

Biljana Ranković¹⁾

1) Faculty of Organizational
Sciences, University of Belgrade,
Serbia
biljana.rankovic@fon.bg.ac.rs

QUALITY MEDIA STATION: A STUDENTS' VIEW OF THE QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Abstract: As the world becomes increasingly complex, every institution has growing needs for people with media-related skills. Nowadays, communication in a socially-networked society creates new challenges and opportunities for universities all over the world. In situation where practically all governmental and other relevant public institutions have developed infrastructure for media support, there is no longer a question if University should participate in the media sphere, but what are the most effective ways to do that. Factually, information and communication are the most significant and challenging issues for the current and future students' quality of life. Unfortunately, there is limited research on how media impact students and how they influence their professional careers. Therefore, the paper aims at presenting specific topics and activities which have been developed within the Quality Media Station, founded in November 2015 as one of the outcomes of TEMPUS project "Enhancement of Quality Infrastructure in Western Balkans", at the Department of Quality Management and Standardization (Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade). The key role of the Center is to establish informational hubs through which all the interested parties could be informed about activities within the University, with the special emphasis on the Quality Infrastructure issues.

Keywords: quality management, quality infrastructure, students' perception, media reporting, higher education

1. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly complex society, in which there coexist a number of different media organizations, information becomes guiding principle and initiator of the most activities all over the world. The exceptional role of media use has profoundly changed the human experience. We use it to communicate, connect with others, find information, buy and sell products, watch television shows, search for entertainment, participate in political spheres [1]. The media is part of our everyday lives [2] and its grow in the last few decades is unprecedented [3]. However, the ubiquity of media is no more apparent than at the University [4]. The media use is increasingly

visible in higher education settings as instructors look to technology to mediate their instruction, promote active learning for students [4] as well as enhance students' quality of life.

The rapid growth in online higher education, in terms of course offerings and student enrollment, has often been celebrated on the grounds that moving education online is an innovative way to increase the accessibility of university education [5]. Therefore, the review begins with the brief description of the literature review, aiming to understand and question some of relevant assumptions that underpin those claims. Literature review is followed by a look at usage trends of the most popular social networking sites. The next section of the review focuses on the new media

center for quality, today known as Quality Media Station (QMS), founded in November 2015 at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade, during the TEMPUS project *Improvement of Partnership with Enterprises by Enhancement of a Regional Quality Management Potentials in Western Balkan Countries*. The organizational structure and students' engagement are explored next. All the outputs and outcomes as well as all the value adding processes follow. Finally, the review offers some concluding remarks with guidelines and suggestions for future research.

2. THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Never has there been a time when media has played such an important role in higher education. Widely embraced as a tool for personal or business purposes, the notion that social media could be an effective tool for educational purposes has received recent attention [4]. With the rise of Web 2.0, a multitude of new possibilities on how to use these online technologies for active learning has intrigued researchers [6]. And while most researchers have addressed the usage of media as the particular consumption of digital media or Internet [2], there is a belief that today's communication creates new challenges and opportunities for teachers and higher education.

Social networking sites, videos, websites, blogs, wikis, multimedia platforms etc. become powerful, attention-grabbing media that let us share information like never before. For the last two decades, the most remarkable educators have sought to invent, improve and implement teaching practices that engage students and connect classroom information with real-life experiences [6]. The part teachers play within education changes with the needs and constraints of the learning environment [7]. Their fundamental role in supporting students, however, remains consistent with contexts [7].

Researchers have been examining the role that media plays in the higher education for the some time now. Some of their exceptional work has highlighted the social media use and social networking sites in higher education settings. A few studies investigated students' perspective and their achievements in college courses. To narrow the range for this review, this section summarizes key findings from these studies.

The compiled report from the Pew Internet & American Life Project [8] was an early indication of the increasingly social role that communications technologies would play in the lives of young people [9]. It found that three-quarters of all teens between ages 12 and 17 were using the Internet and Instant Messaging (IM) and that these modern technologies were becoming an important aspect of their lives [8]. The majority of researchers on social media use have agreed that the predominant social networking users are young adults. In 2005, only 8% of adult internet users had an online profile; today, that number has quadrupled to 35% [11]. More recently, Madden and Zickuhr [12] reported that 83% of internet users within the age 18–29 group used social networking sites and 61% of those use it on a daily basis.

There has been a lack of large-scale research examining education scholars' social media participation [14]. However, the variety of the researches have explored various forms of social-media in higher education settings. For example, Roblyer et al. [9] explored findings on Facebook in higher education. Eva Kassens-Noor [6] as well as Veletsianos and Kimmons [14] investigated how do education professors and students use Twitter. From a slightly different perspective, Gikas and Grant [15] highlighted the importance of mobile computing devices in higher education, while Ituma [16] evaluated students' perceptions about e-learning in a campus-based university.

Proponents of media-driven scholarship have agreed that students' use of social media for educational purposes can certainly enhance their work and foster the development of their education, in general. As a result, universities are increasingly encouraging researchers and educators to expand their online presence [13].

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QUALITY MEDIA STATION (QMS)

Understanding the laws and constraints of today's informational space and, in addition, guided by the academic framework of the University of Belgrade, Quality Media Station (QMS) has been founded in order to support, promote and record all the activities, events, cooperations and other issues relevant to the field of Quality. The vision of the Quality Media Station is to provide a place for students to work together to discuss and address global

issues affecting Quality Management and Standardization and other Quality related topics.

The main role of Quality Media Station has not so much to do with traditional informational media use. Rather, it provides a mechanism for the students to connect, communicate, and interact with each other and their mutual friends through dissemination of information and awareness campaign about importance of Quality Management and Standardization in Western Balkan Countries.

With its competent staff and experience in production and broadcasting of media content, Quality Media Station offers a complete range of services in the media scene in Serbia and the rest of the region. Quality Media Station can organize various media-related activities: photographing, audio and video production, web and graphic design, monitoring of reports in the media, stakeholders reporting, organization of events – workshops, lectures, conferences etc.

Quality Media Station has a strategic goal to support the development of Quality Infrastructure in Serbia, as well as in the whole region, in both informational and organizational manner, and to promote Quality Management and Standardization as a profession in educational, business, governmental and other surroundings, along with the public media in general. Operationally, it aims at covering any event or activity that may contribute to the achievement of its strategic goal – firstly, within the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, but also in much wider contexts and environments.

As the particular media organization, Quality Media Station should, in one place, gather all the relevant experts in this field. Organization like this should, not only lead to the creation of the intellectual network of successful corporations, institutions, agencies and other stakeholders and interested parties, when it comes to quality, but should also be able to create such a media platform, based on appropriate social and moral principles, which will provide quality information to its customers and create basis for further research.

3.1 STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT WITH THE QUALITY MEDIA STATION

In a very short period of time, Quality Media Station has managed to build an image of the only place at the Faculty where all events within the University, with the special emphasis

on the Quality Infrastructure issues, may be presented both effectively and professionally.

During time, a part of Quality Media Station has evolved into a new, very important student organization whose members are students, not only of Quality Management and Standardization, but also from other study groups at the Faculty. At the Quality Media Station there are currently 52 engaged students of Faculty of Organizational Sciences - 7 students are the 1st year college students, 18 are the 2nd year college students, 24 are the 3rd year students and 3 are 4th year college students at the Faculty. Of the total number of students who are engaged in Quality Media Station, 12 students are students of the Informational Systems and Technologies, 3 are students of the Management, 35 are – year of study and study group - are given in students of the Quality Management and Standardization and 2 are students of the Operational Management Department. Students' engagement the Table 1.

Table 1 – Students' engagement with the QMS

<i>The Year of Study</i>	
<i>The 1st Year of Study</i>	7
<i>The 2nd Year of Study</i>	18
<i>The 3rd Year of Study</i>	24
<i>The 4th Year of Study</i>	3
<i>Total</i>	52
<i>The Study Group</i>	
<i>Informational Systems and Technologies</i>	12
<i>Quality Management and Standardization</i>	35
<i>Management</i>	3
<i>Operations Managements</i>	2
<i>Total</i>	52

It is perhaps also significant that, last year, for the first time, Quality Management Trainee Program has been developed within the Quality Media Station, as an internship program for the 1st year students at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of

Belgrade. As a part of the educational process at the Faculty, this program is based on specific forms of teamwork in solving creative problems related to the Quality Management and Standardization and Business Development Management of Quality Media Station. Some of the interns' responsibilities are focused on projects specifically related to the 1st year students' organizational experience and involve: designing posters, charts, graphs, working with people, organizing special events, conducting studies and surveys, conducting research, compiling reports, etc. Developing challenging work assignments related to the students' abilities and experiences is actually a major challenge for the QMS Trainee Program. At this time, 12 students has passed through Quality Management Trainee Program, while 25 students applied for it. Realization of the 13 remaining internships is planned by the end of October 2017. Additionally, Department of Quality Management and Standardization has, for several years now, organized similar internships for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th year Quality Management and Standardization students at the Faculty. Since December 2014, more than 50 students of Quality Management and Standardization has passed through this program and the plan is to continue its successful realization in the years ahead of us.

3.2 QMS PARTNERSHIPS & ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL EVENTS

In recent months, Quality Media Station has supported a number of students' events, firstly at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, but also in much wider environments. Some of the most important activities, events and cooperations that may be considered are: Symorg, Case Study Show, Belgrade Youth Fair, CEO Conference, Start Conference, IoT Hackathon, Job Fair, Gaiming Fair etc. and regarding partnerships, the most prominent partner organizations of Quality Media Station are: TMS CEE (partner of TUV SUD), Quality Austria Center, Center for Career Development, AIESEC LG Belgrade, ESTIEM LC Belgrade, BEST Belgrade, EESTEC LC Belgrade etc.

Total number of special events organized by these and other partner organizations of the Quality Media Station that were supported and media reported by the Quality Media Station – in the 2016 and 2017 – is given in the Table 2.

Table 2 – Special events supported by the Quality Media Station in 2016 and 2017

Month	Number of special events supported by QMS
January	2
February	2
March	6
April	3
May	6
June	2
July	1
August	1
September	3
October	4
November	4
Decembar	8
<i>Total in 2016</i>	<i>42</i>
Month	Number of special events supported by QMS
January	1
February	1
March	6
April	4
May	5
<i>Total in 2017</i>	<i>17</i>

Additionally, in the last couple of years, there has been a significant number of other projects, events and activities organized by the Faculty of Organizational Sciences as well as Quality Management and Standardization Department that were also supported and media reported by the Quality Media Station (QMS).

3.2.1. Business Quality Academy

In cooperation with majority of different organizations, corporations, governmental and other public institutions, agencies etc. at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, for the first time, project *Business Quality Academy* has been organized by the Quality Media Station. Supported by the Quality Management and Standardization Department at the Faculty, project was organized as one of the activities of another project *Personal Initiative* supported by Ministry of Youth and Sports of Republic of Serbia. Project is dedicated to illustrate the best examples in the field of entrepreneurship and employment and it has a goal to provide information, guidelines and recommendations regarding the students' internships in some of the leading multinational corporations in Serbia and the rest of the region, and to encourage the employment of young people throughout Serbia. Some of the following project activities related to the organization of various workshops, lectures and seminars in the cities across Serbia are planned for the October 2017.

3.3. QUALITY-RELATED JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

In an increasingly complex world, where every institution has growing needs for people with media-related skills, employers are often looking for talented graduates who can effectively use a variety of media platforms to increase their brand awareness, differentiate themselves from competitors or engage with their customers on target markets. Because of all that, a few months ago, in association with the Quality Management and Standardization Department, at the Faculty, Quality Media Station began actively to work on the development of young people. Therefore, during the entire year, Quality Media Station contains students' data base, primary in field of Quality Management and Standardization and, with demonstrated skills and abilities, in association with the Quality Management and Standardization Department, students are often recommended to the companies. In the last few decades, a number of quality-related vacancies has been increased. Hence, this is not only well-timed, but continues the tradition of equipping our students with the right resources to make the fundamental impact in the world.

When it comes to supporting the development of Quality Infrastructure and other quality-related issues in Serbia, as well as in the whole region, Quality Media Station strives to achieve its mission and, from the academic as well as informative point of view, promote Quality Management and Standardization as a profession in the educational, business, governmental and other surroundings, along with the public media in general. Therefore, in the last couple of years, in association with the Quality Management and Standardization Department, Quality Media Station has been informing all the stakeholders and interested parties about quality-related topics, with the special emphasis on the quality-related vacancies. The number of quality-related job advertisements, which were reported by the QMS, using popular social networking sites (this can be observed at the Quality Media Station and FON kvalitet Facebook pages), both in 2016 and 2017, is given in Table 3.

Table 3 – Number of quality-related job advertisements reported by the twin pages of QMS (FON kvalitet) in both 2016 and 2017

Month	Number of quality-related job advertisements reported by the twin pages of QMS
January	19
February	17
March	16
April	18
May	24
June	50
July	18
August	12
September	58
October	43
November	50
Decembar	44
Total in 2016	369

Month	Number of quality-related job advertisements reported by the twin pages of QMS
January	46
February	59
March	68
April	66
May	56
Total in 2017 (January-May)	295
Total quality-related vacancies reported by the twin pages of QMS in 2016 and 2017	664

4. CONCLUSION

The majority of scientific researchers equate life satisfaction and other indicators of quality of life with subjective happiness or personal contentment [17]. Existing research, however, highlights that individuals' life satisfaction is determined, in part, by their social ties [18]. Therefore, the belief that social media use can be an effective tool for educational use has received recent attention.

This review has probably raised more questions than it has answered. The most important one is, perhaps, still related to the preparedness, willingness of higher education institutions to accept these new educational methods. Assuming continuous growth of media use, Quality Media Station is taking another step to connect with its surrounding community. Connecting with a number of stakeholders and interested parties, both at the university level and beyond, Quality Media Station strives to achieve its mission and, from the academic, as well as entirely informative aspect, achieve competitiveness in time and win unsatisfying, prevailing media content today.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Gil de Zúñiga, H., Puig, E., & Rojas, H. (2009). Weblogs traditional sources online & political participation: An assessment of how the Internet is changing the political environment. *New Media & Society*, 11(4), 553-574.
- [2] Correa, T., Hinsley, A. W., & De Zuniga, H. G. (2010). Who interacts on the Web?: The intersection of users' personality and social media use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26(2).
- [3] Lenhart, A., Purcell, K., Smith, A., & Zickuhr, K. (2010). Social Media & Mobile Internet Use among Teens and Young Adults. Millennials. Pew internet & American life project.
- [4] Tess, P. A. (2013). The role of social media in higher education classes (real and virtual)—A literature review. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(5), A60-A68.
- [5] Lee, K. (2017). Rethinking the accessibility of online higher education: A historical review. *The Internet and Higher Education*.
- [6] Kassens-Noor, E. (2012). Twitter as a teaching practice to enhance active and informal learning in higher education: The case of sustainable tweets. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 13(1), 9-21.
- [7] Fryer, L. K., & Bovee, H. N. (2016). Supporting students' motivation for e-learning: Teachers matter on and offline. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 30, 21-29.
- [8] Lenhart, A., Rainie, L., & Lewis, O. (2001). Teenage life online: The rise of the instant-message generation and the Internet's impact on friendships and family relationships.
- [9] Roblyer, M. D., McDaniel, M., Webb, M., Herman, J., & Witty, J. V. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. *The Internet and higher education*, 13(3), 134-140.
- [10] McKenna, K. Y., & Bargh, J. A. (2000). Plan 9 from cyberspace: The implications of the Internet for personality and social psychology. *Personality and social psychology review*, 4(1), 57-75.

- [11] Lenhart, A. (2009). Adults and Social Network Websites. Pew Internet and American Life Project. The Pew Center, Washington DC.
- [12] Madden, M., & Zickuhr, K. (2011). 65 percent of online adults use social networking sites.
- [13] Mewburn, I., & Thomson, P. (2013). Why do academics blog? An analysis of audiences, purposes and challenges. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(8), 1105-1119.
- [14] Veletsianos, G., & Kimmons, R. (2016). Scholars in an increasingly open and digital world: How do education professors and students use Twitter?. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 30, 1-10.
- [15] Gikas, J., & Grant, M. M. (2013). Mobile computing devices in higher education: Student perspectives on learning with cellphones, smartphones & social media. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 19, 18-26.
- [16] Ituma, A. (2011). An evaluation of students' perceptions and engagement with e-learning components in a campus based university. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 12(1), 57-68.
- [17] Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2008). *Staying the course: Online education in the United States, 2008*. Sloan Consortium. PO Box 1238, Newburyport, MA 01950.
- [18] Diener, E. D., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of personality assessment*, 49(1), 71-75.
- [19] Kahneman, D., & Krueger, A. B. (2006). Developments in the measurement of subjective well-being. *The journal of economic perspectives*, 20(1), 3-24.



**2nd International conference
on Quality of Life**
