group work? If yes, how, <i>what social media do you use?</i> If no, why?</p> <p>Do you use any social media to share academic content? If yes, how, <i>what social media do you use?</i> If no, why?</p> <p>Do you think social media can engage you more into your studies? If yes, how? If no, Why?</p> <p>Do you think social media can be a useful source of information for your studies ? If yes, how? If now, why?</p>
<p><u>Hedonic motivations</u></p>	<p>Do you think it is possible to use social media to make your studies more pleasant? In what ways?</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Verify if students can hedonically use social media to support their studies</i> 	<p>Do you think it is “fun” to study with social media? Why?</p>
<p><u><i>Social motivations</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify if students use social media to strengthen their existing social relationships in their academic environment</i> • <i>Identify if students use social media to develop new social relationships in their academic environment</i> • <i>Identify if students are influenced by their peers in their decision to use social media for academic purposes</i> 	<p>Do you think social media contributes to improve your social relationships in your class or in your academic programme?</p> <p>Do you think social media help you to develop new social relationships in your class or in your academic programme?</p> <p>Do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media impacts your desire to use it? Why?</p>

Appendix 2 – Interview consent form



LUND UNIVERSITY

Interview consent form

Research project title: Factors influencing students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes

Investigators: Pedro Bonilla
Mohammed Osman

The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. We do not anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken by Swedish institutions require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- You will be sent the transcript and given the opportunity to correct any factual errors
- The transcript of the interview will be analyzed by Pedro Bonilla and Mohammed Osman as investigators
- The interview transcript might be published in Lund University Publications Student Papers (LUP-SP). However, the publication will never contain personal data that allow third-parties to identify you.
- Any summary of the interview content or direct quotations from the interview, which are made available through academic publications or other academic outlets, will be anonymized, so that you cannot be identified. Furthermore, care will be taken to ensure that other identifying information in the interview is not revealed.
- The actual recording will be kept
- Any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

By signing this form, I agree that:

- I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I do not have to take part and I can stop the interview at any time.
- The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above.
- I have read the Information Sheet.
- I do not expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation.
- I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality.
- I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

Participant's printed name

Participant's signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

Appendix 3 – Interview protocol

Factors influencing students on their decision to use social media for academic purposes

Semi-structured interview

Preliminary version: Day, Month, Year

Updated version: Day, Month, Year

Interviewer			
Interviewee name			
Interview place		Interviewee age	
Interview date		Interviewee gender	
Type of interview	In-person/Skype	Interviewee study level	
Start time		Interviewee field of study	
End time		Interviewee email address	

Self-Introduction: My name is _____ and I am an Information Systems master student doing research on the usage of social media usage in academy.

Note for the Interviewer: First of all, thank the interviewee for his/her time and collaboration, and ask permission to record the interview. Kindly explain that this is necessary to comply with the international standards of scientific research, and to let you listen carefully without the concern of taking notes. Reassure your interviewee that he/she has the possibility to get part of the recording canceled in case it is appropriate. The collected data will be treated as confidential, and the interviewee's identity will not be recognizable in future publications including these data. We would be thankful if you elaborate as much as possible in your answers as your experience is valuable for our research.

When we use the term social media we mean: any website or application whose content is mainly generated by its users.

-
1. Are you a student? (warm-up question)

2. Where do you study? And what academic program do you belong to? (warm-up question)
3. What do you think is social media? Can you give me some examples of social media websites or applications? (warm-up question)

4. Do you use social media in your group work? If yes, how, *what social media do you use?* If no, why?
5. Do you use any social media to share academic content? If yes, how, *what social media do you use?* If no, why?
6. Do you think social media can engage you more into your studies? If yes, how? If no, Why?
7. Do you think social media can be a useful source of information for your studies? If yes, how? If no, why?

Probing keywords:

- Collaboration
- Sharing
- Engagement
- Information consumption

Examples:

- Solve exams together
- Discussion and reflection
- Collecting research data from the crowd
- Broadcasting and marketing academic research
- Keeping up with academic research state of art
- Self-marketing and brand building
- Looking for jobs
- Getting relevant and resourceful content
- Getting course material, syllabus and test scores
- Communicating and interacting with others

8. Do you think it is possible to use social media to make your studies more pleasant? In what ways?
9. Do you think it is “fun” to study with social media? Why?

Probing keywords:

- Combining study and leisure time
- Blending informal with formal learning

Examples:

- Converting formal teaching relation to informal

10. Do you think social media contributes to improving your social relationships in your class or in your academic program?
11. Do you think social media help you to develop new social relationships in your class or in your academic program?
12. Do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media impacts your desire to use it? Why?

Probing keywords:

- Social influence
- Vertical social motivations
- Horizontal social motivations

Examples:

- Maintaining relations with colleagues
- Expanding connections pool

13. Do you interact with your teachers in social media? If yes, how? If no, how do you think it can help?
14. Do your teachers share educational material with you on social media? If yes, how? If no, do you think it can help?
15. Does your department share news/necessary information on social media? If yes, how, you think it is useful? If no, do you think it can help?

Probing keywords:

- Faculty social media adoption
- Communication
- Broadcasting

Examples:

- Fostering Facebook discussions
- Polling course evaluations
- Answering students inquiries from Facebook accounts
- Twitter as news channel
- Interaction dialogs with students

16. Do you think some characteristics of social media websites makes them more attractive than other tools? Can you give some examples? Why?
17. Do you prefer to use social media to support your studies instead of L@L? In what cases? Why?

Probing keywords:

- Ease of use/familiarity
- Flexibility / customizability
- Convenience

Examples:

- Mobility
- Ability to get feedback easily
- Funny and friendly usage compared to traditional LMS
- Flexibility compared to rigid LMS
- Ease of use and familiarity
- Personalized and interactive learning
- Free-of-charge feature

18. In what other ways do you think social media contribute to your studies?

Note for the interviewer: ask the interviewee's help to identify and contact further possible informants and prospect interviewees.

At what time was this interview concluded?

Final notes, comments or further details by the interviewer:

.....

Appendix 4 – Transcriptions

Interview 1 (I1)

Date:	2017-04-18
Present:	Mohammed Osman and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	20 minutes
Transcribed by:	Mohammed Osman
Transcription date:	2017-04-19

1	M:okay first of all I would like to thank you for your time for accepting this interview invitation my name
2	is Mohammad Osman and master student from Lund University doing research in the academic usage of
3	social media
4	Missing...
5	M: so i would like to start by asking you are a student?
6	Missing...
7	M: okay where do you study or which academic program did you study?
8	Missing...
9	M: okay ah ah what do you think about social media when I say social media what do you think of?
10	X: the first word that comes my mind now they'd be like wasting time or like an addictive all the all the
11	ideas we can be seen as a negative way in the beginning but when you go deep like did you really think
12	about it and you need to weigh the negative and positive impact of social media so the discussion can
13	go like more more deeper and more I think clear but like when the first word the first like they come to
14	my mind when you say social media it is like a negative impact of my life wasting time ,addiction
15	spending a lot of time on it and something like that
16	M: okay interesting can you give me some examples of social media applications or websites that you
17	know or use?
18	X: yeah I I use like Facebook on a daily basis I use Instagram I use WhatsApp and I'm not sure what is
19	called LinkedIn is like professional job hunting network with the same time the majority of the content

20	is made by the users so if you can count goes like social media or not
21	M: awesome ok interesting yeah it's generally counted as a professional social media ,so okay if we drift
22	into social media in academics did you use social media in your group work?
23	X: yeah yeah we use a lot of original master lately we like whenever we have like a group work the first
24	thing we do we let me make like a chat group in Facebook and we use this chat group for like planning
25	where we are going to meet what we are going to do and if someone have like data to we can pool the
26	data using the social media group or messenger group
27	M: okay okay that's interesting do you use it to share academic content?
28	X: like some time like I use I use my social media account for promoting like soft like sort of like
29	programs which I think you're like my fellow people from my back to my home country so for instant like
30	whenever I know they will be like a scholarship chance or a new opening in a program I share it with
31	other friends and sometimes I would sure like sound like articles which are of my interest like for
32	remote sensing and GIS and also another time is shares us like the MOOC the online course, the free
33	one. everyone with access to Internet can make use of it
34	M: okay interesting do you think social media engage you to your studies or it distracts you or it could be
35	a combination of both?
36	X: This is really a tough question because it depends like on which certain time for instance so sometimes
37	it helps me when I have like a lot of academic work to do I use social media like a breeze like just like
38	take like a couple minutes with social media and to reduce the stress when I have like academic
39	academic pressure and sometimes you lose yourself with social media but I don't know if you count also
40	YouTube as a social media because YouTube is full of materials is really good for about like for academic
41	purpose and also for the like cat videos with also for wasting a lot of time
42	M: okay that's interesting so do you think it could be a useful source of information by it myself?
43	X: Yeah indeed indeed like for example in Facebook there is a group called Sudanese researchers

44	initiative which is really big one of the biggest groups Facebook like we're like a lot of Sudanese would
45	have interest research or academia are together and if we watch the group like they have a problem
46	with something like this is a problem and can while I can more than handle answer for the same
47	problem of someone like knows like a good opportunity go and promote it there so in that in that
48	context social media a very helpful for the academia I've not only got that group the other groups also
49	like for me like there is some groups more specialized like some disciplinary for me this there is like that
50	group called GIS professional or like a surveyor professional or remote sensing students so whenever
51	you go there and it's helps me I actually had me last last last year when i was doing my thesis i was i was
52	looking for like i need to do a lot of data processing and i have to be like in a manual way i will select
53	with time consuming and competition consuming also so like i was searching this like looking for
54	something on remote sensing and I found someone have a link to a blog in developed by one or the
55	student in Italy is like a semi-automatic usually review the blogging we save a lot of time and effort and i
56	get there from the social media so i think was it helpful and it could be more helpful if we in the right
57	way
58	M: okay okay that's really interesting so do you think it makes your studies pleasant?
59	X: oh i don't know like how how can you elaborate more in the question I don't get it?
60	M: oh yeah i mean do you find it like funny studying with social media like studying and chatting at the
61	same time thinks like this?
62	X: oh yeah it could be but sometimes we get distracted like when when you're trying to do the whole
63	thing it is not easy and you need to have strong control yourself so you screw it down like searching for
64	something interesting and then you end up watching something like something irrelevant or like really
65	coming irrelevant at all so if you can keep yourself on track and try to find mine for do like for specific
66	things that would be help of what try to is like easy to get lost in the detail or like in the social context so

67	M: okay interesting so would you say it's fun to study social media?
68	X: yeah it could be fun, even even like we use social media to plan the parties and trips after after
69	finishing the school
70	M: okay that's interesting okay so if we come to the relations with your classmates do you think social
71	media improves your social relationships in the class?
72	X: indeed indeed it is quite helpful imagine if you your only contact with your friend you're like
73	classmates with these they like their emails so they're going to be super tough but through the social
74	media like Facebook and Instagram if you get more is that more social social and personal aspects on it
75	so it turns from classmates to friendship so if loses a bit of the formality of being a class only and
76	especially if you if you talk about people doing like a master level of courses where when we will already
77	have big struggle to follow their life people with the mentality I am here to study without and it just having
78	fun or anything else so social media to just bridge the gap between people and make them more closer
79	and it is quite helpful when when you work in a team like so the collaboration and when you have like
80	we should be like no boundaries with some boundaries at the same time so they'll be like respect but
81	more easygoing working environment could be like created using with the help of the social media
82	ready
83	M: okay that's really interesting so what about developing new relationships with your classmates do
84	you think social media contribute students?
85	X: I think social medias could be like to ease the way for me like personally I'm like face to face person
86	I'm nothing like a lot of doing I can chat with you to organize a sort of event so I remember like the first
87	semester where we were here in Sweden there something called Samladag where the Swedish celebrate
88	like one day over a year eating expected kind of bakeries and pastries and one of our friends he
89	created a small group and added seven or six people from our class we just know each other but not like

90	very much and all the class tested Samla after the class and through a Facebook invitation all of us went
91	and had like cookie and pastries and it was nice and helped us to know each other more or some time
92	outside of the classroom which was really a pleasant and quite quite nice work with and of course of like
93	using social media from the beginning
94	M: okay that's interesting so if I ask you do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using
95	social media is this why you are using social media it is a peer pressure?
96	X: no i mean I am in social media almost like for almost 8
97	when I was doing my bachelor's degree like I think two of us on your three of us had Facebook accounts
98	and they were making fun of us why using Facebook no one is using Facebook it could be like this when
99	wind way like the social media becoming trendy other people feel the pressure to keep up with it like for
100	instance now I'm feeling the pressure to have in Snapchat because we have a lot of line is my classmate
101	or like my friend how many snapshots on this land they talking about you all the time so I'm thinking or
102	should i get is because my friend or my classmate have it or not but it exists the fact it's the other people
103	using the that mean of social media it puts all the pressure of you to do it also so that you don't feel left
104	out or isolated or not up to date with what is going on
105	M: not okay okay that's really interesting so if we drift a bit and ask about your teachers and professors
106	do they use social media to contact you or communicate you or something?
107	X: no no no like I have like one of my teacher here I'm a friend with him a Facebook he is using even for
108	contacting me using for other things like promoting so sometimes I can academic work so whenever he
109	publish something new can write and let me Facebook after publishing and put a link or about it all
110	about that thing but that is only one for my school here in Sweden who I sort of social media
111	M: okay do you think it would be useful if teacher follow this or do ?
112	X: this oh I think it could be good i don't like an example back from Sudan like one of one of people i
113	know who was working as a tutor so he was really active on social media so I would say every daily basis

114	he writes the exercises and the homework for the students to it and put it online so they can submit it
115	to Dropbox file and you go down and see the post and the comment a final the interaction between him
116	and his students so it could be like quite helpful but i think the academic with like with the academic
117	formality to go to to the diversity portal for like is informing students about that is could have a sort of
118	like a legal consequence because you are not sure that all the students will have it in a social media
119	account so that can present in social media but by the law or by the university rules everyone should
120	have like a university email address which they can get information about the class or homework
121	M: okay okay that's very interesting point so what what do you think if your teachers do this like share
122	academic material do you think it would be useful?
123	X: maybe it could be useful but you should be like, if the teacher can not measure how much the
124	students can have access to this like material or online or like in the Facebook or in another like mean of
125	social media or not unless for example in our department we have like this page run by the IT
126	coordinator of our department he don't publish was so called academic material but he publish if there
127	is like someone doing a PhD defense, master thesis defense or like it there like a public lecture like an
128	opening position or there is a job you get like a notice from the Department web page and I find that
129	thing and I find that very interesting because specially as a alumni after school I don't usually one check
130	my university website on a daily basis as I check my social media on a daily basis so if there is a chance
131	here I should follow it or a professor coming from the states or a public lecture here in Lund University
132	so I can go and attend it
133	M: okay okay that's really interesting so if I ask you what are the characteristics of social media that that
134	make them attractive for you to use in your academic studies?
135	X: the easy access and it is attractive a graphical way if you think about the University portal isn't that

136	more like graphically attractive as Instagram or Facebook or Snapchat or like being in whatever and they
137	are up to date all time to be up to it and it also could be sort of user based content like to the content
138	could be developed by users can be other student or like other like scholars or think of it is it doing more
139	of interactivity between between the both side of like me and other people sharing information
140	M: okay okay that's interesting if we convert compare to your University portal which is Live@Lund so
141	what do you think like the pros and cons of both?
142	X: be honest I never use Live@Lund so I everything you can find in these social media I never tried to use
143	source like this Live@Lund so I can't compare between them ?
144	M: even like to download the course literature or articles or something like?
145	X: we don't use Live@Lund, for every course we have a website from our department so we don't go
146	through Live@Lund or something
147	M: okay so if you compare it with the website of your department what do you think?
148	X: I would go on the website in this case because I want to be sure like everything is there I don't wanna
149	miss anything
150	M: okay but for example I think it in the website of your department you are having some features like
151	discussion features,portal features where students can discuss right?
152	X: yeah I think it but I am not that active actually for me my whole group was discussing our chat group
153	more than the academic portal or university website
154	M:yeah so why do you do it like in the chat group rather than the department website ?
155	X:maybe because of for sake of simplicity or maybe because when you are not in a chat group you
156	disclose like be like only three or four of us only,while when you do it in a portal it will be seen for
157	everyone and even professors and it is less formal
158	M: okay okay interesting the final question is is there any other ways do you think that social media
159	contribute to your studies?
160	X: I think beside getting information contacting with people, relieving stress when you are working hard
161	on anything at the school a maybe could be good for for sharing content taking the news during and like
162	if you're coordinating any in any sort of program or even promoting things

163	M: okay okay that's interesting okay then this concludes our interview thank you very much for your
164	time and thank you yeah work out good luck with your project okay thank you very much

Interview 2 (I2)

Date:	2017-04-16
Present:	Pedro Bonilla and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	46 minutes
Transcribed by:	Pedro Bonilla
Transcription date:	2017-04-17

1	Pedro: hello I'm Pedro Bonilla I'm a researcher from Lund University and I'm going to ask you
2	some questions about how you use social media and what are the factors that motivate you to
3	use social media. First of all I would... I will tell you some conditions like this interview will be
4	recorded but it would be anonymous, so just try to not mention your name and we will analyze
5	the content of this interview but it will remain anonymous even on the publication and this
6	interview is totally voluntarily so if you want to stop at any time we can do it if you feel
7	uncomfortable with this
8	
9	Student: ok
10	
11	Pedro: first tell me what is your age
12	
13	Student: 29
14	
15	Pedro: 29. Are you a student?
16	
17	Student: Yes
18	
19	Pedro: what do you study?
20	
21	Student: the Masters in development studies
22	
23	Pedro: what university do you study?
24	
25	Student: Lund... Lund University
26	
27	Pedro: Please tell me what do you think is social media?
28	

29	Student: Well, I think given its name "social" and "media" it's Internet best means of people
30	interacting and communicating. it can mean a lot but yeah in many ways the word social
31	constraints what really people do on this Internet-based applications yeah I would say online or
32	Internet best means of people interacting and communicating
33	
34	Pedro: okay it's a very good definition... and can you give me some examples of social media
35	
36	Student: And the most prominent not from prominent really but the most widely known is
37	Facebook then you have twitter, you have photo best applications like Instagram and yeah
38	
39	
40	Pedro: what about WhatsApp?
41	
42	Student: WhatsApp
43	
44	Pedro: do you use it?
45	
46	Student: I use it. Viber, messenger
47	
48	Pedro: That's good. So please tell me and do you use social media when you have group
49	assignments or group work?
50	
51	Student: yes, I many times because many students many of those have worked within groups
52	find social media applications more convenient to working in groups. For example, messenger
53	Facebook messenger where you can come together in a group and start sharing if you're
54	working on their on their own a topic an assignment you can work with without having to meet
55	you can only share your progress same but also others WhatsApp so yeah it's quite convenient
56	for students
57	
58	Pedro: okay so you use it the more or less like to coordinate
59	
60	Student: coordinate coordinate
61	
62	Pedro: okay and do you use a social media to share academic content?
63	

64	Student: well in a sense of student work in a sense of students related work but not... because
65	sharing social media language means also having a public aspect like for example when you
66	got Facebook and ask you what's in your mind when you share you know lightly not invest that
67	sense about sharing with within a working group you know that I'd be the most prominent use of
68	social media to share this kind of academic content like work in progress
69	
70	Pedro: okay what kind of content?
71	
72	Student: in this case I'm talking about like student assignments this kind of content but not
73	sharing like that sharing like for example if you were you're my classmate and I'm working on
74	say my paper and i want you to comment to do this back and forth communications it's kind of
75	restricted you know that's the most you at least for me as well as they know most do i use it
76	share but sharing academic content as this means like sharing finished work to the public like
77	the way you share feeds on Facebook that's not so common
78	
79	Pedro: okay and do you think social media can engage you more in your study like yeah making
80	you study more let's say?
81	
82	Student: i think yes but also them twist that question the other way around because you know if
83	you think of social media now apart from of applications like WhatsApp where you only have to
84	you know there is no platform where other you can see what other people doing but applications
85	like Facebook like twitter these ones are like community where you need to know exactly what
86	you want and because in a community people are doing lots of different things you may not
87	know what they're doing if you don't know how to look forward they're going so this application
88	like Facebook and Twitter you need to know exactly with kind of groups which kinds of like for
89	example keywords this language they call them hashtags you know if you are looking for

90	something to do it they for example social media and academics what kind of platforms you
91	need to look for what kind of pages you need to follow and this define how you engage with
92	social media academically and all social media cannot engage you academically so in other
93	words this so called "gravity get it out" but if you know exactly what you're looking for you follow
94	the right pages you know you don't follow Kardashian Kim Kardashian oh yeah why well if you
95	follow the right pages and you you enter the right groups you can really engage you with social
96	media academically but it's so tough because there's a lot of junk social media and some of it is
97	sponsored so it keeps on showing your feed and yeah
98	
99	Pedro: I think there are a lot of problems with a fake news
100	
101	Student: Junk news
102	
103	Pedro: junk information
104	
105	Student: yes absolutely
106	
107	Pedro: okay in do you think I mean related with that do you think social media can be a useful
108	source of information for your for your studies?
109	
110	Student: yeah I think I think but again linking back cause we've just been talking about that
111	badly I'm also responsible for this I need to know exactly what I want and how to get it, because
112	this is all some tough in this junk environment will really get to know the kind of information you
113	want yes like I said you need to know what kind of tools I learned about this thing of hashtag for
114	example in Twitter if I'm looking for some like me who is concerned who discusses on different
115	things when you use a hashtag about say energy then you see exactly you filter information to
116	limit it to exactly energy what kind of what kind of information is flowing on energy what people
117	write what people say

118	
119	Pedro: okay any how do you know or how do you choose say like went to trust or not to trust the
120	information?
121	
122	Student: that's another huge problem today because they of this which is what is you said "fake
123	news" partly you have to like now on student we are quick with tool of verification somehow
124	because of studies you come to know how to verify information also know that this is the red
125	source and it's the wrong source because you have to you know flip flop back and forth you can
126	say okay maybe this is all so it's not it's not an issue of right or wrong, but the level of the
127	process that information goes through to the publishers you know public consumption you can
128	always juggle through this as a student at least
129	
130	Pedro: okay and changing a little bit have you ever used for example any social media
131	Facebook or Twitter to solve exams together with your group because sometimes you have
132	home assignments yeah right, so have you used social media to like to... do it on a
133	collaboratively way.
134	
135	Student: Yeah, I get it yes quite often as a complementary you know as additional way of further
136	doing the assignment even without having to be there physically so how we have done it how
137	we do it is basically that you for example meet once in a week the rest of the days coordinate
138	well say messenger where when you meet your sign it's obvious office responsibilities for
139	example if they give me that okay go under such of this and then during the process I update
140	the group about my progress via the chosen social media platform like messenger.
141	
142	Pedro: okay like what's well this is like more efficient right
143	
144	Student: yeah
145	
146	Pedro: like you only meet when it's really necessary
147	
148	Student: exactly exactly but also want to say that bites off this chosen platform with a
149	messenger or WhatsApp isn't it soft enough so it is that should be time to meet physically
150	

151	Pedro: so you're saying you cannot replace totally...
152	
153	Student: not so to speak it is physical meetings in this case are irreplaceable for this the chosen
154	platform of social media is complementary
155	
156	Pedro: and do you think is possible to use social media to make your studies more pleasant
157	like...
158	
159	Student: yeah
160	
161	Pedro: you understand to get let's say pleasure from studying
162	
163	Student: I think it is tempting to say that it's hard, but again that is attendant upon the individual
164	yourself social media, because I think... as for me... it really feel that social media is contributing
165	to what I'm doing and cause you pleasure, i need to have some degree of discipline, you know
166	because there's a lot of the distractions on social media and some of them can be even they're
167	addictive so it need to have some people of discipline and again but what we said you need to
168	know exactly how to get what you want so you can appreciate how much social media and an
169	app view to the studies you need also to know how to get what you want and we're also
170	because platforms like Facebook quite... quite... congested with a lot of junk and with a lot of
171	people what when you go to Twitter for example there is fake news that is junk of course but
172	quite not so much I'm not favoring Twitter over Facebook myself but knowing what you want and
173	where to get it this can be the fact this can be the factor that may make you appreciate social
174	media as a part of your studies
175	
176	Pedro: yes so it's like you're you know you cannot find a way you don't even know what you
177	want
178	
179	Student: exactly, so to speak
180	

181	Pedro: okay now that you mentioned a social media can be a distraction do you think it might be
182	good for your studies because some people say that they they need like some distraction while
183	they are studying, so they can like focus more or study longer for example whenever they are
184	studying they also have social media open
185	
186	Student: yeah
187	
188	Pedro: and they kind of alternate between studying and social media so it can be like let's say
189	more fun for some people to study in this way
190	
191	Student: well I think for some people but I for one completely completely reject the idea that
192	social media can help me go through for example in a lecture when I'm in lecture I almost want
193	to turn off my phone you know and the kind of distractions that I may accept for example if we
194	are seated together in a lecture and then some in some interval we can say a word or two that
195	kind of but opening on up I'm trying to see the news feed the kind of cat videos and learning
196	stuff for me that's another thing so we're... partly I may say this very condition this very condition
197	where people become so dependent on social media if it's of one of the you may say in
198	enslaving tendency of some of these applications where by they somehow they are playing on
199	Alice psychological
200	
201	Pedro: okay highly dependent on the person
202	
203	Student: you you you come to appreciate it as a normal for you to alternate between whatever
204	you're doing not only studies but even when you're reading here when you interviewing me you
205	may want to get a break open to accepting me you know if it's off is a result of this growing
206	dependency... this product not absolutely bad but there should be some restraint on the
207	individual user... the individual user
208	

209	Pedro: okay and then moving move along a little bit in... do you think social media contributes to
210	improve your social relationships in your class or in your academic program?
211	
212	Student: you're using the word "improving" yes somehow, but of course not new ones because
213	as you know before you asked what is your Facebook page this Facebook name you have
214	already become somehow connected with a fellow student so you you may find it convenient to
215	continue talking and interacting and knowing more about each other and all the kind of things
216	but that in the student environment that is initiated outside outside the virtual reality social media
217	so... like i said before i ask you for your Facebook name suddenly we have already become
218	connected friends non friends are such, but yeah from the real world from the feasible if we
219	continue to talk knowing more about what we are interested in... backgrounds academic
220	backgrounds we can attribute that social media because we may not be physically present or
221	we may not meet this all the time, but this mediated platform you know messenger... WhatsApp.
222	we can use it to further know more about each other maybe in the future we make collaboration
223	on such project and so on... so we may say that in that sense whatever platform we have been
224	using has helped us improve improve our relationship as students
225	
226	Pedro: ok, so the first contact according to what you said it's a physical
227	
228	Student: yes, outside the virtual reality
229	
230	Pedro: and then you move to the virtual world
231	
232	Student: yeah
233	
234	Pedro: okay... and do you think that the fact that some of your colleagues are using social
235	media impacts your desire to use it or makes you use it more?
236	
237	Student: not me but I know that this is a common reality I know of one girl who was completely

238	outside all social media as you know it she had an older phone for calling and receiving and she
239	was completely unplugged as she had completely unplanned ass off from this social media
240	outlets, but you know it became completely difficult I worked with her in one of the courses and
241	it was really hard for her to get along, because all of us were using Messenger and so it was
242	hard for her to be part of any group because it's a fancy way of working that's how people work
243	they don't meet all the time they meet once in a while and the rest of the time they coordinate
244	their social media platform they choose... and just one person cannot yeah you know stop them
245	from doing that, so she had to change and by phone where you can join in groups and out
246	what's up contribute so it can't be not the other way around that you joined because of
247	"bandwagon" on it can be partly that, but also that you have no alternative but really to join you
248	know what I mean, that for if you really really see us about your studies and you want to is your
249	life and be a participating member of any group then you need to somehow plug yourself onto
250	one of these
251	
252	Pedro: okay and let's say that in your group in your master they create one group on the social
253	media could be Facebook or Twitter anything... and they start sharing important content about
254	the courses or like assignments or notifications like all the teacher changed the date or
255	something do you think that will motivate you to use the social media to use the same social
256	media?
257	
258	Student: yeah I think so but maybe not motivate, but we may use another word "force me" you
259	know what I mean because it may not inspire me to join social media that it may leave me with
260	no alternative but to join in social media... you get what I mean and and in that case if I'm really
261	really I only restrict its usage exactly that, so some people who are really not into this you know
262	I've been using social media before during graduate studies myself, but not so much yeah, you
263	know, but some people who are really doing this because they are communicating with fellow

264	student and so on... they are not so motivated at such, but they have to, you know when you do
265	something because you really have to
266	
267	Pedro: because it's so necessary that...
268	
269	Student: it's necessary... that one... it's necessary, it's necessary for you to do so
270	
271	Pedro: okay let's talk a little bit about the teachers, do you interact with your teachers or have
272	you interacted with your teachers in social media?
273	
274	Student: no, no
275	
276	Pedro: why do you think that is?
277	
278	Student: because I imagine myself a teacher having students following me on Instagram...
279	haha... and the work somehow ethical aid the teacher-student the relationship is quite complex
280	because first of all and you know it's a bit hierarchical as well, the very idea that one is the
281	teacher and one in the student there is a hierarchy, so teachers find it not so easy to have
282	students following them on Facebook and Twitter quite quite quite near I see teachers using
283	Twitter and students all over them that's another thing but teachers being followed by the
284	students on Instagram that's another thing you know so i can see the two teachers are really
285	hesitant even when they have social media they rarely rarely shared this with students
286	
287	Pedro: and let's say in front of your part as a student yeah will you be worried about this
288	connection in social media with the teachers?
289	
290	Student: I won't go for it, I would not go for it... as a student I also think that social media is a bit
291	private space, you get what I mean, that somehow my relationship with teachers needed to be
292	in the physical world
293	
294	Pedro: it's like you need to separate the academical and the personal
295	
296	Student: I feel like that somehow
297	
298	Pedro: and your main concern would be kind of privacy, right?
299	

300	Student: yeah, I think, partly yes
301	
302	Pedro: okay and but have your teachers shared any educational material on social media?
303	
304	Student: not that I can remember but you know you talked about Live@Lund that's that's the
305	teacher must that's the platform where they share most of the stuff that they want to share with
306	students because it's also designed in that way, but of course not incorporating lots of things,
307	but the updates I'm not coming to them, I sick here, I need to take care of my daughter and so
308	on so we meet let's agree to meet next time... they share that on Live@Lund
309	
310	Pedro: okay so it's like the main medium
311	
312	Student: because it's the official platform
313	
314	Pedro: okay
315	
316	Student: and also all students have access to this is no need for example and sharing any
317	document may be a new PDF document students have to read all of us and download it from
318	Live@Lund so they prefer that way
319	
320	Pedro: okay now that you mentioned Live@Lund... do you only use it because you need or I
321	mean you say that teachers put content there, right? so you enter Live@Lund, download, that's
322	like the main way you use it or have you use it on another way
323	
324	Student: well I it depends I think now because in my department... the graduate school as
325	students come like new master students the graduate school organizes some events some
326	course not course it's a platform for Live@Lund where students can meet and talk you know,
327	like social media
328	
329	Pedro: Like a discussion board
330	
331	Student: A discussion... and getting to know each other so but of course that is organized

332	between before you come before Autumn but students don't normally use it to talk to each other
333	you know they prefer the outside social media applications
334	
335	Pedro: why do you think that is? that people are not using...
336	
337	Student: partly i may say because of its official character you know what I mean the university
338	best university managed interactive platform like the university make and control... the university
339	the managed... which some are also may mean to some people that they whatever i do on that
340	is the university see what's going on and so on and so forth but that really is not a big thing i
341	think it's partly may explain it's official character as the official interactive platform for students
342	teachers and... of course it's a managed way and see timetable and so on that may partly
343	discourage students from talking so much using it
344	
345	Pedro: so you think is like students are kind of afraid of talking there in Live@Lund?
346	
347	Student: I may say that they want to restrict it to its official status, that they go there to get
348	updates and they know what course administrator are saying, when submit papers, what kind of
349	lectures are being canceled and so on and so forth, but to interact it has at least not that i know i
350	don't i don't know other faculties, but in my department, we don't use it not many student use it
351	to talk to each other use, but it has application you can talk to each other, yeah, you can talk
352	using Live@Lund you can adopt
353	
354	Pedro: they kind of prefer other social media...
355	
356	Student: there is this illusion that in the outside apps you have privacy actually when you also
357	have no guarantee of it. Get what I mean... there's that thinking that in my own Facebook app is
358	my top private space and so you know so
359	
360	Pedro: okay and then you mentioned that your department share some information about
361	events at the beginning of the master?

362	
363	Student: yet it is a complete planned platform within the next two months where students can
364	know about prior they're coming to Lund to the University they can know about a few things
365	
366	Pedro: Do you think that was useful?
367	
368	Student: extremely useful extremely useful because they are mentors students ooh who
369	volunteer with the graduate school who are continuing students so they are it's not teachers that
370	run into the same continuing students who are selected by the graduate school to volunteer to
371	interactively with the prospective students
372	
373	Pedro: okay and all of that was on Live@Lund?
374	
375	Student: Live@Lund, so students can ask questions about for example about life in Lund,
376	academic writing, lots of program-related questions and the main types they interact with them
377	they also have a few assignments for example like a of course like my course what is
378	development what do you think of development and then mentors interact with the students on
379	this kind of topics knows that it's not official you don't have to join you don't have to doing that
380	platform but it's encouraged that if you have time guess login and interacting with your friends
381	so like in my year when we came we already knew each other by name at least and by photo
382	because those who uploaded photos at Live@Lund you would say oh this is Pedro and so it
383	was useful I would say
384	
385	Pedro: Do you think some characteristics of social media makes them more attractive than other
386	tools like yeah?
387	
388	Student: I get it I think I think but also I think depends on the individual tests you know... tests as
389	in the idea what it preferences individual preferences like for example i prefer i may prefer twitter
390	if I'm looking for something academical other people know how to find that exactly what i find on

391	twitter on Facebook so yes some applications are more attractive to different preferences to
392	different things like our students you may need with academic content you know and the kind of
393	people who share such academic content and so not so forth so an application like Twitter
394	where hashtags define you know the keywords you know even Facebook that works but it's
395	much more and also the descriptions in terms of how much you can share in writing 140
396	characters for example whereby most of the things you have to cock it in a link and then some
397	people think that this is attractive why because it's only when I choose to follow that then boom
398	got bombarded with a lot of one but before that if I am just selecting what is it that I'm interested
399	in is limited the information is limited you get it for you I don't waste time going into what I don't
400	want I only dip in I mean dig in into the links provided when I say that exactly this is what I want
401	so that might be attractive for some people like me for example others may also have other
402	features that they appeal so to different audiences maybe that may work better that each of
403	them have design tools that appeal to different audiences
404	
405	Pedro: for example okay for example using the fact that a people are more familiar to Twitter
406	Facebook to WhatsApp yeah are kind of encouraging them to use those tools instead of
407	Live@Lund because Live@Lund is the official right? the institutional, but the phenomenon is
408	that people are not using it very much... do you think familiarity might be a reason for that?
409	
410	Student: yeah exactly partly but also now you're making me remember one other aspect may be
411	that may contribute to why is it that master students because you know this is official and under
412	student best and and therefore the community is limited to the institution to the students for
413	example if I want something really you may not get when it comes to sharing for example if we
414	all just use Live@Lund and share these are sharing you know we are in a closed space of
415	Live@Lund as students and teachers but now when you go to Twitter it's the whole world has
416	opened up, so you can see lots more even so what I mean what I mean is that even when
417	students choose to use the Live@Lund for sharing whatever you want to share they may also
418	think that it's limited

419	
420	Pedro: it's like a very closed... controlled...
421	
422	Student: yeah right it's an elite closed-space well of only you know members members only
423	yeah members only
424	
425	Pedro: only people that belong to the course
426	
427	Student: that exactly
428	
429	Pedro: that's very interesting in them and for example Live@Lund does not have like an
430	application... have you used Live@Lund from your phone for example...
431	
432	Student: before it was not so easy but now you can now it now i use it you can't really fun
433	because it was not mobile friendly for somewhat of a long time it wasn't so mobile friendly but
434	they're doing some technical changes i think but now you can access you can the page can fit
435	on the phone
436	
437	Pedro: okay it's better adapted now... do you think?
438	
439	Student: yeah yeah at least as far as I'm concerned because i can serve a smartphone but the
440	page now before it was not possible now the page is mobile friendly, so you can juggle through
441	the page
442	
443	Pedro: but they still don't have like an application that you can download, right?
444	
445	Student: now they don't have an app they don't have an app that's the simple thing if they really
446	think about it because that's where things are going and... an app makes it easier for for
447	students because it's say it's exactly designed to be used by in that way phones
448	
449	Pedro: and I think with an application you can also get like instant notifications you know
450	
451	Student: yeah we're gonna get exactly
452	
453	Pedro: when you get a message you receive it instantly
454	

455	Student: yeah you can choose to have be notified when there's anything new shared so you
456	don't miss anything but here before you login you have to log in to see what's happening before
457	you log in I don't know maybe I just don't know but if I login I don't get notified I have login into
458	another way maybe they are doing it that you get notified by email which is another second way
459	notification process but this is instant like you say the other one is mediated by your email but
460	this is instant when you have an app it is instant
461	
462	Pedro: ok so that's kind of an advantage, right? of using social media
463	
464	Student: yeah but do you get those notifications if you use Live@Lund for example you know
465	like I say you get notified in a second medium they notify they send a notification to your email
466	so you must have the email and that email me you must we must be allowing notifications which
467	is also not so easy because you you you may think that is another new email you know what I
468	mean you may think it's just you know then you may be junk email because you are if you
469	choose to be notified you will always be notified about new emails that means you have to
470	check all the time but if it is an app it is specific when you see a notification on it and notification
471	from Live@Lund
472	
473	Pedro: yeah, that's a very good point... yeah, you can tell the difference... when to know... what
474	is the source...
475	
476	Student: exactly but some of us ignore I always ignore my emails the whole day for example
477	and then I check in the evening because i know I cannot check all the time... that lots of junk
478	comes in the email you can't all the time to checking it
479	
480	Pedro: I think I have that problem too I check like at the end yeah all the junk together... Ok, so I
481	have maybe a final question for you... it's very open... like in what other ways do you think social
482	media contribute to your studies?

483	
484	Student: in any other ways
485	
486	Pedro: yeah
487	
488	Student: well again I go back to my the way i conceive of these social media applications all of
489	them there may not that many of them I don't know but I me know now that there are many
490	social media applications that are available for use I conceived this whatever the platform one
491	chooses to use as a community as a community a lively community and in a community you
492	expect everything anything anything is possible within a community, because behave differently
493	and you have different interests different talents, different aspirations have different ones, so
494	you have that kind of mixture of what people are interested in what you are looking for what
495	people aspire for what people want to share, so exactly as an individual member of this
496	community I have to be as specific as possible if I'm looking for something and that that is the
497	path that is very difficult you know because then more people cannot tell what they're looking for
498	current know in this community what is that me I want to get from other members and to know
499	others members in that community what you willing to share also like it can be useful so I need
500	to know what I want and how to get it because not all of them can provide it the few who can
501	provide what i want so i need to get on this process of knowing how to get those people who are
502	what I want then social media can be extremely useful you know but if the if there is this kind of
503	disorder I don't know really ho who can provide what i want and sometimes digest day it
504	becomes messy so then i take the table i turn the table back to the individual user of social
505	media but there should be some awareness and that our students because a student
506	communities as an elite community students have the social status in society has informed
507	members so in a student environment this is ok because students can can notice... effective
508	usage also determine how how useful this tools can be
509	
510	Pedro: ok it's about creating communities... looking at what people want, right? and connecting

511	what you want with the provider of what you want... it's about connections
512	
513	Student: yeah, exactly, in the language of social media they may call them "groups" but also
514	individual people like you you may be working on a paper then you share it somehow for those
515	who interest if I'm interested how do i get to know you if you're not my friend if you don't we are
516	not in any sako how do i get even when you share it publicly how do i get access to your paper I
517	need to know keywords that if really you're working on something like now you're working on
518	social media and academics if you share your results if you wish to share your thesis and
519	maybe you published it in open access and share it on Facebook, how I get to know that work of
520	yours is that I need to know how to look for it that means maybe I should use keywords and
521	when you put in keywords somehow you get lots of things but they don't deviate so much on
522	what you're looking for by accident maybe I can get your paper so yeah yeah knowing how to
523	get what I want and knowing what kind of people within this community what kind of groups and
524	all this kind of things
525	
526	Pedro: okay that's very good... it's an interesting point... so I think we are done by now thank
527	you very much for participating in this study, we are going to transcribe this interview and we will
528	send you the transcription just for you maybe you want to add or check something or if you want
529	to remove some part you can do it like... it's part of your rights.
530	
531	Student: that's democratic
532	
533	Pedro: it's very democratic. so thanks again for participating
535	Student: and good luck with your writing... with your thesis

Interview 3 (I3)

Date:	2017-04-15
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Present:	Pedro Bonilla and the interviewee
Interview format:	Skype
Interview duration:	18.5
Transcribed by:	Pedro Bonilla
Transcription date:	2017-04-16

1	Pedro: Ok, hello, good morning I'm Pedro from the University of Lund and I'm going to ask you
2	some questions about how you use social media in your academic context. So first of all I would
3	like to ask you: are you a student?
4	
5	Student: Yes of course I'm student
6	
7	Pedro: Okay, can you tell me where do you study? And what academic program do you belong
8	to?
9	
10	Student: At the moment... Information systems program
11	
12	Pedro: Okay okay sorry I think there was a problem with the connection... can you repeat?
13	
14	Student: Yeah I study in Lund University in Sweden and the academic program is called
15	Information Systems
16	
17	Pedro: Okay, perfect, and then please tell me what do you think is social media for you? and
18	please give me some examples of social media that you have used
19	
20	Student: Okay social media for me it's a connection for people through which they can
21	communicate and do a lot of things like Facebook and Twitter are the most used social media
22	websites so yeah
23	
24	Pedro: Okay yeah that's a good definition and is close... I just want to mention that in the
25	context of our research, social media is a any website or application whose content is mainly
26	generated by its users
27	
28	Student: Of course I agree with that

29	
30	Pedro: Okay so just to point out that and also for example applications like WhatsApp or Google
31	Docs are considered social media under this definition... just to make it clear like in this
32	research
33	
34	Student: Okay I understand
35	
36	Pedro: Okay so please tell me do you use social media in your group work for example when
37	you have group assignments
38	
39	Student: Ah yes sometimes I'm using it but it depends on the situation
40	
41	Pedro: Ok can you tell me like some cases where you have used the social media... some
42	specific examples?
43	
44	Student: Yeah for example when we have a group assignment for the university we're using the
45	social media for collaboration like group chatting and something like that.
46	
47	Pedro: For the chatting what applications do you use. What is the name?
48	
49	Student: Most we're using Facebook Messenger but also sometimes we're using Viber or
50	WhatsApp
51	
52	Pedro: Okay okay that's good and I guess you use that to coordinate group work, right?
53	
54	Student: Yeah
55	
56	Pedro: When you meet when you get together a do you use something else? another social
57	media?
58	
59	Student: No
60	
61	Pedro: Okay and please tell me also do you use any social media to share academic content?
62	
63	Student: Of course I'm using Facebook also we have a group... a secret group created in
64	Facebook on which we are sharing like... I don't know... articles and things that are that we are
65	using for the University and for the learning process

66	
67	Pedro: Okay is it like like a private group, right?
68	
69	Student: Yeah
70	
71	Pedro: Okay and do you think a social media can engage you more into your studies?
72	
73	Student: Yeah nice let me say yes because for example now that Facebook is offering some
74	live streaming so maybe we can use it somehow to engage the students and also me in some
75	in some ways I don't know
76	
77	Pedro: Okay so you think it kind of motivates you to study?
78	
79	Student: Yeah of course
80	
81	Pedro: Okay nice and do you think social media can be a useful source of information for your
82	studies?
83	
84	Student: It depends yeah it depends on what size here or which friends or whatever you're
85	connected with on the social media but yeah
86	
87	Pedro: And do you trust that information that you get from social media?
88	
89	Student: Sometimes if I think that it is a trusted source maybe yeah
90	
91	Pedro: Okay good and do you think is possible to use social media to make your studies like
92	more pleasant? And what ways?
93	
94	Student: For example in which you which way?
95	
96	Pedro: Yeah like for example some people say that they use social media while they are
97	studying so they can get sort of a distraction they alternate between studying and checking
98	social media
99	
100	Student: Yeah my opinion yeah in my opinion social media does not make my study more
101	pleasant right now
102	
103	Pedro: Okay so I guess... so you think it doesn't make it more fun to study?

104	
105	Student: With social media, right?
106	
107	Pedro: Yeah
108	
109	Student: Hmm in my opinion maybe... I have... I don't have the right answer about this, but I
110	think yes
111	
112	Pedro: Okay and let's move on then eh do you think a social media contributes to improve your
113	social relationships in your class, I'm talking about like a the existing social relationship that you
114	have... your friends do you think it improves your relationship with them?
115	
116	Student: You mean with my colleagues?
117	
118	Pedro: Yes, exactly
119	
120	Student: Yeah of course because we're connected all the time so we can chat with them...
121	speaking about anything connected to the University, to the academic program... so I think yes, it
122	improves
123	
124	Pedro: Good and do you think social media it can help you to develop like new relationships I
125	mean like getting to know new people in your master program for example when you started
126	your master program it did you use social media to get to know more people?
127	
128	Student: Yeah of course when we started for example we were a lot of people from around
129	around the world so we didn't know each other and I was using the social media to recognize
130	the people and my colleagues so that we can develop new social relationships
131	
132	Pedro: Okay that's very nice and do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using
133	social media like impacts your your desire to use it? for example...
134	
135	Student: Yeah of course because as I said we're connected through this social media and we
136	found if I'm using it then maybe my colleagues will use it to reach me to find me somehow

137	
138	Pedro: Okay so if for example if everybody is using let's say Facebook... that this fact motivate
139	you to use Facebook
140	
141	Student: No no
142	
143	Pedro: Okay so it's not... so it's not like an important factor like if everybody is using it?
144	
145	Student: No no no I mean yeah it's important factor because if everyone and everybody is
146	using it then I should use it too, because otherwise I cannot I mean... I can reach them I can find
147	them, but this is more easier way
148	
149	Pedro: Okay perfect yeah and do you interact with your teachers in social media?
150	
151	Student: No, not at all
152	
153	Pedro: Okay do you think it would help if you can use social media to connect with your
154	teachers?
155	
156	Student: Yeah of course maybe it would help in a way... for example we are going to be up to
157	date for everything that is happening for example for a particular subject and stuff like that
158	
159	Pedro: Do your teachers share educational material with you on social media?
160	
161	Student: Until now we don't have any education educational materials shared through social
162	media with the teachers but we're using it as students... you know... with my colleagues
163	
164	Pedro: Okay nice and... where do the teachers share the educational material?
165	
166	Student: The teachers are sharing their educational material mostly on Live@Lund, which is a
167	portal for the university
168	
169	Pedro: Ok nice... and does your department for example share news or information on social
170	media?
171	
172	Student: Sorry I didn't hear... can you repeat, please?

173	
174	Pedro: Yeah, what is the department you're studying in?
175	
176	Student: The department is Information Technology which is located in the Lund University, the
177	School of Economics
178	
179	Pedro: Ok does your department share any information on social media?
180	
181	Student: Eh... I guess no... it I haven't seen something like that
182	
183	Pedro: Ok do you think it it might help if they share things on social media, the department like
184	for example I don't know events or important Information
185	
186	Student: Yeah it would be easier for the students I guess because we're always using some
187	let's say for example we're using Facebook and if the staff is sharing information to the social
188	media for example through Facebook we're going to be more updated to the things that are
189	going to happen in the university. I can guess.
190	
191	Pedro: Yeah I agree and do you... do you think some characteristics of social media makes
192	them more attractive than other tools... in
193	
194	Student: For example they are user-friendly so you don't have to click a lot of things to find
195	something
196	
197	Pedro: Nice... and... can you give some examples?
198	
199	Student: Some examples about?
200	
201	Pedro: Yeah like of some social media that the you think have a characteristic that makes it
202	more attractive to be used
203	
204	Student: Aha, for example...
205	
206	Pedro: Hello... Hello sorry I cannot hear you... hello...
207	
208	Student: Can you hear me now?
209	

210	Pedro: Yes I think the call was down
211	
212	Student: Yeah, the connection was dropped
213	
214	Pedro: Okay so yeah we were talking about the some examples of characteristics if you can
215	provide me
216	
217	Student: Yes for example if i use Facebook maybe I need to only two clicks school to find the
218	group in which I am I a member there... so I can find some... let's say literature shared from my
219	colleagues... but if I use Live@Lund I need... let's say... five to ten clicks to find something
220	
221	Pedro: Ah, ok, ok... and that takes me to the next question then... like... do you prefer to use
222	social media to support your studies instead of Live@Lund... Like in what cases to do you
223	prefer social media?
224	
225	Student: Yeah... I can say that previous example that I already mentioned and... of course I
226	would prefer social media to support my studies instead of Live@Lund
227	
228	Pedro: Ok, why do you think people prefer to use social media in some cases instead of
229	Live@Lund?
230	
231	Student: You know, because they say it's more easy to use for example and everybody is using
232	it so you can find more information than in Live@Lund and... you don't need a lot of searches or
233	lot of clicks to find something
234	
235	Pedro: Okay and... do you think the fact that Live@Lund does not have a like an application for
236	your smartphone affects this decision of the students?
237	
238	Student: Oh yeah I'm sure yes, because it will be much more easier to use it
239	
240	Pedro: Okay Hmm... now we have the final question in what other ways do you think social
241	media might contribute to your studies?
242	
243	Student: Hmm... I have no...

244	
245	Pedro: This is more like an open question like if you might think of other ways...
246	
247	Student: So yeah for example I said previously maybe we can use the live streaming for
248	example I think the live streaming for example when some student is absent maybe he can he
249	or she can attend to the lectures using this live streaming so he or she won't miss any lecture or
250	seminar or something like that
251	
252	Pedro: Ok so it's kind of like social media provides some functionality that is not available like
253	on Live@Lund or others systems, right?
254	
255	Student: Yeah, I want to say that... exactly
256	
257	Pedro: Okay, okay that's nice... I think we are done by now so thank you very much for
258	participating in this study
259	
260	Student: Thank you too
261	
262	Pedro: I will send you the transcript of the interview, so you can check if you... if... you can
263	check the information and if you want to remove or add something
264	
265	Student: Okay
266	
267	Pedro: We will keep in touch
268	
269	Student: Ok thank you very much
270	
271	Pedro: Thank you very much
272	
273	

Interview 4 (I4)

Date:	2017-04-20
Present:	Mohammed Osman and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	14 minutes
Transcribed by:	Mohammed Osman
Transcription date:	2017-04-21

1	M:hello my name is Mohammed Osman and I am a student in information systems doing master research
2	in academic usage of social media first of all I would like to thank you for your time and your
3	collaboration and I would like for ask your permission to record this interview
4	X: yes,of course
5	M: thank you your identity will not be recognized in the publications and research
6	M: so i would like to start by asking you, are you student?
7	X: yes
8	M:okay, where do you study?
9	X: I study at the medical faculty in biomedicine AT Lund university
10	M: okay interesting so what do you think about social media when you hear the phrase social media?
11	X: I think it's a very good tool that some people use in a very inefficient manner
12	M: How?
13	X: because like they use it to pick fights occasionally or to voice strange messages online that maybe
14	they would not voice they were talking to someone in person but I think it's a great way to keep people
15	connected and to relay information in an easy way
16	M: interesting and can you give me examples of social media applications that you use?
17	X: I use mostly Facebook
18	M: okay what about other like Twitter, Instagram?
19	X: none of those really I should have a like a Tumblr but it's not so much social was just showing images
20	and such
21	M:okay interesting so if we drift into academics do use social media in your group work?
22	X: yes in the group a lot yes
23	M: can you elaborate?
24	X: we have like case studies medical cases and it's very easy if you can post images of things you have
25	written or of whiteboard conversations that you had during group meetings and you can also post

26	thoughts and ideas of what to bring up in the meetings for such and it's way easier than like collecting
27	people and going into a meeting person so it's very efficient than ever
28	M: okay interesting, do you use anything other than use it with the Facebook messenger or?
29	X: No we use it as a group like we create a Facebook group and we post images and such
30	M: interesting do you use any other applications Google Docs Google Drive?
31	X: occasionally Google drive if there are like essay writing applications but for coursework i would say
32	currently that Facebook is used more , Google Drive is used more in our previous courses where had
33	more like group writing essays
34	M: okay interesting so do you use it to share academic content?
35	X: yes between the students but not from the teacher to the student sub speak
36	M: okay what sort of academic stuff only related to the school or maybe an article that you like that you
37	decided to share?
38	X: I'd say both but we use it like I would publish like write the link to an article to everyone i know but i
39	might do it within a group like centered around the current case or around the current question or
40	something like that like with my classmate more or less and we have like a class group where we
41	sometimes write things as such
42	M:okay interesting so using social media engages you to your studies?
43	X: yes in certain ways i would say it's easier to keep contact with your classmates through a social
44	platform than through saying like an academic platform like Moodle because everyone uses Facebook
45	okay pretty much
46	M:so like you come you more focused with your studies if you use social media?
47	X: in some cases yes if you're going to discuss how to like layout a project or if you have some ideas that
48	you want to share between your group members I'd say messenger and Facebook is very efficient
49	M: okay interesting so can social media via like a useful source of information?
50	X: yes it can but people need to really like to take into into consideration what they're publishing and
51	what they are asking about they're saying or such an people seem to be quite bad that's actually really
52	looking into what they are sharing and not just academic but other kind of publications like newspapers

53	and such and people seem to share a lot of things without really looking into it so to speak that's not
54	really an issue when you doing schoolwork so much but more just general public I think
55	M:okay okay have you ever use it as a source of information ?
56	X:yes I would have used it as a source of discovery like if you see something you might look it up and so
57	on but I wouldn't quote something from Facebook and say that it's true without looking it out first
58	M: okay okay interesting so do you think it makes your studies more pleasant?
59	X: yes when in a group collaboration it certainly does and it's usually easier to reach out through
60	Facebook than through emails or such when we use it it usually works really well but it's not usable for
61	everything
62	M:okay like what?
63	X: like if you're writing like a personal essay or something like that it might be good to write to your
64	classmates and such that you're probably not creating a group just to talk about something that you're
65	doing on your own
66	M:yeah okay interesting so it could be more fun to study Facebook or social media in general?
67	X: it's probably again makes group work or collaborations very easy if you have a chat where everyone
68	can interact with each other instantly without having to set up a meeting or something like that I' think
69	it can be efficient if you use it right
70	M: okay interesting so what about your social relationships do you think social media contributes to
71	improve your social relationships in the academic context?
72	X: Hmm with my classmates occasionally yes but i probably wouldn't look at my professors or
73	something like that i would like to have a more professional relationship with supervisors and such so
74	that you should do through email
75	M:okay okay can you elaborate more how to improve your relationship with your classmates you
76	organize events with you social media or something?
77	X: yeah i mean i would say not so much and i participate but i see that people use it that way and I
78	certainly like chat with my classmates over Facebook whether it's school related or not so I would say

79	that the relationships improve regardless simply because you keep in contact with each other and then
80	if you have a question about something school related you might go to them for opinions or reviewing
81	or whatever so yeah it contributes
82	M: okay interesting what about developing new social relations?
83	X: it's certainly an easy way to keep in contact with someone you just met but I'm I would imagine that
84	the relationship is better built if you speak to them in person but if you don't have a possibility to do
85	that maybe you have like a long-distance relationship or something Facebook is a very easy way to keep
86	in touch whether it's professional or not
87	M: okay look don't you use other social media like WhatsApp?
88	X: no I don't know there's just messenger and Facebook and like some sites for image
89	M: okay interesting so do you think that the fact some of your colleagues are using social media that's
90	why you are using it?
91	X: probably because if no one use Facebook there will be no point in keeping contact with anyone like if
92	you have a platform where more or less everyone has an account and everyone is available it's a very
93	easy way to keep in touch with them
94	M: okay okay interesting so coming to a point that you mentioned do you interact with your teachers or
95	professors of the social media?
96	X: no I don't
97	M: so do you think it would be useful if they do?
98	X: possibly, but I think using a student email is equally as efficient in our case because usually people
99	want to separate their professional and personal lives and I think professors usually want to do that they
100	might not want students to contact them on Facebook and such but rather by email
101	M: okay but don't you think it could be more efficient to contact professor instantly?
102	X: it will probably be efficient it's just I don't think that many professors would be willing to do so
103	because if you have some sort of clash with the student or maybe if I just imagine the professors want to
104	separate the professional and personal lives and if they have interactions or social media they want
105	might want to do that mostly with their personal friends and they might not want to make up a separate

106	account just for their students or such so it would be efficient but I think I don't think many people
107	would be like willing to do with students or teachers to be honest
108	M: okay okay interesting so what if they for example share my educational material via social media or
109	something?
110	X: yeah yeah like I think it might be efficient that we usually have educational platforms for that where
111	they share power points and review notes and instructions for essays and such so you know where to
112	find it regardless and they usually let us know at least in our course beforehand like I'm going to put this
113	up on Moodle you can find it this in this folder and so on so it's available just through a different
114	platform there isn't like social in the same sense
115	M: okay interesting okay what about your department does the department share any information
116	social media?
117	X: it does i would say like the medical faculty and Lund university as a whole does but like my course
118	doesn't have an account for example because it's a small course that's set up by the students
119	themselves like my classmates and have a group for the class themselves and one for the biomedicine
120	students at Lund university but it's not by the faculty it's like why the students who want to keep in
121	touch with each other
122	M: okay and you think that would be useful if this year for example like job posts or news or maybe PhD
123	positions?
124	X: yes it would I think they do it using their own website rather than Facebook and I'm sure there are
125	certain like Facebook groups and such that share that material but yeah I think it would be efficient if
126	they do but I have not seen it
127	M: okay interesting ,so what do you think are some characteristics of social media that make them more
128	attractive than other websites?
129	X: the fact that people want to be known typically that they want to be recognized and they want to be
130	heard and it's easy to type out a message that whoever can be rather than like telling it to someone who
131	tells it to someone else and so forth

132	M: okay and if you think about it in academic context why do you prefer for example to discuss in a
133	Facebook group rather than the discussion portal in Moodle ?
134	X: mostly because people are so used to Facebook and they are just discovering Moodle as a new like a
135	platform and I also I don't know if Moodle has a chat function it might, but other than that they usually
136	is emails which is not instant messaging simply and you cannot see when someone is typing and you
137	can't interact as quickly so i think that's again they use Facebook for everything else why wouldn't they
138	use it to interact with their classmates
139	M: okay okay that's really interesting so if you compare both Moodle and the social media in this case
140	Facebook what you do you say the pros and cons?
141	X: i would say that again it's a nice way to separate school work from your free time which Facebook you
142	should include and while Moodle is great in many ways you know exactly where to find things to keep
143	speaking it doesn't have this instant chat functions and also things people are so used to Facebook i
144	think they would prefer to use something that they're like have become accustomed to rather than
145	using an entirely new platform for which you have to log on to answer
146	M:okay okay that's interesting finally is there any other ways that you think social media contributes to
147	your education?
148	X: i think it does simply because perhaps not so much the faculty of its own but you can follow pages
149	that you find interesting and I follow couple of pages that are relevant to my academic interests so
150	sometimes they post like reviews or journals or interesting facts and so on but foremost I would say that
151	it's an easy way to keep in contact with your classmates and you are approached partners as well
152	M:okay okay that's interesting well that concludes our interview thanks for your time

Interview 5 (I5)

Date:	2017-04-20
Present:	Pedro Bonilla and the interviewee

Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	24 minutes
Transcribed by:	Pedro Bonilla
Transcription date:	2017-04-21

1	Pedro: Hello Pedro Bonilla and my researcher from loan University and I'm going to ask you
2	some questions about how you use social media and what are the factors that influence you to
3	to use social media in your academic environment so first of all I just want to mention some
4	conditions this interview will be recorded and it there will be it will be produced a transcription
5	but all the interview will be anonymous so we just try to not mention your name in order to keep
6	it that way and also this interview is voluntary so you can stop it at any time if you feel
7	uncomfortable weekend you can cancel it and yeah we'll be ready anonymous in any way so
8	please tell me are you a student?
9	
10	Student: Yes from Lund University
11	
12	Pedro: You study in Lund University and what program do you belong to?
13	
14	Student: Bachelor in International Development
15	
16	Pedro: Okay perfect and what is your age?
17	
18	Student: I'm 22
19	
20	Pedro: Perfect... now please tell me what what do you think the social media?
21	
22	Student: um social media I would say for instance I guess the most common examples are
23	Facebook and Twitter Instagram... places where people can interact on the Internet for instance
24	when there is an interaction between a number people and which is not in the physical world but
25	on the Internet... I would say
26	
27	Pedro: Okay, perfect, and they tell me do you use social media in your group work?
28	

29	Student: Yeah we usually do obviously connect with each other through for instance Facebook
30	and come up with the ideas when we should meet and what what we should have done by that
31	date like for instance everybody should have read until chapter 5
32	up and we decide location and we I guess you can say that we arranged like everything through
33	social media
34	
35	Pedro: It's like... to coordinate
36	
37	Student: Yeah I've got you to coordinate the group work in that sense
38	
39	Pedro: And you can tell me some examples of a social media that you use for the group work?
40	
41	Student: Yeah Facebook for like or like Facebook Messenger for communicating we have like a
42	group chat with everybody at the group and then also yeah Facebook groups wherever I can
43	post everybody in the group can post and upload the documents for instance that we need yeah
44	
45	Pedro: So you have a group... like a Facebook group or something for your master?
46	
47	Student: Bachelor
48	
49	Pedro: Ah, sorry for your bachelor...
50	
51	Student: So we have a first up we have like a complete group with all the students where
52	everybody can post like a general comments and stuff like that and that we also have like for
53	specific tasks while we are divided into groups we create like new groups where we discussed
54	the specification
55	
56	Pedro: like mini groups or subgroups?
57	
58	Student: Yeah exactly subgroups in that sense
59	
60	Pedro: Perfect and then okay maybe yes you already answered it back do you use any social

61	media to share your academic content?
62	
63	Student: Ah, yeah so for instance if the if the lecturer tells us to read this and this article and it
64	can sometimes be like hard to find in the library web research thing so often one of us finds it
65	and then just post a link or upload documents to purchase a Facebook group so we share the
66	documents through that group
67	
68	Pedro: Perfect and they do you think social media can engage you more in your studies?
69	
70	Student: I think so because it can make you talk more and interact more with other students...
71	Hmm... I guess there is also always a risk that you'd like drift off when you're on Facebook is
72	you're supposed to study and go on to your group on Facebook but you end up scrolling down
73	there to see other events going on but overall the I do you think it helps that you can
74	communicate and interact with the other students
75	
76	Pedro: Ok yeah it might be like a distraction, right?
77	
78	Student: Yeah yeah it can be... can be
79	
80	Pedro: And do you think social media can be a useful source of information for your studies for
81	example?
82	
83	Student: Um I'm not really sure because like in social media that there is so much so much
84	information on social media and none of it is really like checked or reviewed or anything people
85	cannot upload just whatever they want to but I guess it also depends on what you're what you're
86	researching if you if you want to discover what people are sharing on Facebook for instance
87	come with there will be greats like tons of information available that if you want to look into like a
88	specific topic topic development in rural Bangladesh or whatever it can be that I'm not sure that
89	Facebook is the best source for that for that topic... then you have to rely more on like academic
90	journals and articles

91	
92	Pedro: Okay and then if you find something in the social media how can you trust the
93	information? how can you select what to trust and what to dismiss?
94	
95	Student: Yeah that's always hard I guess you have to do some work yourself and double check
96	basically if someone posts something some information that you that you feel like oh this
97	sounds a little bit weird so perhaps this isn't true I guess most often the case is that it isn't true
98	like if you have like... Hmm... like a bad feeling about it... then often it isn't true but I guess the
99	best thing is to double check and do some research yourself if you come across difficult
100	information or something like that
101	
102	Pedro: Okay and do you think it is possible to use social media to make your studies more
103	pleasant?
104	
105	Student: Yeah yeah definitely what do you mean pleasantly like with other students?
106	
107	Pedro: Yeah like for example some people report that they use social media like a distraction
108	while while they are studying so they can alternate between the studying and at the same time
109	reading something interesting in social media in that way they can kind of study longer for more
110	time without getting bored those
111	
112	Student: Yeah that's true... like if you're yeah... I have done that a lot of times I think everyone
113	else here you're sitting down reading and then then you don't feel like reading anymore so you
114	go into some sort of social media and scroll down for a bit then as you get the energy again to
115	store something so yeah I would say that's true
116	
117	Pedro: And in do you think it is fun to study with the social media?
118	
119	Student: Yeah it is fun... it is a new way of and it's also very efficient way to coordinate things
120	because everybody checks it time and time again like and it's also it's also easier that's us
121	because you doesn't always have to you don't always have to get together meet at the library

122	for example you can actually discuss things online through social media so that's awesome very
123	convenient if you those have a lot of time then you can just coordinate everything through
124	through the Internet... Hmm... in that sense it's it's more fun to use it leaves time for other stuff
125	
126	Pedro: Nice... and do you think a social media it can contribute to improve your social
127	relationships in your class or in your academic program?
128	
129	Student: Yeah I think so because the more you I guess social media allows you to interact more
130	with other students and if you interact more and talk much on students and I guess you can edit
131	connection to them it can also be harmful in the sense that it's like it allows everyone to just sit
132	on for instance Facebook and don't actually meet each other in like in in the real real life's so to
133	say... so then I guess it's a good way to actually get to know people if you're a little bit shy and
134	you don't dare to talk to anyone now you can perhaps... it's easier to message them and then
135	start up a conversation in that way so yeah it could absolutely help build those connections
136	
137	Pedro: Okay this is a very similar question... do you think social media help you to develop new
138	social relationships in your class like for example at the beginning of your of your program your
139	bachelor?
140	
141	Student: Yeah
142	
143	Pedro: Was it helpful... social media to to meet some people to get to know new people?
144	
145	Student: Yeah yeah it was absolutely... because we had like all the introductory weeks like all
146	the introduction weeks we had or everything basically was coordinated through a social media
147	like okay so when you when you want to meet up should we do something today everything was
148	basically coordinated with social media so it helps like when I was a new student here in Lund it
149	helped a lot to... to get to know people and to actually decide which places to go and yeah just

150	posting and as I said that we have like a general bigger class group with over class and then in
151	the beginning of our program someone can post like "yeah we were planning and doing some
152	BBQ in some park somewhere" and then everybody who wanted to come to just like here
153	yeah... like that poster... or just show up so yeah in that sense it's easier to make new
154	connections
155	
156	Pedro: Okay and do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media
157	impacts your your desire to use it?
158	
159	Student: Yeah yeah I think sorry i don't think i would use it as much if not everybody else's it like
160	you are in some way or not a dependent on it in order to like because everybody else uses it to
161	it communicates with each other and you don't want to be left out so i guess you want to be a
162	part of the discussion and then you have to have a Facebook in order to yeah communicate
163	through the rest of the class... so...
164	
165	Pedro: Yeah for example with this a Facebook group that you mentioned and like are you
166	encouraged to use Facebook more now that before?
167	
168	Student: Yeah yeah yeah I didn't use Facebook as much when I... before I moved to Lund
169	because I just yeah went to work I went home I called my friend blah blah and we met up
170	somewhere but now when basically in our whole class is coordinated through Facebook like
171	what are you doing tonight? we have like a big group chat or blah blah blah then you have to
172	have Facebook so yeah I would definitely use it more
173	
174	Pedro: Okay and changing a little bit the topic... you do you interact with your teachers in social
175	media?
176	
177	Student: Ah no no I don't have any of my teachers so I'm on social media
178	
179	Pedro: Okay um do you think it might help to interact with them in social media? or would you
180	prefer not to?
181	

182	Student: I don't know it might help if you have questions perhaps about certain issues but I
183	mean as we do now when we have questions about a certain assignment or stuff like that we
184	usually email our teachers and that works fine... I'm not sure if you want to if you want to have
185	your teachers to be able to see everything that you do or uploaded or right after this on social
186	media... no... yeah
187	
188	Pedro: It's kind of better to keep it... separated?
189	
190	Student: Yeah yeah it's I guess it also has to do a little bit with privacy but you don't want your
191	teachers to know everything about you
192	
193	Pedro: Okay and but... do your teachers share educational material on on social media? On
194	Twitter or something?
195	
196	Student: No no and I am never I have never found any teacher on social media... they never
197	mention it at all actually... so know they don't
198	
199	Pedro: And what about your department do they share news or important information on social
200	media?
201	
202	Student: Oh yeah I think they have a Facebook page which people can like and then they share
203	news or like link to interest articles or for new thesis from master students and stuff like that but I
204	don't I don't think they upload any important information I just think they share interesting...
205	
206	Pedro: But for example you you don't use it that much...
207	
208	Student: No no whenever I come across it I might look at whatever they sharing but I wouldn't
209	say I go in there and check every day like what they share or upload... no
210	
211	Pedro: Okay and do you think that some characteristics of social media make them more
212	attractive than other tools like a for example you said you mentioned that you use email right to

213	contact your teachers, but it is the only way that you have or you have like a platform or website
214	where teachers put the content?
215	
216	Student: Yeah Live@Lund if you are familiar with that... like the educational platform but i think
217	the social media is goods in that regards that it's more personal than email like email is very this
218	right blah blah blah you send it but social media then you have to what you send is also
219	dependent on what profile you have on your profile picture and whatever information about
220	yourselves out there so email is better i would say when communicating with the teacher
221	because it's slightly more like anonymous in that sense and perhaps you don't want your
222	teachers to know everything about you and you and your background... so...
223	
224	Pedro: And regarding the communication between students for example it do you think that
225	some characteristics of social media are better than Live@Lund or email?
226	
227	Student: Yeah yeah I think there are some communication tools through Live@Lund but I've
228	never used them myself I think you can like message people on Live@Lund that have never
229	used it because we we instantly go to Facebook like... communicating between students for
230	instance and... perhaps that's just like an old habit that you don't think about it to just do it you
231	just go directly to Facebook but i will say it's better for communicating through the students...
232	
233	Pedro: And do you think it has something to do with a familiarity and the fact that people are
234	more familiar with Facebook than Live@Lund, for example?
235	
236	Student: Yeah definitely... yeah Live@Lund is a... I mean first of all it's already a confusing
237	website I'm still having a hard time finding every document and which site everything is
238	uploaded oh yeah yeah I has a lot to do with familiarity
239	
240	Pedro: Ok and what about with the fact that Live@Lund... I think they don't have an app, right?
241	like an application?
242	
243	Student: Oh yeah yeah
244	

245	Pedro: For example have you tried to use Live@Lund from your phone?
246	
247	Student: I think I have to I have tried it sometimes but that's just like build further the point that
248	Live@Lund it is not really good to for interaction it might be good for... Hmm... getting a
249	document that teachers uploaded on the schedule but in terms of interaction... Hmm... no I
250	never use it... I don't think it built for it that way
251	
252	Pedro: Ok and then... ok and I just have one final question for you may be is very open saying
253	what other ways do you think social media can contribute to your studies? Can you think of any
254	in any other way?
255	
256	Student: Yeah it can contribute to getting to know people that you didn't know before it can it
257	can also it can help you learn things that you don't understand so well because if you have an
258	interaction with another student's he or she can help you to understand if you are messaging
259	between each other for instance like students helping out each other more that can contribute...
260	it can also contribute to like easier access as i said before like instead of everyone searching to
261	find a very hard document on the library web page then... instead someone can find it and then
262	upload it through the social media so everyone has easier access to it
263	
264	Pedro: Okay and for example you think it is very useful that social media have like instant
265	notifications like someone shared something you get a message instantly?
266	
267	Student: Yeah that could be... that's good in some sense, but can also be pretty annoying like...
268	Hmm... I don't want to get a notification about everything so i think i will... on my phone for
269	instance i think I'm like turned off several applications like twitter or Instagram which I don't want
270	any notification from them I just... I just want to check them when i want to but it feels like I have
271	left I have to leave Facebook notifications on because there is a lot of important information very

272	for example now when we have a group project someone could write something important that
273	we all have to be concerned about look at and that we do have to react to that immediately so
274	yeah instant notifications are good in some sense but they can also be annoying
275	
276	Pedro: So when it's related to... to your studies say you prefer to leave their notifications on,
277	right?
278	
279	Student: Yeah yeah I do...
280	
281	Pedro: And yeah... it's... because it's important information like let's say that they publish some
282	grades that you were waiting for...
283	
284	Student: Yeah exactly
285	
286	Pedro: So people notify others like "oh we now we have the grades"
287	
288	Student: Yeah exactly and that actually happened today as well like they uploaded some grades
289	and someone wrote a post like the teacher wrote a post on Live@Lund and then some students
290	found found out about it and I'm posted instantly in the Facebook group like all the grades are up
291	and then like in that way everybody else could go and check.. so yeah...
292	
293	Pedro: And do you get notifications with Live@Lund?
294	
295	Student: No i don't think so no I don't I'm not sure if there is a... if there is a function for that at all
296	
297	Pedro: So you will always have to I go to Live@Lund and check if there's anything new... like
298	every day or...
299	
300	Student: Yeah, exactly which is that's a downside I would say of Live@Lund, because after they
301	do post important information and you don't and you have to call in and check everyday
302	manually yourself in order to see if they uploaded anything... so in that sense... it's good that

303	other students perhaps find out and then share it with all the other students through social
304	media
305	
306	Pedro: And when you check Live@Lund is there there is a place where you can check all the
307	subjects of all the courses on the same place or you have to check every every course to see if
308	there's anything new?
309	
310	Student: Yeah I recently found out about it that is something called "a feed" or something like
311	that on Live@Lund... I didn't know about that earlier previously I just have to go into every
312	course and check for new announcements and scroll down and set for updates and blah blah
313	blah but you someone showed me a few days ago that there was a button called "Feed" and
314	they can see all the events so i think i would use that at the future
315	
316	Pedro: Yeah, it's useful after you realize I guess that that function exists...
317	
318	Student: Hehe...yeah yeah I'm gonna use that... for now...
319	
320	Pedro: And okay i think we are done by now... so we are going to transcribe this interview and
321	we will send it to you just for you to check if you want to add or remove something... like if you
322	consider that you can remove something and... yeah I will just write to you if maybe I forgot
323	some small detail and i will write if I need something some information so thank you very much
324	for participating this study and good luck with your studies
325	
326	Student: Yeah, thanks
327	
328	

Interview 6 (I6)

Date:	2017-04-17
Present:	Pedro Bonilla and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	34 minutes
Transcribed by:	Pedro Bonilla
Transcription date:	2017-04-18

1	Pedro: okay hello I'm Pedro Bonilla and I'm a researcher from Lund University and I'm going to
2	ask you some questions about how you use social media and what are the factors that influence
3	you to use it on the for academic purposes
4	
5	Student: okay
6	
7	Pedro: so first of all and I'm going to tell you some conditions like the interview will be recorded
8	and will be analyzed but it would be anonymous so you try to not mention your name
9	
10	Student: yeah do it and
11	
12	Pedro: if you feel in any moment that the interview is no right or you are not comfortable you can
13	stop it at any moment
14	
15	Student: yeah
16	
17	Pedro: like you are here a voluntary and him yeah your name will would not be discussed so
18	first of all him are you a student?
19	
20	Student: yeah, I'm a student
21	
22	Pedro: what is your age?
23	
24	Student: I'm 24
25	
26	Pedro: And what is your current level of study?

27	
28	Student: master
29	
30	Pedro: okay your study...
31	
32	Student: in a 2-year master yeah
33	
34	Pedro: okay and before your master why what did you study?
35	
36	Student: Before my master I studied Mechatronics engineering and physics
37	
38	Pedro: okay and right now what academic program do you belong to?
39	
40	Student: The complete name ok the complete name is biological physics and computational
41	biology
42	
43	Pedro: okay why do you think a is social media for you?
44	
45	Student: It's a medium... a way to interact virtually with some other people... yeah I guess
46	
47	Pedro: okay can you give me like some examples of social media?
48	
49	Student: Facebook, what else... Twitter... I have discovered... if you use it wisely is very
50	interesting... what is the name... Instagram.. you know... I mean if you don't follow people for
51	only posts and pictures of their cats, for example, following like NASA, researchers and
52	scientists, they publish very interesting information there. Those kind of social media.
53	
54	Pedro: ok nice and do you use social media when you have group work?
55	
56	Student: Yes, unfortunately yes
57	
58	Pedro: okay what social media do you use?
59	
60	Student: Mostly Facebook or WhatsApp it depends on what they decide... it's up to... it's
61	up to what people feel more comfortable with.
62	
63	Pedro: Okay
64	

65	Student: Recently, I'm also using a new one named "Slack" which is more for "team work" and
66	that kind. It's different. I mean yes kind of related with the school that's also another one that I'm
67	just discovering.
68	
69	Pedro: what can you do in this network?
70	
71	Student: Slack?, it's... let's say... like any other network I mean you can also have a chat, group
72	chats, and depending if you are that project with a partner or we took another few people and
73	then you can make a group specific for that but you also have your general group so it's very
74	useful in that way and the good thing about that is not as annoying as Facebook you know
75	because at some point you can establish the time when you are available you know so then you
76	won't get notifications away from this hours and if you say that you are available from nine to
77	from nine in the morning to six in the afternoon you will only get notifications during that period
78	of time and apart from that you won't get anything until the next day when you log in again
79	
80	Pedro: that's very... convenient
81	
82	Student: Yeah well I mean yeah because sometimes when it's work and work you have your
83	Facebook chat and it's 24
84	convenient
85	
86	Pedro: And do you use social media to share academic?... like I know people uses more
87	pictures but...
88	
89	Student: yeah, well, I mean for pictures... yes but... what do you mean by academic content?
90	like?
91	
92	Pedro: let' say for example you find an interesting article and you want to share with your
93	colleagues
94	
95	Student: yeah I actually that's something I would like to have like you know like a Facebook

96	without pictures of the people's cat or without the dinner they had last time, because you know
97	when you are following or if you have like your group of friends and you know that these people
98	have like interesting ideas and then you would like to know only their ideas not their life then
99	that will be very interesting but just sometimes I shared that on Facebook because you know it's
100	the main social Facebook yeah
101	
102	Pedro: and also if for example the teacher published the grades, you can notify other people
103	there or?
104	
105	Student: what do you mean? in Facebook? Or Where?
106	
107	Pedro: Yeah
108	
109	Student: well, yeah it depends... I mean haven't find any teacher who has used his/her
110	Facebook account for this kind of stuff. I mean that here they are very respectful in that way that
111	Facebook at least for them means like a amusement or not work-related social media at least...
112	at least... from the side of the professors on the side the of the students well we yes of course
113	we use that social network to interact but I really appreciate because otherwise I wouldn't like to
114	have like my professors in my Facebook account.
115	
116	Pedro: yeah, you're right, like for privacy
117	
118	Student: Yeah, exactly like 'oh I see why you didn't deliver the last report because you were
119	partying yesterday now you don't have any permission to hand in later'. No, definitely I wouldn't
120	like to have my teachers or my professors in my personal social media
121	
122	Pedro: That's interesting I will come back to that topic a little bit later... and do you think social
123	media can engage you more in your studies?
124	
125	Student: Yeah, well, to be honest, I before that... yes... before what can I say? 2000-

126	something... 2013... maybe I didn't like to use my social media too often. I actually still don't like
127	to use it very much, but the thing at some point some professors started to create groups you
128	know in Facebook and they started to put there for example the homeworks... or even some last
129	minute advertisement they used to make it on Facebook so that's why I started to use more
130	Facebook because all the information of the homeworks were there, but in general that was the
131	reason why I started to do so I yes then... it was related with academic stuff.. and yes...
132	
133	Pedro: Okay so so before you didn't use too much Facebook, but now you use it because a lot
134	of content or?
135	
136	Student: Yes, a lot of content at least in this moment not from part of the professor but just from
137	my schoolmates from my classmates... yes... so that's I why... otherwise I think wouldn't use it
138	that much sometimes I would like to just turn off all my social media, but the problem is that "oh
139	yes we have to meet for example I have my group for my class" what was the name of this
140	class? "Chaos science and technology"... and yes we arrange the meeting like "oh we have
141	tomorrow to meet to solve the problem from biophysics" "yes we have to go to the lab to do this
142	experiment" something like that, so we arrange everything by Facebook, but then that's why I
143	have to be like... that's why I need actually to have it installed on my mobile because otherwise I
144	think I would only use it maybe once a day and that's all, but... when it's something school-
145	related then I have to be like more attentive to... put more... have more attention on it... you
146	know.
147	
148	Pedro: okay that's interesting and do you think social media can be a useful source I was a
149	useful source of information for your studies?
150	
151	Student: Yes I think so but... the problem is there's not like a social network for that.. well maybe
152	there is and still I haven't found it.. or maybe you can... how can I say?... to restrict your

153	personal social media... well... your account... whatever you use maybe Facebook or Twitter to
154	only have this kind of academic connections but otherwise... well... then you will receive
155	notifications from the others people's likes
156	
157	Pedro: okay and then have you tried to use social media for example to solve exams together...
158	like if you have... sometimes you have a assignments or exams?
159	
160	Student: You mean legally, isn't it? not cheating... solving exams together
161	
162	Pedro: yeah, like in a legal way
163	
164	Student: In a legal way... but anyway I think in both cases my response would be no... but let
165	me think.. not exams, but maybe to... you know... for homeworks or projects or that kind of stuff
166	
167	Pedro: okay... Hmm... do you think it is possible to use social media to make your studies more
168	pleasant... like... more enjoyable in any way?
169	
170	Student: Yes, I think there must be a way to do that, I mean... right now for example...
171	Live@Lund... social media or social network, platform whatever... that almost nobody use it... at
172	least I don't use it and my classmates I think they also don't use it because most of the stuff we
173	solve it by Facebook or WhatsApp... but social media would be a very good way... I mean if
174	there would be like an specialized media for that I think that would be useful I guess.
175	
176	Pedro: okay and do you think it is fun to study with social media?
177	
178	Student: What do you mean by fun or what exactly...?
179	
180	Pedro: like for example some people use social media as a distraction like they study and at the
181	same they are reading something in the social media... so they alternate?
182	
183	Student: Well, yes, I mean It would be funny, but on the other hand, you would also get
184	distracted... for example that was what I was telling you as well... that I started to use this...

185	what's the name of this thing? Instagram... and for example I have in here some for example
186	National Geographic or Discovery Channel or the European Space Agency or the NASA... I
187	mean the good thing is that in this case I restrict my media to only have like information that I
188	really wanted to have so they publish pictures and news and that kind of stuff... science-
189	related... then I get very interesting stuff here... but if I would be starting to follow like for
190	example... well... my friends yes my friends that post everything there maybe it wouldn't be that
191	interesting... or maybe it would be like the rest of the other social media you know like Facebook
192	that they post everything of their lives or everything that came to their minds... and sometimes is
193	not very interesting, but I think yes to have something like that... look at this...
194	
195	Pedro: Ok nice... so you are more interested in the social media where you subscribe to
196	content?
197	
198	Student: No, I don't mean I'm not subscribed... yes I'm a subscriber, but I mean they share what
199	they are doing or what it's being developed... whatever so that's interesting... well... yeah
200	
201	Pedro: Ok and then please now moving to another topic do you think social media contributes to
202	improve your social relationships in your class like you have some friends in up some
203	colleagues you think by using social media you can improve that relationship with them?
204	
205	Student: I have never think about it... well, at least... no... maybe if you have like his number, her
206	number or you have his Facebook her Facebook then if you have some questions in a class that
207	you are sharing but in other way I don't see how this could be improved you know yeah you are
208	always in the classroom and if you don't hang out with them I don't think the social media will
209	change something... at least that's what I think... Hehe
210	
211	Pedro: Sure and do you think social media help you to develop new relationships in the in your
212	class or in your academic program?
213	

214	Student: I think it's the same... related as the previous question... I mean it depends on how you
215	use your social media I mean if you only use this virtual social network only to interact with
216	people that you already know in the real life (not in the virtual one) but in the real life then there
217	would be no difference because then you would be only interacting with the people that you
218	already interact but if you are using your social network your virtual social network to find
219	connections or to find people with shared interests and yes by sure you will find some other
220	people but that depends on how you do it
221	
222	Pedro: For example at the beginning of your master yeah what is helpful to use social media
223	like... to get to know?
224	
225	Student: Yes I think it was very useful in the sense but not in the academic way you know it was
226	more in the social way to know what was happening around like what was going to be the
227	events of this week and the you can join and meet people there and whatever... when you are
228	new in a city then you need to find activities and in that case yes having this kind of social media
229	helps a lot... it makes things much more easier
230	
231	Pedro: Yes... and... do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media
232	impacts your you're the type to use it here more motivated to use it because everyone is using?
233	
234	Student: No, not really... to be honest... in my case... I'm not that addicted to that kind of
235	networks, so... in my last discovery of social media I'm restricting the people who I'm following
236	or the content that I'm following... even there are some friends that I have there but I don't want
237	to know anything about their lives and I'm just following things or topics that interests me so... I
238	don't so that if a lot of people is in there I would follow them... only if it has something like yes It
239	has something different to the all other social media that exist now maybe... otherwise I think I

240	won't follow them.
241	
242	Pedro: Okay and let's say that in someone created a group in Facebook for your master or yeah
243	come on is sharing important information about the master... I don't know your grades, your
244	exams or notifications from teachers. I don't know... do you think that will motivate you?
245	
246	Student: Yeah, of course, it will motivate me because it's a course and I'm taking it so it's
247	something that I choose to do. If all the information from that course is there, sure I will follow
248	that.
249	
250	Pedro: Perfect
251	
252	Student: But it's because I'm enrolled in that course not because I want to follow them... you
253	know... it's because of the content but not because of the person.
254	
255	Pedro: Ah, okay, it's about the... yeah... the information...
256	
257	Student: Exactly if they are sharing information about my class in that group of course I would
258	join that group, but I mean... otherwise I think that wouldn't follow them. I mean if my friends
259	from the university are joining a new social network and I don't know what's going on there... or
260	what exactly they are doing there and I find that is not interesting then maybe I won't follow
261	them. That's the thing that I won't join that network just because they are there. Only if the
262	information that they are sharing there is interesting, then I would follow them, but just because
263	they are present, no.
264	
265	Pedro: Okay it's all about if the information is relevant to you...
266	
267	Student: Yeah, maybe they are sharing their pictures from the last holidays or the pictures from
268	the last party and that's the only thing they are doing. That new social network maybe I won't, so
269	that's what I'm telling you it depends on the content.
270	

271	Pedro: Ok and now coming back to the question of the teachers in do you interact with your
272	teachers in social media in any way?
273	
274	Student: No, hopefully no. I think for that kind of interaction the email is enough. At least for me.
275	If I really need to meet with them go to their office and talk to them, but maybe in a not very
276	personal social network like Facebook, because nobody would like to have their boss or your
277	professors there. Only if you really came along with them in a really good way, otherwise I think
278	no. I mean you would really need to be the friend of your professor in order to you wanting to
279	have him in your personal social media. And I think they also wouldn't like to have their social
280	life showed to their students. I really like that there is this you know kind of separation that the
281	email is not very personal it is impersonal you know share the information that you want in the
282	words in the email and that's all nothing else and cannot also see who or what else you are
283	doing. Only the exact amount of information that you need, so the email is cool for me.
284	
285	Pedro: It's kind of good to have it separated...
286	
287	Student: Exactly, yes, it's good to have it separated...
288	
289	Pedro: Your academic life and...
290	
291	Student: Your social life... into different strands...
292	
293	Pedro: And in your program, have your teachers sometime shared educational material on
294	social media?
295	
296	Student: No, I don't follow them. Well, I don't follow or I don't have my actual professors right
297	now, but for example some professors some teachers from my bachelor I actually have them on
298	my social media, but that's because they... I really come along with them... you know... so I
299	actually they some time they share very interesting information I actually I think that is the kind

300	of people that I would like to have only in my social media, because when they post something
301	or they publish something it's interesting information it's related with science it's related with
302	what interests me and it's interesting for them, so then in that case, I think that yes it's nice, but
303	they are not anymore professors so I don't have any problem with them, because they don't...
304	you know... we are separate. They can be part of my social life because they are not anymore
305	my superiors they don't give me grades anymore, so that's why. I like that.
306	
307	Pedro: Right now they are like on the same level, let's say...
308	
309	Student: Yeah, right now I'm not his student and they are not my professors. Right now they
310	are... they could be... they were my professors. It could be said that we are more like friend than
311	student-professors, but I mean... that's now... in that moment, I wouldn't say the same thing.
312	
313	Pedro: And does your department or your school's share news or information on social media?
314	
315	Student: Yes, they do... my department I don't know, but at least the university they do and
316	sometimes it's interesting information
317	
318	Pedro: Do you think it's useful what they share?
319	
320	Student: Yeah, I think so. They are the ones who or the kind of pages that publish useful
321	information.
322	
323	Pedro: Have they tried to do polls or survey through social media?
324	
325	Student: No, you mean my department? I don't think so, no, the poll are mostly used by my
326	classmates or by friends in the groups of a class or a project, but for some kind of like a bigger
327	authority like the official websites from my department, no, they haven't
328	

329	Pedro: And do they have they tried to like foster discussions on Facebook or any other media...
330	discussions about some topic?
331	
332	Student: No, not really... it's mostly like news or information that student are needed to know,
333	you know, "the next week is the last week to sign up for the new courses" or something like that
334	or "this building will be closed for this week because we are making some preparations" so that
335	kind of information. It's easier to reach them by the social networks than...
336	
337	Pedro: Ok, and where do your teachers share the educational material about the course like the
338	slides?
339	
340	Student: Well, depends... most of them they do it on Live@Lund or the official site of the course
341	
342	Pedro: okay so you have two places?
343	
344	Student: Yeah, exactly, sometimes it's even in both. You know they post it in Live@Lund and in
345	the official website. So it's the same thing I guess because I think Live@Lund is also like the not
346	the official or the unofficial... it's kind of a website for that course. Yes, now I remember another
347	one another social network "Piazza" that's another one that one of my teachers uses to share all
348	the content of the course.
349	
350	Pedro: Ok that's more for academic...?
351	
352	Student: Yeah, that's also for academic... actually I haven't use it too much... maybe it has the
353	thing that I'm looking for... but I don't think so
354	
355	Pedro: Okay and do you think that some characteristics of social media make them like more
356	attractive than other tools? like...
357	
358	Student: What you mean?

359	
360	Pedro: Yeah for example you mentioned that you have Live@Lund which is the institutional
361	system and also the web page of the course, but why why students kind of prefer to use social
362	media sometimes?
363	
364	Student: Facebook... because you have the app I guess and then you can have all the
365	notifications in your mobile, but I don't know if Live@Lund has this kind of application or mobile
366	application. Maybe that's the reason, otherwise I have no idea... in my case is because nobody
367	shares anything there, so... I mean there's only some information so I only go there and go out
368	when I need and if I need to discuss something with my classmates or my teammates I do it by
369	the social media they prefer, but yeah that's one of the reasons why they don't use it because
370	there's no like an official app or something that you can download into your mobile.
371	
372	Pedro: so it's kind of uncomfortable to use Live@Lund in your phone for example, right?
373	
374	Student: Yeah, I think so
375	
376	Pedro: instead, social media have like applications
377	
378	Student: For everything, I mean... most of the social media is from apps... I'm trying to think
379	about one social media that has no app, but I think that doesn't exist, because otherwise it
380	would have extinct so long ago.
381	
382	Pedro: and do you think the fact that people are more familiar with Facebook or other social
383	media like motivates them to use social media instead of Live@Lund for example?
384	
385	Student: Yeah, I guess I mean you spend more time in Facebook than in any other social
386	network most of the people do that so that's why they rather to use social network that they
387	already know, they don't have to learn anything new maybe that's the reason. And they are not
388	forced to, you know, because I mean if you already have all this facilities in one social network

389	then why would you change to another one. I mean, the professors are not forcing you to use
390	these, the facilities that has Facebook I mean it's good enough for its purposes. There's no... I
391	mean... so maybe that's the reason why nobody goes through another social network, because
392	this one has already what people need. In case that, in some point, there will be like a new
393	requirement or something new that the people requires and it's not in Facebook they maybe they
394	will start to change to another social network where they can have this thing or where this new
395	social network can offer this, otherwise I don't that they will change, you know. If they are not
396	forced, of course, you can force them. If you force them, they will change too.
397	
398	Pedro: Okay and so to finish with that topic, in your opinion, do you prefer to use social media to
399	support your studies instead of Live@Lund?
400	
401	Student: Well, as I have already told you, from Live@Lund I get all the information, the official
402	information for the courses, for exams, for the lectures for the homeworks or whatever, but I
403	mean it's also not that I'm using the other social media like very frequently to solve my academic
404	duties. It's more like a way to arrange meetings with my teammates and then do all the work
405	that we have to do but it's not exactly the place where we are solving these issues. It's the way
406	that we find to meet up and then do what we have to do but not the place where solve all the
407	things.
408	
409	Pedro: Okay because in Live@Lund you know that there is a discussion board you know so you
410	can post things there but...
411	
412	Student: Well, maybe it's because I haven't used that much but I don't know well. Maybe you
413	know this network better than me. You also have like the possibility to create personal groups I
414	mean for example if your are doing teamwork and it's only three of you, then you want to

415	discuss only with these three people then you don't want to discuss... or to have a public
416	discussion about it, so I don't know if Live@Lund has this facility.
417	
418	Pedro: I think you can post like public topics...
419	
420	Student: Yeah, that's a reason, because you can only post public discussion or public
421	questions, but sometimes you want to say 'hey, do you have time tomorrow at three or tomorrow
422	after lunch to meet up and solve this thing' yes sometimes that's what you want, so maybe that's
423	something that is "lack of" in Live@Lund
424	
425	Pedro: Okay i have a final question for you... in what other ways do you think social media
426	contribute to your studies? this is more like a very open question...
427	
428	Student: On one hand, it's this tool for arranging meetings. Maybe mostly the main issue for the
429	social media related to our studies, but on the other hand, it's that depends on how you use
430	social media you can very useful information. For example, it's very funny when you restrict your
431	social network to interesting information I was reading last time from this social media one
432	discovery about a moon in Saturn that, well, I mean... of course they have discovered kind of a
433	volcanic activity on their very deep eye layer around the planet, but I mean... that's something
434	that "oh that's very interesting" and if I would also have that kind of information related more
435	specific to my studies that would be nice, but the problem is that you have... you have the social
436	media that exists right now if you want to use in that kind of way you have to restrict it in that
437	way, so you don't have to follow people who posts information that is in this case not interesting
438	for you. You have to restrict yourself only to what it's interesting.
439	
440	Pedro: So it's kind of flexible...
441	
442	Student: Yeah, I mean that's the thing that is flexible. You can use it only for academic purposes
443	or for how can I say? science not exactly related to what you are studying, but some kind of of

444	way. What's the word for this in English? Hmm... science divulgation... yeah.
445	
446	Pedro: Do you think social media it's friendly?
447	
448	Student: Yeah, it depends on which one, but most of them are friendly
449	
450	Pedro: At least more friendly than for example Live@Lund or?
451	
452	Student: Yeah, at least more friendly than Live@Lund or for example if you take the last number
453	of... I don't know... what could it be? yeah, at least more friendly than Live@Lund
454	
455	Pedro: Okay yeah I think we are done by now
456	
457	Student: Ok, cool
458	
459	Pedro: So thank you very much for your participation in this study hey I will send you the
460	transcription of this interview you just for you if you want to add or remove some part
461	
462	Student: Ok
463	
464	Pedro: You can do it but the transcription will be anonymous, so I think you don't have to worry,
465	so thank you very much
466	
467	Student: You're welcome
468	
469	

Interview 7 (I7)

Date:	2017-04-17
Present:	Mohammed Osman and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	20 minutes
Transcribed by:	Mohammed Osman
Transcription date:	2017-04-18

1	M:okay my name is Mohammed Osman i am a student at information system masters doing research in
2	academic usage of social media first of all I would like to thank you for your time and collaboration and I
3	would like to ask you for your permission to record this interview
4	X:ok
5	M: just to comply with the scientific research standards the collected data during the interview will be
6	treated as confidential data and your identity will not be recognized
7	X:ok
8	M:so let's just start can you tell me about yourself, are you a student?
9	X: yes my name is XX 26
10	change
11	M:ok so for you what is social media when I say social media what do you think of?
12	X:I think social media is a platform where you can talk with your friends your family it's kind of like a
13	getaway or like on a tool to be connected with people from all around the world whether your friends or
14	whether people that we would like to know I mean right kind of broad like it depends how you use
15	M:it okay you know certain of applications or do you think of this certain applications when I say social
16	media?
17	X: yeah of course when you say social media I think of Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp all the, you
18	know application within our that we use on our daily basis within our phone and and somehow became
19	actually it kind of became the alternative for you know usual texting we don't even think about texting
20	anymore

21	M:ok yeah I see okay if we drift into academics do you use social media for an academic work if yes can
22	you elaborate and give me some examples?
23	X: yeah I mean for me here during my experience here I found a lot of people prefer contacting through
24	Facebook for assignment for example i usually like a usual when I'm doing an assignment I said just to
25	connect through email but I found a lot of people prefer to do it through a messenger Facebook or
26	WhatsApp and for them they said it might be easier to do that because they don't check their email
27	regularly so it might be easier to just connect and talk on Facebook or WhatsApp and it makes makes it
28	easier to say hey I'm done with this part even send documents within the Facebook ah
29	M:ok so I see ok and yes what about sharing academic content?
30	X: um yeah i mean I'm not sure like sharing academic like i would say there's a lot of articles and there's
31	a lot of material and I'm Facebook and i can see that definitely for example there are a lot of people who
32	share scholarship web pages or articles about Business Insider's and so forth so there's definitely a trend
33	to share everything like it's not just educational but everything you find and you find interesting people
34	share it
35	M: ok that's good regarding engagement in your studies do you think social media makes you more
36	engaged to your studies?
37	X: not really
38	M: or it's distracting?
39	X:it's distracting for sure I mean I mean it's nice that you can get hold of people easily through social
40	media usually require more fast maybe then an email but I think when you get when you get into that
41	platform and you use for example Facebook for you know discussing an assignment you end up
42	somehow distracted by the homepage and you read what your friend said or so it becomes like you're
43	not really focusing on your you're doing the communication with your mat with your friend at the same
44	time you're doing your assignment of the other people so it's kind of distracting I would have preferred

45	to have it on a mail email kind of form to do or like a Google Drive or where we can write and do stuff
46	instead of because I feel like it's more professional if you know what I mean
47	M: yeah I got you I got you yeah that's cool okay do you think social media could be a useful source of
48	information?
49	X: definitely I think there's a lot of people who do not like who do not like look at other sources of
50	information so i think everyone now or at least there's a lot of people using Facebook and there's a lot of
51	people depend on Facebook on the news and what's happening in the world what's happening in
52	academic field or whatever so i think definitely it's bringing more people to read more and more than
53	the other types of newspapers or like I don't know magazines
54	M:ok or maybe job posts?
55	X:exactly
56	M: ok ok um coming to the point that the social media may distract you during your studies isn't making
57	your studies more pleasant that way?
58	X:using it?
59	M:yeah
60	X: no i mean because i don't see a different like if I'm contacting if we're using let's say Facebook to
61	communicate about or discuss something I mean it's discussion I mean either you hate your work or like
62	it I don't think being it on on a messenger on Facebook would make it more pleasant its work
63	M: ok ok so you don't think it's really funny?
64	X: I mean for me I want to be honest I don't um I think it's easier to connect through messenger because
65	it it's kind of like in terms of times you kind of save time because then like you read you reply you read
66	reply whether whereas if you're using an email then it takes a longer time to just coordinate the work so
67	in a way it's much easier to use social media to coordinate with each other because most people from
68	our generation use it but at the same time like for me it's just it's kind of sometimes distracting to be
69	honest especially if you have 10
70	aspects does not really concern you but then you find that you're getting notifications about it so it's

71	kind of waste your time thank you you're reading stuff that might not concern you as well
72	M: okay okay yeah so coming to your relationships with your classmates do you think social media
73	contributes to improving your relationships?
74	X: I don't know I mean to be honest I think it's more about showing who you are or show it like or it it
75	depends i mean would it say to contribute to my own but in what way what do you mean like contribute
76	to my relation?
77	M: I mean does it make you to getting to know more your friends?
78	X: I guess so I mean if I'm allowed to say I guess the way they talk about their life or the way they post
79	what's happening in our lives it kind of gives you a glimpse of who they are as a person and I guess if you
80	for example if you only know me just ah like talk to me once and then you see me post something about
81	my life or about my what I kind of think that I like and then you say hey this is a new part of X didn't
82	know so i guess in some way it shows it shows you a little bit of what's happening in people's life and
83	you could have it could be someone that you don't like and all of a sudden you find something that's
84	really interesting about him or her and then you say hey this is person is really interesting so i think in a
85	way it's kind of gives you more about the person than the first impression that you have of them or if
86	you don't know them so in a way i would say yes and in a way of saying no because it could be negative
87	as well
88	M: okay interesting okay ah ok that's regarding your current relationships what do you think about
89	expanding the relationships does it help you to expand your relationships to get to know new people?
90	X: i guess for sure i mean i don't add people i don't know that's one thing because at this point i think
91	you only you only have energy for the people you know but the same time I feel like you I find someone
92	interesting once and I find that I really would like to communicate or to get to know them more I was at
93	just hey i would add you on Facebook in that way i will make sure that i can access them otherwise i will

94	just meet someone for once and say hey I'm just really interesting person but i but i don't know how can
95	i get connected with him because I don't have the email or I don't have anything it's nothing is the easier
96	way to just keep the people that you find interesting and you want to get to know more so I think
97	definitely yes for that
98	M: okay okay interesting okay do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media
99	that's why you are using it?
100	X: not at all I mean for me uh I usually only use like social media to share videos or to share maybe
101	articles and I'm not like that's what I say like very active on that aspect now I'm not like I haven't been
102	even using Facebook since I came here to Sweden but since I'm living here I find myself using it more and
103	more because I have nothing else to do but i wouldn't say I'm using it because everyone is using I'm
104	using it for my own enjoyment I'm using it to kill time I'm using it to know what's happening with
105	everyone
106	M: okay interesting fair enough okay if we come to academics do you interact with your teachers with
107	social media?
108	X: oh no you ok but I had a couple of my clients added me on Facebook and I found that very weird feels
109	like in essentially because usually you use it on a social platform and all of a sudden all my work is
110	coming off a okay so yeah it was weird so I would say it was not like educational but at least it's on a
111	professional level if you can connect them
112	M: ok ok interesting do you think that would be useful if you can contact your teachers in social media?
113	X:ah it depends on how they see it because some people might find it I am intruding to their personal
114	life i would definitely wouldn't want them to think that way it depends on how much I know them like if
115	I'm not crossing the line and just involving myself up because the thing is people use sometimes people
116	use Facebook on a very personal level and they use it only to connect with their family or friends so if I'm
117	if I'm if I have 100

118	space or if you know what I mean
119	M: yeah
120	X: so for me I would never like add any of my teachers because that would mean it's like I don't know I
121	feel like in a sense it's kind of unprofessional for me to just intrude in their personal life okay so i would
122	add them on a professional network such as LinkedIn or any kind of network that we would have
123	something that in common but i wouldn't just add them on Facebook
124	M: okay interesting very interesting so what do you think if we assume that your teachers use social
125	media if they share educational material for you would it be useful in that case?
126	X: I guess so yeah sure I mean like I said it depends on the boundaries that they do like they put she's
127	like I wouldn't mind like for me I don't mind having them as friends on Facebook but then again it's also
128	about respecting their boundaries if that's ok with them if they like having their if I'm like his favorite
129	student and he wants to have me on or she wants to have me on her Facebook for it I don't mind we
130	depend on them ok or me I wouldn't be comfortable just like connecting on a social media with them ok
131	it's realize yeah they might share something interesting but
132	M: ok if we come to the department level does your development share some information in Facebook?
133	X: well I haven't been following up with their page actually?
134	M: interesting and do you think it would be useful they do?
135	X: you um maybe it would be but to be honest I think there's a lot of stuff shared Facebook that I would
136	I wouldn't say exactly it would make it would be significant I would you know it for me it wouldn't be
137	significant because every because every now going to help like 10
138	me I wouldn't be just like say oh they publish something really interesting I might as well write it
139	because there's a lot of pages that are people come following and there I might find them more
140	interesting so for me I would say it might be distracting maybe if they have if we have an email when we
141	get to is connected to the University email and if they have a page with the news that might be more
142	focused and less distracting maybe but I would not say would be helpful if I see it in social media

143	M: yeah okay interesting that's very interesting okay what do you think the characteristics that make
144	social media i would say attractive for your academic you that you said that you are using Google drive
145	you are using WhatsApp up why ?
146	X:um i guess when it comes to how we connect with our phones that becomes more like people are now
147	more close to their phone and that's the first thing that you think of when you go out is to take your
148	phone so if i have a phone and if it's Internet connected then for me if i use like Facebook and i have all
149	the people in my class have Facebook accounts then it makes sense for me for the inland if i have them
150	in urgent or if we're working on something and I need their feedback immediately then the easiest way
151	if I know they're all connected and I can see them online like for example you can check that chat and
152	you can see 25
153	email and hope for them to read it and then come back to you ok so I think in a way it's easier less time
154	spent on conversation and also getting responses and are easy to share as long as you have them friends
155	on Facebook yeah educational what other?
156	M: okay ah if you compare it to live at length learning platform okay why don't you do the things you do
157	in Live@Lund you have discussion portals in Live@Lund?
158	X: we don't use it at all yeah
159	M: yeah why do you use social media instead
160	X: I guess because it's more I don't know I mean it's more cozy I mean Live@Lund I feel that we use it
161	mainly to just see the schedule and see the articles and so forth but I think um I guess people are more
162	comfortable in their own space if you know what I mean because if you have the discussion if you see
163	the discussion at Live@Lund i everyone can see it everyone you can say something and everyone can
164	see it but I guess if you're using Facebook or if you're chatting with the closed group then it might be
165	easier for you to be more comfortable
166	M:ok ok interesting ok what about aspects like maybe the mobility of the Facebook compared to usual
167	learning platforms?

168	X: yeah I mean I guess unfortunately people would have become so dependent on Facebook on getting
169	information like I said like the reading articles as some of them might not be true but we keep on
170	reading them because it's easier now with the new feeds like the most popular topics whether education
171	or whatever they come up so people read them and then you kind of share them and everyone reads
172	them so for from me I think Facebook is easier especially if you want to know what is up today then
173	Facebook becomes a tool to get that access
174	M: ok ok interesting and maybe also be the familiarity?
175	X: exactly exactly it is kind of pleasure and work has become kind of a mix like it's not really social it's
176	everything
177	M: ok ok interesting interesting finally I would like to conclude what do you think other aspects that
178	social media are contributing to your learning experience?
179	X: from a like educational level exactly I mean for me like if I'm just looking at my experience with Lund
180	University I think um like social media definitely contributing a lot like for example with the Lund
181	University page there's a lot of interesting articles that day they publish for example they publish the
182	ranking of all universities and then I get to share that and everyone even my sister she called she was
183	like you know I I looked at what you share then I was interesting to see the kind of university I've never
184	heard of so I think in a way there's a lot of a lot of good stuff that people might not know about it and
185	then when you see it on Facebook and then you share it with other people people then we didn't know
186	more about it so I think in terms of just knowledge it's quite beneficial because a lot of people are on
187	Facebook and if you're reading an article when you share it and they might read it and they might know
188	about it they might know about Lund University and they didn't know about it before if I'm using it to
189	connect with my life my colleague from from university from the school I might be and then I see them
190	Oh seen so then you make sure that they seen it because you get a message that it has been seen by

191	your friend so in a way it kind of give you less stress about if people are reading your stuff or if they're
192	going to reply or whatever and also um there are a lot of ways yeah but mainly I guess information and
193	knowledge mainly you get more information you get more knowledge like I don't have any kind of
194	subscription on our educational like journal or something like that you so I guess see becomes kind of
195	the tool like if I'm following up with the University of web page if I'm following up with any kind of like
196	news then it becomes like the main tool for me to get access to education material or articles
197	M: oh okay okay interesting ah this concludes our interview thank you very much for your time very
198	welcome

Interview 8 (I8)

Date:	2017-04-18
Present:	Pedro Bonilla and the interviewee
Interview format:	Skype
Interview duration:	25 minutes
Transcribed by:	Pedro Bonilla
Transcription date:	2017-04-19

1	Pedro: Hello I'm a researcher from Lund University I'm Pedro Bonilla and I'm going to ask you
2	some questions about how you use social media and what influences you to use social media
3	for your studies
4	
5	Student: Yeah
6	
7	Pedro: So first of all i want to mention some conditions this interview will be recorded and it will
8	be transcribed but it will be anonymous so try to know them mention your name may be in order
9	to keep it anonymous
10	
11	Student: Okay maybe while transcribing you can erase my name
12	
13	Pedro: Yeah we can we can fix that just in case. Another thing is that this interview is voluntary
14	going sorry so you can stop it at any time if you feel uncomfortable
15	
16	Student: Okay
17	
18	Pedro: And so first of all please tell me are you a student
19	
20	Student: Yes
21	
22	Pedro: Okay can you tell me a what is your age
23	
24	Student: I am 26
25	
26	Pedro: Perfect and where do you study?

27	
28	Student: At Lund university school of economics and management
29	
30	Pedro: Okay and what a what academic program do you belong to
31	
32	Student: I study information systems right from our program of one year
33	
34	Pedro: Okay and please tell me what do you think is social media for you?
35	
36	Student: Social media is a strong tool for connecting people saying finding solutions of easiest
37	like is the fastest way of connecting to people and gaining as much knowledge as possible
38	
39	Pedro: Okay perfect and can you give me some examples of social media websites or
40	applications?
41	
42	Student: Examples? yeah, we are surrounded with everything that social media is... okay like
43	WhatsApp, Facebook... Hmm.... Twitter and then a lot of things yeah
44	
45	Pedro: Okay thank you and do you use social media when you have group work?
46	
47	Student: Yeah extensively yeah
48	
49	Pedro: What social media do you use for your... to work in groups?
50	
51	Student: It depends some... Facebook too... sometimes Five and then sometimes to internal
52	chat... WhatsApp... yeah any other tools that is comfortable and accepted within the team
53	members
54	
55	Pedro: Okay for example let's say Facebook... what do you use Facebook for in order to do
56	group work?
57	
58	Student: If we have some assignments or some group works during this thesis as well
59	extensively using it to connect at any time of the day and that is... to connect with informations
60	and people at any time yeah so...
61	
62	Pedro: Okay it's kind of to arrange or to coordinate meetings, right?
63	
64	Student: Yeah

65	
66	Pedro: Ok and then do you use any social media to share academic content?
67	
68	Student: Yes sometimes they are definitely a we do it through Skype or through Facebook...
69	extensively we do it... all of that
70	
71	Pedro: Okay... eh... what social media do you use when you want to share academic things?
72	
73	Student: Oh, like me and my partner, we are extensively using a lot of Facebook, Messenger
74	and the Skype chat options and yeah we are doing that and sometimes we use OneDrive or
75	Evernote... yeah anything
76	
77	Pedro: And why do you use? for example you mentioned Facebook... why do you use Facebook
78	to share?
79	
80	Student: And see it's accessible and we're also acquainted with it we're also familiar with it and
81	yeah it is very easily like we decided that we kind of have a presence on Facebook and we are
82	extensively is looking at it checking on messages so it makes life very easy if you use Facebook
83	
84	Pedro: Okay so you are very familiar with this social network?
85	
86	Student: Yeah
87	
88	Pedro: Okay and do you think social media can engage you more into your studies?
89	
90	Student: Oh yeah I feel so it's very cheap it's very fast and it has high presence, so I feel that
91	the social media has really made my life easier when it comes to studies... You can share notes,
92	you can share knowledge and you can share all these information in much faster way than it
93	used to be, so I definitely think that social media it has really helped me again
94	
95	Pedro: Perfect... and do you think social media can be a useful source of information for for your
96	studies?
97	

98	Student: I definitely feel so yeah I definitely feel so considering the case of my studies I have
99	extensively use social media and I will be using it later on as well, so I feel so
100	
101	Pedro: And for example you know that sometimes there are fake information or fake news in
102	social media, right?
103	
104	Student: Yeah
105	
106	Pedro: How how can you trust the information how can you know if it's...?
107	
108	Student: I mean it's a lot information and it its... people and technology is evolving very fast so
109	there is high high chances that we kind of get misled with some information but yeah I mean it's
110	up to your conscience and you know discussion with the people and can help you it's all this
111	kind of thing let's say I see something that is not relevant or I feel it suspicious so I can Internet
112	is vast i mean i can i can Google it on my own or I can discuss with my friends about this, so I
113	feel I mean everything is a pro and a con it we just... the more aware you are the more safe you
114	are
115	
116	Pedro: Okay perfect and have you... Hmm... have you ever used social media to solve an
117	assignment together?
118	
119	Student: Yeah yeah every time
120	
121	Pedro: Yeah it's very common for you?
122	
123	Student: It's very common
124	
125	Pedro: Okay and do you think is possible to your social media to make your studies more
126	pleasant?
127	
128	Student: I feel so I feel so it is absolutely possible accessible
129	
130	Pedro: In what ways... can you give me an example?

131	
132	Student: Important information sharing, connectivity, engaging people, no time limits and yeah
133	that way and you can work simultaneously being anywhere anytime
134	
135	Pedro: Okay and do you think is possible to have fun with social media and... at the same time
136	study, like a some people report that they use social media as a distraction in... while they are
137	studying they also use social media to like to alternate between studying and getting some
138	distraction from social media?
139	
140	Student: Social media is a distraction to me but when I'm studying alone... doing something
141	serious... I definitely do it alone and of course that's how are they how... I focus and
142	concentrate, it has nothing to do with only social media i mean it if i have to be if i am doing
143	something serious probably I will never see my phone or we just focus so I mean distraction is
144	possible everywhere and anytime I can't blame social media for the stuff
145	
146	Pedro: Okay and do you think... I mean changing a little bit the topic do you think social media
147	can contribute to improve your social relationships in your class or in your academic program?
148	
149	Student: Oh, definitely, definitely, like it really does it really does it enhances the interaction...
150	during my master program we have a social media group... all my classmates are part of it and
151	we shared all important information sometimes lecture notes, before the lectures and stuff like
152	that... so that is really helpful to that place is very easy if we have any problem of regarding our
153	research... our fellows will post it on the blog and somebody among the classmates they have
154	previous examples they definitely come forward and help so it's definitely a constructive way
155	
156	Pedro: Okay nice and maybe a similar question but do you think social media help you to
157	develop new new social relationships in the course?
158	
159	Student: Of course of course like I said previously definitely does

160	
161	Pedro: For example a day at the beginning of your master was it helpful to use social media to
162	meet new people?
163	
164	Student: Yeah it was definitely very nice because once we had the... like... in case of my master
165	program once we had the list of all the 40
166	together we kind of made a social media groups before that before joining the class so our
167	sessions started in August and we had a social media group from May and June so everybody
168	kind of get familiar to each other on that group everybody knew who is coming from where they
169	are coming in the if they had some questions regarding their let's say their... let's say their travel
170	to Sweden or anything they kind of posted it it there and it was very nice and interactive
171	
172	Pedro: Okay
173	
174	Student: it's good a relationship
175	
176	Pedro: Ok so this Facebook good kind of helped your group to like to know each other even
177	before coming here, right?
178	
179	Student: Yes
180	
181	Pedro: Ok and do you think the fact that some of your colleagues are using social media
182	impacts your your desire or your decision to use it?
183	
184	Student: Definitely it does definitely the more people are going to get on social media the
185	more... is it is easier for you to be acquainted with the platform and get full use of it
186	
187	Pedro: Ok so if someone like like you say they someone created a Facebook group in your
188	master is... so this motivates you to like to use Facebook more... to... for academic purposes?
189	
190	Student: Definitely it does definitely now if I have any issue I definitely post it in my master group
191	regarding any course or anything so and I'm hopeful that I will receive a response like ten on ten
192	times i have posted anything I got a response

193	
194	Pedro: Okay perfect mean do you interact with your teachers in social media... have you ever
195	done that?
196	
197	Student: Not very much on social media some because yeah I don't want them to add in my
198	social media for nothing because... it could be helpful... it's just that my personal choice
199	although I interact with my teachers on Gmail chat... something more official
200	
201	Pedro: Okay like through Live@Lund for example or email?
202	
203	Student: Yeah or Gmail chat I just wanted to keep it official that's the only reason that I interact
204	them by a chat and means oh who...
205	
206	Pedro: Can I ask you why you wouldn't like to add your teachers to your social media?
207	
208	Student: I it's nothing that i don't like them because that maybe I'm a little hesitant or shy to send
209	an friend request or something but yeah when I'm out of this master program I think I'd like them
210	on social media so to make sure that i am connected to them throughout the life so I'll definitely
211	add them once I'm out of... I'm done with my master's program I see that when I'm doing my
212	master program the more authentic way of connecting to the required official chats and means
213	of it it is my personal
214	
215	Pedro: Okay so you wouldn't do it while you are on your master, right?
216	
217	Student: Yeah I just wanted to be more professional but there is there is no desire denying the
218	part that later on I would love to do that
219	
220	Pedro: Okay and do your teachers share educational materials on on any social media like...?
221	
222	Student: I see all we have our own internal portal at Lund University so our teacher shares all
223	our information on that portal so it is kind of an alternative social media with us with all the

224	classes and our teachers to be our teacher extensively uses uses those platforms to just keep a
225	track of all the documents shared and information shared with students... that is kind of... and I
226	think that is nice as well, because that is totally separated and orderly you know one-to-one kind
227	of thing, so that is also an alternative good way of sharing and that is kind of all social media for
228	school purposes
229	
230	Pedro: Nice and can you tell me the name of the portal that you mentioned?
231	
232	Student: It's called Live@Lund it is supported on the Lund University it is also that it has all the
233	same features as let's say of Facebook, so it that is our Facebook when it comes to sharing and
234	informations and sets or submitting assignments with our teachers and everyone had their
235	individual accounts let's say likes exactly like Facebook where you can see all your academic
236	records
237	
238	Pedro: ok I probably will come back to that topic of Live@Lund maybe a little bit later and by
239	there for now and we like to ask you that your department share news or necessary information
240	on social media? now you willing to the Department of informatics, right?
241	
242	Student: I'd like our like some of our teachers are in some courses use Flipboard to share
243	information and encourage you to use Flipboard. Flipboard is kind of a social media with your
244	references and sources of news, informations anything you want so yes it is... it is used
245	
246	Pedro: ok and do you think that the some characteristics of social media websites and makes
247	them more attractive than other tools?
248	
249	Student: Characteristics... I think the vast presence of people who make it more extensive and
250	when you talk about tools you cannot restrict people... when I'd say talk about tools like
251	Live@Lund so I'm only connected to my classmates on that and then... in social media I can
252	interact with my friends who are studying into other universities and share and exchange

253	documents or information while they are studying... let's say... for the same courses, so I just
254	think that the tool is quite closed and social media is quite open
255	
256	Pedro: okay and for example in most of the social media applications have yeah they have like
257	an application for smartphones, right? do you think this is an important characteristics that you
258	can install an app in your smartphone and use it everywhere?
259	
260	Student: I feel so it a tool or a platform has to engage more people then it has to be app for
261	telephones or mobile phones or stuff like that... mobile apps are definitely very important
262	
263	Pedro: Perfect in coming back to you to Live@Lund you mentioned that Live@Lund is similar to
264	social media, right? it's like a platform of your of your department so...
265	
266	Student: Yeah
267	
268	Pedro: Do you prefer to use social media instead of of Live@Lund in some cases?
269	
270	Student: when I'm interacting with my classmates I can go with what you say to social media like
271	Facebook and other things but then my teachers are putting assignments and things or any
272	information you know Live@Lund it's the option that I'd go for
273	
274	Pedro: okay it's like the official option, right?
275	
276	Student: Yeah, yeah
277	
278	Pedro: But do you think people are using Live@Lund a lot?
279	
280	Student: Not I wouldn't say that a lot but all of us are using Live@Lund to interact and get the
281	information news going on in the department regarding courses, grades, assignments so we
282	definitely use or check Live@Lund once a day, so we can't simply ignore it because that's
283	related to a master program
284	
285	Pedro: Okay so let's say that is some of your colleagues want to say share something related
286	with the master, who would he be likely to do it on Live@Lund or on the Facebook group that

287	you mentioned?
288	
289	Student: That's what I said... if it has to be my classmates I guess we all go with a Facebook
290	group, but if it involves teachers and teachers sharing it or we should be sending our
291	assignment or something we do it with Live@Lund
292	
293	Pedro: Okay and you think that has to do with the fact that people are more familiar with
294	Facebook?
295	
296	Student: Yeah because we kind of have a Facebook presence as well... and sometimes the
297	if you don't go to Live@Lund you might miss it, so Facebook is a safe twice but teachers
298	don't follow those social network and I think that is also right
299	
300	Pedro: Ok and... ok I have a like a final question for you is a very open question you say... in
301	what in what other ways do you think social media contribute to your studies?
302	
303	Student: What other way? ...Hmm... it helps me connect to people from the other
304	universities... connect to professors... like not exactly connecting but get it... get to know them in a better
305	way or maybe more students from other universities and find them on Facebook and send them
306	requests asking some questions or not requests actually message requests maybe... asking
307	certain questions and maybe yeah it's useful it is for this in with open network you know
308	so accessibility is a really plus point but it could upset some people as well there's always so
309	and cons... it's a way of the user of a social media that really decides its usage... I think
310	
311	Pedro: Okay so you mentioned accessibility, openness, so you think that I like a strong
312	characteristic of social media that they that everyone can have access to it, right?
313	
314	Student: Yeah
315	
316	Pedro: Like you said that you can connect with people from other universities?
317	
318	Student: Yeah, yeah
319	
320	Pedro: And you couldn't do that with Live@Lund for example, right?

321	
322	Student: Of course, no, Live@Lund is pretty close that is specifically for my master program. I
323	get that is right as well for Live@Lund to be closed, because that is only our teachers and
324	students changing information on a closed network with grades and stuff like that, so I feel yeah
325	it is fine
326	
327	Pedro: Okay, so you agree that Live@Lund to be closed closed kind of closed?
328	
329	Student: Fine yeah that is all nice... maybe we can add some extra features where we can see
330	the same courses are taught in both all other universities but then that requires other university
331	to convince people who share their information and stuff so... that way is fine maybe we can
332	improve some features later on discussing about it
333	
334	Pedro: Okay because also we have to consider that they Live@Lund is not easy to use like for
335	example from your phone, right?
336	
337	Student: Yeah, yeah, of course, that is a big problem with that of course no denying that fact
338	
339	Pedro: Okay so it's like a usability problem for now?
340	
341	Student: Yeah it has a usability problem now
342	
343	Pedro: Okay so I think we are done by now so this interview will be transcribed as i told you and
344	we will send you the transcription just for you to check if you want to add or remove something
345	in the interview you know so thank you very much for participating in this study
346	
347	Student: You're welcome
348	
349	Pedro: Yeah, we'll keep in touch if I need to ask a small detail or something
350	
351	Student: Yeah
352	

353	Pedro: Thank you
354	
355	

Interview 9 (I9)

Date:	2017-04-15
Present:	Mohammed Osman and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	10 minutes
Transcribed by:	Mohammed Osman
Transcription date:	2017-04-16

1	M:okay my name is Mohammed Osman i am a student at information system doing master research
2	in the factors of academic usage of social media first of all I would like to thank you for your
3	time and collaboration and I would like to ask your permission to record this interview the
4	collected data will be treated as confidential data and your identity will not be recognized. okay?
5	M:I would start by asking you if you are a student?
6	X:Yes ,I am student
7	M:where do you study?
8	X:I'm studying in the Faculty of Engineering in Lund University
9	M:what program?
10	X:water resource engineering, a master degree
11	M:okay I can you tell me what do you think is social media for you how do you define social
12	media when I say social media what do you think?
13	X:okay it's kind of a new way to connect to the world especially in our abroad it's kind of a way
14	that I connect with my people from my country and kind of a way to see different people
15	different cultures kind of
16	M:if we drift into academics ,do use the social media for your academic work for your group
17	work ?
18	X:yes yes yes i do i do use social media in my sometimes in my group work and academic work
19	M:how can you elaborate and give me some examples?
20	X:okay first of all like we contact each other in order to schedule our meetings on everything and
21	to ask about something that was not here in the topic or whatsoever so I would say recently the
22	main contact way that we are used.

23	M:okay do you need to show any academic content?
24	X:yes if yes yes I do sent some document through social media
25	M: like what, what application do you use?
26	X: okay so basically or Microsoft Word Excel and some PDFs and some I send and some links to
27	the to the social media and also we use the Google Drive and Google those two like Google
28	Docs to write our final thing before editing it
29	M:okay and what social media application do you use for sharing?
30	X:for sure okay for sharing documents special i used Google drive where we initiate a folder and
31	we upload all our documents there and now even our final document we upload it there
32	M: and how our collaboration?
33	X: Okay and mainly we use WhatsApp and Facebook to discuss what we are going to do, mainly
34	by creating WhatsApp groups
35	M:okay do you think this usage of social media engages you more into your studies
36	X:Yes it is useful and help since it is kind of the only way I am using now because sometimes it
37	is very difficult to meet your group people all the time so you just like we just want to, but you at
38	the sometimes you want to meet them you want to ask them about something you want to ask
39	them about something that's the only way you can meet them
40	M:okay and when it comes to academic content do you think social media could be a useful
41	source of information?
42	X: in it is self i would not say yes because the social media you can trust it 100% e but no I don't
43	rely on social media as the main source for something in my academic work okay
44	M:okay okay do you think studying with social media makes your academic experience more
45	pleasant is it more fun?
46	X:I don't know how to answer this question either yes or no one if it kind of make it easier for
47	me to engage in some studies and some group works so I would say yes
48	M: In the sense that maybe merging your leisure and study time
49	X: I you could be could be could be also something like that yeah it's really helpful in that thing
50	okay what about your relationship with your colleagues do you think social media contributes to
51	this?
52	X:You mean the academic relationship?

53	M: Yes the academic relationship.
54	X:I mean we just use it we'll just use it in order to communicate but it doesn't help like to really
55	connect to people
56	M:okay okay okay this is regarding improving your current relationships do you think it
57	increases your pool of relationship like you know maybe i would say getting to know more new
58	students
59	or something?
60	X: yeah definitely helps yeah yeah in normal view people and getting to know a little bit about
61	them out say yes and the beginning but only at the beginning because in order to really meet
62	those people after know them the first time you have to you have to have a natural
63	communication like physical communication physical like you need to meet them face to face in
64	order to really get another but if the beginning yes is a way for introducing in order to be or
65	making you meeting new people
66	M:okay do you think the fact that maybe because some of your colleagues are using social media
67	that's why you are using it?
68	X: could be yes yes just because I actually sometimes I had to have some accounts and some
69	sort of like social media like websites or something like that I had to do that just because my
70	some of my friends were using it.
71	M:okay if we come to the faculty and teachers do interact to these some of your teachers via a
72	social media?
73	X: no no more enjoying only the first formal email okay that count as a social media I don't
74	know
75	M:okay do you think it would be helpful if your teachers would engage into this?
76	X:sometimes yes because like you don't want to be formal all the time and you don't check your
77	email all the time so but you of course check your Facebook or WhatsApp all the time because a
78	you are having to your phone with you all the time so it would be preferred sometimes yes,it
79	helps.
80	M:okay and when it comes to sharing educational material definitely your teachers are not

81	sharing with the educational material via social media as you said, but do you think if they share
82	it via social media that would be more effective?
83	X:no I don't think,because I believe the current efficient way to do it okay
84	M:what about your department does it share some information via social media?
85	X:no my department no
86	M:okay and do you think that your department can do something via social media?
87	X:yeah they can use it in a way to help more students to engage in activities together and to kind
88	of get to know what are the real activities for our department because they are not publishing
89	anything I think of that
90	M:okay well as you discussed that you are using social media for some of your group work what
91	do you think is attractive in social media that you are using it why don't you use maybe
92	traditional learning management system like Live@Lund?
93	X:yeah I mean for me because it's accessible all the time since I'm having my phone with me all
94	the time that's that's the most important reason why I'm using social media all the time that I'm
95	using WhatsApp because whenever someone sent me a message that just get the tree I get like I
96	really know that at one time immediately I send him back on something like that but I don't have
97	my Live@Lund in my mobile
98	M: okay others all the time so it could be if like for example the familiarity
99	X:yeah of course of course could be a familiarity with that but I'm really familiar with those apps
100	that i am using them all the time
101	M:okay um if I ask you is there any way that you think its social media is contributing to your
102	study yes
103	X:yes that's of course it it kind of make it easier for me so I mean especially because it's almost
104	you can say social media now is my only way for communication with other people yes
105	M:okay okay then thank you this concludes our interview and thank you for your time
106	X:you are welcome

Interview 10 (I10)

Date:	2017-04-18
Present:	Mohammed Osman and the interviewee
Interview format:	In-person
Interview duration:	18 minutes
Transcribed by:	Mohammed Osman
Transcription date:	2017-04-19

1	M:okay hi my name is Mohammad Osman and I am a student information systems doing research in the
2	usage of social media in academics, first of all I would like to thank you for your time and collaboration I
3	would like to ask you kindly to record the interview and your identity will not be revealed
4	X:okay
5	M: okay so to start with the are you student?
6	X: yes I am a student here at Lund University and I'm studying in development field
7	M: okay interesting what are you studying?
8	X: so its development studies comprises of economics political science human geography it's a multi-
9	faceted course
10	M: okay interesting what do you think of social media once you hear the phrase social media what
11	comes to your mind?
12	X: this is a difficult question because I think social media is what it sounds I mean it's an integration of
13	people and connecting different people and then groups online but I do think there's some positive and
14	negative aspects of social media I mean I think sometimes it can unify people and grant people
15	experiences and connections they wouldn't otherwise have yeah but on the other hand sometimes
16	social media divides people it becomes kind of polarizing and maybe not all social contact can be
17	positive
18	M: yeah I would agree, can you give me some examples of social media that you use social media?
19	X: I mostly use Facebook but this is kind of funny because I noticed that my cousin she's 11

20	have a little bit younger than us are using a lot of Snapchat ,Instagram I think Twitter is used by all age
21	groups but I never got into that so mostly Facebook
22	M: ok ok yes, me too okay if we just drift into academics do use social media in your group work?
23	X: um yeah actually we're getting together with groups when we're working with people we might not
24	know very well I think it's really easy just to create a social group on Facebook particularly with
25	messenger because it serves as a good platform to communicate obviously this is not really fully
26	integrated into our course but rather we do it on our own usually
27	M: okay okay interesting hey there any other social media application to use maybe Google Drive
28	Google Docs?
29	X: yeah I think I've used a lot of Google services I remember a few years ago Google was trying to launch
30	a kind of a competition to Facebook and that never really happened but in the same time I've used a lot
31	of Google services like you said drive I think academically that's it very useful
32	M:okay okay that's interesting and do use social media to share academic content?
33	X: yeah yeah like documents sometimes I really like Live@Lund sometimes because you can download
34	the presentations or powerpoints other useful information but a lot of the time maybe we don't have
35	that material so I've even seen students sharing literature and stuff through social media PDFs and such
36	a alike so it's very very good
37	M:interesting what about engagement to your studies do you feel that social media makes you more
38	engaged to your studies or it distracts you?
39	X: I think both social media can be extremely distracting and I wouldn't I wouldn't be telling the truth if I
40	said it would make me focus because I think social media can often detract your attention to whatever
41	you're doing and it becomes a bit of an addiction for some people so I try and avoid it taking up my time
42	on a devoted to study but unfortunately sometimes you do get distracted M: okay maybe by
43	notifications or something or this stuff?
44	X: yeah or like we were discussing on the way here you know there can be some news or some

45	information that pops up and people are talking about you get in you get involved
46	M: exactly yeah I feel the same ,okay would you rely on social media as a source for your academic
47	information?
48	X: only if it's being distributed by reputable sources I think this is a problem with any information on
49	social media is I want to get stuff from verifiable a source if it's directly from the University or from
50	someone officials something official that would be great but if you're talking about research I don't
51	know
52	M:okay okay yeah I would agree does it make your studies more pleasant when you use for example
53	social media during the study?
54	X: it serves a good study break to do personal stuff on social media and sometimes like I think the
55	positive side of that is you can maybe meet people you wouldn't otherwise meet set up you know let's
56	go study at this place I think from time to time social media can have a positive effect because it unifies
57	people within a group or create study opportunity
58	M: okay interesting so would that be more fun for you?
59	X: I would it be more fun I suppose so because otherwise I might be alone studying by myself but
60	sometimes social media creates an environment where you can connect with other students I have been
61	able to create a group study session just out of thin air
62	M: maybe blending formal and informal learning absolutely okay so if we come to your relationships
63	with your colleagues do you think social music media improves your relationships?
64	X: that's difficult for me because personally I think especially in the university environment it can be
65	difficult if you have a opinion that differs from your colleagues and the problem of social media is that
66	everything's out there so if I were to create a position that was a little different than someone else's it
67	could affect negatively within my my group but by the same token I think social media can have unifying
68	effects but it's very dangerous because if something were to come out personal it could affect your
69	social relationships in the real world as in social media can be dangerous if not used carefully I think

70	M: okay okay interesting do you have a story to share or something?
71	X: um yeah actually I can share one there was a post a few weeks ago that i wrote it was pretty neutral
72	thing i was a bit frustrated just about the attack that happened in Stockholm and granted i think this is
73	kind of common now there's attacks all the time there's bad news and it circulates in the echo chambers
74	of social media yeah but what happened was there was some one on one side of an argument
75	condemning Muslims and I do not agree with that opinion at all and there was another person on there
76	who was getting upset with his arguments naturally because she shares the Muslim faith so there was
77	an argument and I did not get involved mainly because I was asleep but a few hours later and I got a
78	post from a colleague in class who I don't know very well and interestingly enough she blamed me from
79	being involved at all in the conversation even though I hadn't written anything so I think social media
80	has the potential to damage reputation even if you didn't intend it to be so, so when I say you have to
81	use it carefully I mean maybe not writing as much political or personal beliefs may be sharing happy
82	things or rather things that are not sensitive maybe could be better
83	M: yeah I can result may mean some misunderstanding.
84	X: correct yes I think there's huge potential for misunderstandings or conflicts.
85	M: interesting what about developing new relationships?
86	X: this is a great point I think it's amazing nowadays where you can meet someone and sometimes for a
87	very brief moment and you can instead of writing down contact information that can be lost or
88	whatever you can connect immediately and I think Facebook's a great platform because you can already
89	kind of see their established information and profile where a Snapchat isn't it became be personal but it
90	doesn't tell the story about that person so you can get to know a lot of people better and interestingly
91	people you already do know maybe you're visiting a city and I've been surprised sometimes to find out
92	one of my friends is there so friends I already know so you can meet new people and you can catch up
93	with all people or all friends that you didn't know we're even nearby

94	M: okay it could be the reason that you are using social media because other people are using it or some
95	of your friends are using it?
96	X: yeah that's exactly the man nowadays like a lot of my friends they've canceled their Facebook account
97	probably because they got tired of some of the the opinions and some of the media that's so involved
98	on Facebook and there's a lot of drama sometimes among some people get constant arguments and so
99	forth and they canceled their their Facebook but at the end of the day they came back and I think
100	there's this drive to come back because Facebook in a way has become kind of your social atmosphere
101	outside of real life I mean the people you know in real life but I think there's a natural human drive to be
102	social and social media takes that online I really think a lot of people can't live without it I'm not at that
103	point yet but I think ultimately social media is very powerful it's very attractive
104	M: I agree okay if we come to the teachers do you interact with your teacher through social media?
105	X: I honestly know there are some teachers are at a high school where I connected with later University-
106	wise I hadn't really connected with many teachers on Facebook but I remember in my high school there
107	was a policy where the teachers could not be friends students on social media at all , however after
108	graduating and leaving some did and I noticed some other teachers I may have added did it add add me
109	back that could just be a personal thing or it could be that they don't want to get any connection with
110	the student so I think it it depends but in Sweden it's very likely there's a more casual relationship
111	between teachers and students
112	M:okay so it's more like a cultural thing?
113	X: I think so , also may be the policy of the school or university might not allow for that officially
114	M: okay that's very interesting so do you think it would be useful if your teachers share educational
115	material via social media or interact with you via social media?
116	X: Hmm personally I wouldn't mind but I do think there's some people who don't use social media -there

117	you heard a notification!- no I think there's some people who don't use it or not involved in it so I like to
118	think offering more platforms as good but just not taking away the old ones for example I would be a
119	little upset if they got rid of Live@Lund and replaced it with a Facebook group I think offering people
120	offering students offering everyone more choices is good but taking away choices is always a
121	compromise that might be tough to fill
122	M: okay okay very interesting point what about your department does it share many information in
123	social media gives you news updates or something?
124	X: I wish they did one of the most frustrating things I think is when we first went in the course they're
125	still presenting the calendar now on a document like a PDF and I think most people use Google calendar I
126	know for the first semester I would add all the events individually on to my Google calendar because it's
127	much easier for me to see in that format they exhibit and I notice that the department doesn't do that
128	they're actually not very proactive at all my specific department regarding social media however I
129	noticed some students that were filling the gap there was another student in my class who decided to
130	create a Google calendar and share it with anyone who wanted to use it so sometimes when the
131	department isn't offering a certain service other people will jump in to fill the gaps
132	M: okay that's really true think so if I asked you what characteristics do you think attracts you to social
133	media?
134	X: Hmm definitely connecting with friends and family who were far away yeah I think nowadays it's
135	becoming something that would prerequisite to get to know people think I don't necessarily like that
136	aspect because I don't think digital contact replaces real human contact but sometimes to connect with
137	people you know that you got to send them a message they won't answer their phone if you call them
138	anything so the first option is you know get on their Facebook see what they're up to send them a
139	message and hey you want to go for lunch want to go out to this place at the end of the day social media

140	becomes like a tool to connect with people in real life
141	M: exactly exactly and if you think of this in academic context how does it reflect I mean these
142	characteristics?
143	X: at least in my case I think it's proven very useful because I've been able to we have a group for a
144	program and I've been able to connect with other students and classmates and ask a question that
145	maybe sometimes I don't want to ask the professor because it's a very casual question you or
146	sometimes it's a group concern maybe were concerned about a certain assignment don't understand
147	the context and you can get very instant answers because there's always someone in the group who is
148	there to respond which is very nice
149	M: okay interesting so if you compare it to Live@Lund like the usual the casual learning management
150	system how can we what advantages do you think social media has?
151	X: Hmm well I think Live@Lund to being the official site offers some some functionality that social
152	media would maybe distract you with for example I've noticed sometimes you go into an official page
153	or you're looking at the group but then something else pops up I mean it's like going into a candy shop
154	you can't pick what you want and you end up getting really distracted and maybe I don't think that's just
155	me i think that's everybody it's become that way so when you're going to Live@Lund it's very good
156	because you're there just for Live@Lund but at the same time i think traditional websites are
157	disappearing in favor of social media i don't really know if i can say that's a good or a bad thing time will
158	tell but yeah putting everything on one platform like i said before it might not be a good compromise
159	M: yeah i would agree ,and finally is there any other ways do you think social media could you please
160	your studies?
161	X: Hmm I think overall it contributes in the way of what I mentioned before mostly I'm connecting with
162	the other students sometimes you share material even like a calendar and of course you are putting

163	some trust in two other people that person were to right the wrong information on the calendar maybe
164	I'd go to the wrong place or go to the wrong time so there is a level of trust and you you do have to
165	verify certain things but i think the ability to share material and share opinions and insights you know
166	even get together and study with people you probably wouldn't otherwise connect with are very
167	valuable
168	M: interesting this concludes our interview thank you very much for your time

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