

# President's News Digest

## Message From the Editor

Welcome to the 23<sup>rd</sup> issue of the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of the President's News Digest.

In this issue **Dr. Mohammad Al-Hamami, the Manager of Community Engagement Office** will address the subject of **"Social Media and Social Networks in Education"**

Email: [Hessa.almeraisi@asu.edu.bh](mailto:Hessa.almeraisi@asu.edu.bh)  
T: +973- 16036161



Mrs.Hessa Al Meraisi  
Manager of President's Office

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## Message from a Colleague Social Media and Social Networks in Education

The information and communications technology revolution has changed the communication aspects between individuals and societies. The usage of its tools and the associated applications has become so popular due to the availability and cheapness of the required infrastructure including the needed hardware, software, and applications.

Social media platforms and social networking tools are the most important outcomes of this revolution and they are that playing a major role in human life and for various aspects.

In this article I will try to focus on using social media platforms and social networking tools in education. Although social media platforms and social networking tools have been created primarily to build social relationships, and they are linked in the minds of many people as a mean of entertainment, especially when they are used on a personal level and even considered as a waste of time in some cases, but at the same time they are considered as the best way for education and obtaining Knowledge by all segments of society, whether they are students, employees, or otherwise. But it is important to emphasize that governments and educational institutions play a major role in investing in these platforms and tools by setting the appropriate regulations and policies, and providing a supportive infrastructure, in addition to raising awareness about the optimal use and knowing the risks associated with them.


Social media platforms and social networking tools can be used for teaching and learning outside classrooms, sharing information and knowledge related to the intended course, such as the topics that have been explained, submitting assignments, and sharing answers to questions and solutions by using them in the following forms:

- 1- The teacher can communicate with the students, who can also communicate with each other and exchange information and knowledge through the use of social networking tools such as "WhatsApp". One example is the formation of a group for a specific course that includes all students enrolled in the course in addition to the lecturer.
- 2- Use specialized educational platforms that provide social networking capabilities such as conversations, direct interaction, content sharing, etc. It is worth noting that most advanced e-learning platforms such as "Moodle" and "Blackboard" have these capabilities.
- 3- The teacher and students can communicate directly via social media accounts and for the various platforms, as the platforms provide many means to facilitate this, like creating a specialized group between the instructor and his or her students on "Facebook", or the instructor inserts the students' accounts in a special list as in "Twitter".



Dr. Mohammad Alaa  
Hussain Mohammad  
Al-Hamami  
Manager of Community  
Engagement Office

Dr. Mohammad Alaa A-Hamami is Associate Professor in Management Information Systems Department, and the Manager of Community Engagement Office at Applied Science University in Kingdom of Bahrain. He is a Specialist in Social Media and Information Systems Security. He has around eighteen years' experience in teaching and conducting research in his specialty. Dr. Al-Hamami has occupied the following positions: Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK), Microsoft Faculty Fellow of Microsoft Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education, Associate Member of IEEE-Computer Society, Member of ISACA, Member of Bahrain Information Technology Society, Member of the Bahrain Internet Society (BIS), Member of Social Media Club, and supervisor of many undergraduate final projects and graduate students (MSc thesis). He is also participated in many Conferences and Seminars in the field of Information Security, Social Media, E-Government and Information Technology. Dr. Al-Hamami has published around forty scientific researches and papers in many International and National Journals and several articles in scientific magazines. During the time of his activity, Dr. Al-Hamami has published ten books.



On the individual level, social media platforms are considered as one of the best means to obtain informal education. What is meant by informal education is that the person is the one who searches for information and knowledge that he or she is interested in without having a formal relationship with educational institutions. This provides learning opportunities to people who cannot participate in formal learning systems for various reasons.

Informal learning can be provided in social media platforms and social networking tools, which is accomplished by the following methods:

1. Subscribe to specialized social media platforms for education such as (Lynda) and benefit from the lectures and lessons that they offer.
2. Follow accounts of the specialized institutions that provide information that the learner is interest in.
3. Participate in specialized groups that raise topics of interest to subscribers in these groups, these kind of groups can be found in social media platforms or social media tools.
4. Follow news and technical accounts to know the latest news and developments of topics of interest to the learner.
5. Follow the accounts of influential people in social media platforms, such as Scientists, Scholars, and Specialists, and take advantage of the information and knowledge they provide.
6. View lectures and educational videos on social media platforms and benefit from them, as well as view the comments and reviews associated with them.
7. Blogs are the best sources for enriching information and knowledge through the articles that are published in them, as well as the comments and interactions related to these articles.

In general, the use of social media tools and social media platforms as a means of education and skills development is due to the following reasons:

- ⇒ The use of social media platforms requires technical skills related to the usage. Also, communication needs skills related to reading and writing and even self-development, so many people, even if their level of education is low, they are trying to develop their skills in order to use social media platforms effectively.
- ⇒ The need to deal with multiple languages, such as the English language in addition to the Arabic language, compels social media platforms users to develop their level of education about these languages.
- ⇒ Social media platforms for low-income people are a major means of obtaining education for free through the various information that they provide and also through the different kinds of content that is published on these platforms.

From the foregoing, we conclude that social media platforms and social networking tools can be considered as best methods used in teaching and learning if they are used and invested properly by institutions and individuals.

## Coronavirus: a personal reflection



It was in late December 2019 when I started hearing about some people in Wuhan China being infected by the coronavirus in a seafood market (not yet confirmed that the market was the source). I was sad to hear about it especially that I visited Wuhan few times when I was working in the UK. Wuhan is a beautiful city and its people are really kind and generous. However, and for a while, I thought that Wuhan was too far from us and this problem could be solved easily until the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared it as a Pandemic affecting the whole World and naming the virus as COVID-19. In mid January 2020, Professor Waheeb with his exceptional vision started telling me that we have to be prepared for the coronavirus; at first I thought he was a little bit over worried as I was of the same view that China was too far and nothing will reach us. Of course, Prof Waheeb was right and we started working on a policy to deal with Corona and presented it to the BOT on the 12th of February addressing measures to ensure health and safety and delivery of online learning and teaching just in case there was a closure of schools and universities.


On the 21st of February, the first case of Corona in Bahrain was declared. On the 24th of February, I was travelling to Dubai to present at a conference organised by CLICKS. Prof Waheeb insisted that I should take with me face masks as he could see something I didn't. I must admit I didn't wear the face mask on the way to Dubai, but on the way back when I started realising this is a serious problem I did. On the 25th of February, Gulf Air cancelled all flights from Dubai and Sharjah and I had to return on the 28th of February from Abu Dhabi, many thanks for the help of Mr Abdulla Al-Khaja and Mr Jamal who managed to find me a seat on that flight. On that flight, I started thinking and reflecting on what's happening and how humanity is affected across the globe, but still didn't realise the scale of the suffering. Today (**5 April 2020**), we have over a million people infected with well over **64,975** deaths in **206** countries and half of the World Population is in a lockdown status. What a tragedy? The whole world can't find a cure or vaccine against this virus and many nations have left it until late to deal with the spread of the virus. Who could imagine that doctors in some advanced nations have to decide on who should be treated and who is not?; it is really sad to reach that point for a caring profession. Alhamdulillah Bahrain was an exception as the wise leadership of the Kingdom realised the problem earlier and put stringent measures for curing and prevention. Many thanks are due to HRH the Crown Prince and his team for the tireless efforts in protecting Bahrain and its people from this virus. The work and vision of HRH was commended by the WHO and many medical experts from around the world. The advice from the task force in Bahrain that is combatting the coronavirus is threefold: trust in God and the ability of the medical team, stay at home whenever possible, and follow high standard of hygienes including washing hands frequently and using sanitisers.

It is really sad to see people across the globe suffering and everyone is hoping a vaccine will be found soon. The scientists and medical doctors are working hard on finding the cure, but this episode shows that we need to work together in good faith and to rely on God to protect us.

As I was reflecting on the coronavirus and its consequences, I stated to read and research more and I personally think like everybody else that there will be winners and losers which I have tried my best to identify. Of course the biggest loser is humanity and the loss of lives, but businesses will also suffer. From my own humble experience and some research I have done, it seems that the winners will include: hand sanitizers, face masks and household disinfectants companies, the environment through a significant decline in air pollution, online and distance teaching, family bonding, social media companies, Netflix, Amazon, road safety through a reduction in road accidents, home cooking, packaged food, health and pharmaceutical companies, medical products, corner shops, home working, food delivery, medical supplements including vitamins, E-commerce, Fintech, online video gaming, and ICT companies amongst many others. However, the biggest losers will be : humanity at large, employment, stock market, world economies, oil and gas companies, travel industry and air travel in particular, hotels, restaurants, cafe, theatres, hospitality companies, social gatherings, conferences, exhibitions, cultural events, sports events and tournaments, racism as we blame a specific nation for the disease, and tourism amongst many others. I wrote this article

before I came across a very useful recent study by Derasat center in Bahrain which covers the winners and losers of coronavirus in more detail and includes some very interesting findings.

In the last few weeks, we started hearing new terms like social distancing, bump shaking (instead of hand shaking) and we started to wash our hands at least once every thirty minutes, put hand sanitisers, wear masks, use steamers to clean our clothes on a daily basis and remove our shoes before we enter the house. The coronavirus may have brought us some new hygiene techniques which will be kept embraced once the nightmare is over. New social habits including no handshaking, no hugs, no kisses on the cheeks, home cooking, and staying at home have already become the norm.



Many suggestions are emerging every day by medical experts on how to be protected from the virus including: washing hands using soap and water and sanitisers, wearing face masks, preferably staying at home, washing hands after signing any paper, do not touch your face, keep social distancing, keep surfaces cleaning, do not shake hands, do not come into physical contacts with anybody, keep your immune system strong, take extra precautions when you visit supermarkets amongst many others. These are things which we were not used to, but we need to learn how to do them now.

It seems that medical experts are still not convinced how the virus is transmitted. Some are of the view that it is transmitted through droplets from a sick person through coughing and sneezing while others believe that it is airborne. Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, US, found that coughs can project liquid up to 6m away and that sneezes, which involve much higher speeds, can reach up to 8m away. The WHO recommends 1m distance between people whereas the US and UK recommend 2m and the study at MIT mentioned 8m. This demonstrates that this is now based on guessing as more evidence is needed to be in place in order to understand how the virus behaves and what are the best precautions.

Many experts are of the view that by not touching the face, wearing face masks, keeping a 2 meter distance from any individual, and through social distancing we can be protected from the virus. It looks like we have all become experts because of the massive amount of information disseminated in the social media. Even, we started to believe that by eating garlic, onions, ginger, and bananas we will be well protected; of course none of these is based on scientific evidence. In addition, some scientists argue that the virus can be killed by heat and that's why we started to see an increase in the purchase of vapour equipment and steamers and vapour inhalers. It has to be said that there are plenty of myths about COVID-19. This is caused by a state of desperation and the role of social media in spreading false information. A reliable source of information is the WHO and a link in the references is provided.

The coronavirus has proved how weak is the human race and how humanity at large is suffering from an aggressive virus and that powerful nations are performing worse than less developed ones. The virus affects everybody irrespective of their religion, colour, race, gender, and age and we should all be united in fighting it. There is one thing which is certain, the world after corona will not be the same as the one before. There will be drastic changes in demographics, local and international alliances, economic directions, and ways of working and learning. It looks like any vaccine for the disease is more than a year away. This will result in living in uncertainty for months to come. This is tiring and depressing, but we shouldn't lose faith that there will be an end to this nightmare by God's grace and our togetherness. These are surreal times and sometimes we feel as we are trapped in a movie and for many of us this the worst experience in our life time.

From a research point view, medical research is progressing in over 50 countries to find a cure. In addition, AI and data mining techniques will help us understand how coronavirus virus is spreading and whether treatments used in some countries are leading to better results than others.

To conclude, I think that the Kingdom and our University are well prepared to deal with the coronavirus or COVID-19 over the next few weeks and months. Let's all hope that a cure will be found soon and the nightmare will be over with the grace of God and hard work of medical doctors and scientists. Coronavirus has taught us one thing that we should be spiritually closer together as people even though we are keeping the social distancing, and that nothing is worth it and we should enjoy life and work whenever we can.

May God protect us all and humanity at large.

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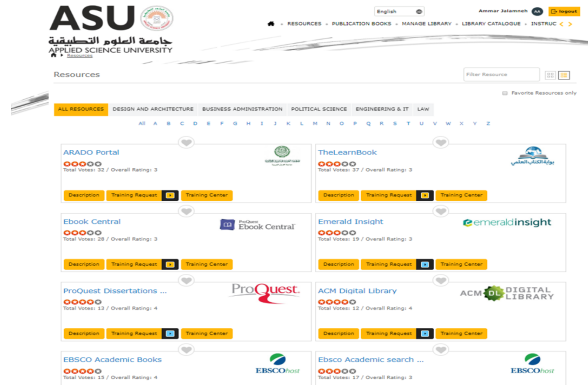
## المكتبات وأزمة كورونا: كيف تعاملت المكتبات مع أزمة كورونا؟ بقلم د. عمار جلامنة



لو نظرنا إلى العالم في هذه الأيام العصيبة وخلال هذه الفترة من مواجهته لفيروس كورونا والذي أصبح موضوع الساعة وسبب ذعرا كبيرا في العالم بسبب إتساع رقعة الجغرافية وظهور إصابات جديدة كل يوم تقريبا في العديد من دول العالم سواء الدول الغربية أو العربية، مما أدى إلى إتخاذ العديد من الدول جراء هذا الوباء العديد من الإجراءات الاحترازية والحاسمة للحفاظ على حياة مواطنيها ووثرائها ومنها حظر التجول في كثير من الدول وتعليق حركة السفر وحضور المؤتمرات وإغلاق المؤسسات العلمية والأسواق والمجمعات التجارية ومراكز وصلات والترفيه والتسليّة للعب الأطفال وصلات الإعراس بإستثناء القطاعات الصحية والعسكرية ومنظومة التعليم عن بعد في قطاع التعليم عن بعد في قطاع التعليم وكل هذه الإجراءات التي إتخذتها كثير من الدول حول العالم المؤقت للحد من إنتشار هذه الوباء الخطير وهو من الإجراءات الاحترازية.

وبناء على هذه الإجراءات والتي تضمنت المكتبات بخلق مبانها أثناء فترة المواجهة مع هذا الفيروس، هناك تساؤلات كثيرة تم طرحها؛ هل توقفت المكتبات عن تقديم خدماتها لمجتمع المستفيدين؟ كيف تعاملت المكتبات خلال فترة إغلاق أبوابها أمام جمهور المستفيدين؟ سوف أقوم بتقديم دراسة حالة عن مكتبة جامعة العلوم التطبيقية مع هذه الأحداث وجولة مع المكتبة المغلقة أبوابها أمام مجتمع المستفيدين مؤقّتا وكيف إتخذت إجراءات للتعامل مع المستفيدين أثناء غلق أبوابها.

لقد قامت مكتبة جامعة العلوم التطبيقية ومع بداية توقيف العمل في الجامعة بالبحث عن بديل لمساعدة مجتمع الجامعة للإستفادة من خدمات المكتبة وخاصة الطلبة وذلك لإعداد بحوثهم وإكمال دراستهم وتمجيدا لرسالة المكتبة بتقديم جميع الخدمات مهما كانت الظروف، وأصبحنا نقدم خدماتنا إلكترونيا بحيث يستطيع الباحث البحث عن مصادر المعلومات وهو في بيته وإتاحة الخدمات الرقمية على مدار الساعة طوال أيام الأسبوع وذلك بتوفير الكتب الإلكترونية والكتب الصوتية والمجلات....



وقد وضعنا فيلما تعريفيا عن طريقة الإستخدام من خلال قنوات التواصل الإجتماعي ودليل مفصل على كيفية إستخدام خدمات المكتبة، وقد قمنا أيضا بتمديد تواريخ الإستحقاق للمواد المستعارة تلقائيا وعدم فرض أي غرامة متأخرة ويمكن للمستفيدين إرجاع الكتب عند إعادة فتح المكتبة إن شاء الله، وقد قمنا أيضا بتقديم خدمة تجديد فترة الإستعارة بالشكل الإلكتروني وتقديم خدمة الرد على الإستفسارات والخدمات المرجعية عبر الإتصال مع موظفي المكتبة.

### إبغية التسجيل في البوابة الإلكترونية ((قواعد البيانات))





## أستاذ الجامعة: المهنة والرسالة بقلم د. علي الددا- قائم بأعمال رئيس قسم العلوم السياسية

تلك المهنة التي تحظى بالمكانة الرفيعة في المجتمع، ما كان لها إلا أن تكون ذات أبعاد فاعلة ومؤثرة في بنية الأجيال القادمة. وأستاذ الجامعة بين مهنته ورسالته، في تلاحم دائم، محاولاً تطوير ذاته ومعلوماته وخبراته، لعلمه أن ذلك سيشكل مضمون رسالته وفحواها، والتي تقوم على أساس أمانة ما سينقله للطلبة من علم دون بخل أو كتمان، وذلك عبر ممارساته المهنية المتجددة، مضافاً إليها طرائق التدريس المناسبة التي يرى أنها تعينه على أداء هذه المهمة، المشتقة أصلاً من فلسفة الجامعة ككل، والتي تعد منبعاً للفكر والإبداع الإنساني في أرفع مستوياته .

ولأن مهنة أستاذ الجامعة لا تعتمد فقط على الرسوخ في العلم وسعة الإلمام بالتحصص، فقد كان لا بد لها من توافر العديد من المتطلبات، سواء على المستوى الشخصي أو الاجتماعي، مثل: اللباقة والأناقاة، والقيافة والثقافة، والتحلي بالصفات الاخلاقية، والحضور الرزين المتزن، والنقاة بالنفس، والشخصية المكتملة القادرة على تفهم مشكلات الطلبة وظروفهم واحترام ذواتهم ورفع معنوياتهم وحسن التصرف معهم. بالإضافة الى امتلاك أستاذ الجامعة لفن إدارة المحاضرات بمهارة، تواكبه غزارة في المادة العلمية ورغبة أكيدة في التدريس. ومن المهم لأستاذ الجامعة أن يكون أميناً في بحوثه وديقاً في إنجازاته لمختلف الأعمال، ومتحدثاً فصيحاً يمتلك القدرة على الإقناع وإدارة الحوار. كل ذلك سيصب في النهاية في فاعلية دوره كأستاذ في الجامعة، وسيجد أنه قادر على تحقيق الهدف المنشود من أهداف التعليم الجامعي، حيث سيصل الى نتيجة مؤداها، وجود علاقة طردية بين تميز أداء أستاذ الجامعة وجودة المخرجات التعليمية والباحثة.

كما أن أستاذ الجامعة، ينو الى التنظيم في أداء أعماله، يخطط لدروسه ويراجع ممارساته المهنية، وكثيراً ما يتسأل عن جودة التعليم الذي يقوم به، ولعل طريقة التقييم التي يتبعها الأستاذ تفيدته بالإجابة على هذا التساؤل وتعينه على تطوير خطته وتحسينها، فكلما كان تقييمه للطلاب قد تم بشكل صحيح، كلما حصل على معلومات مفيدة عن أدائهم، تمكنه لاحقاً من الاعتماد عليها ببنقة لاتخاذ قرارات مناسبة بشأن عمله التعليمي. ولذلك فإن أستاذ الجامعة يدرك تماماً أن عملية التقييم ليست لوضع الدرجات فقط، وإنما لتعنيه على وضع تصور عن أداء الطالب، بل وتشخيص نقاط القوة والضعف لما يقوم هو بتقديمه للطلاب، الأمر الذي سيكون له أثرًا ملموساً على اختيار طرق التعليم ونوع التقييم المناسب. وبهذا فإن مهنة أستاذ الجامعة تقوم على التنظيم والإعداد، لا على العشوائية، مستندة الى مدى إدراك الأستاذ لقدرات الطلاب واستعدادهم، وتقديراته النسبية لمعارفهم السابقة، وكيفية استفادته من كل ذلك في اختيار طريقة التدريس التي تناسب مستوياتهم. وحيث أن التعلم التفاعلي يساعد الطلاب على التفكير والتحدث ومشاركة المعلومات فيما بينهم، فإن أستاذ الجامعة سيستخدم طرق تدريس تقوم على إشراك المتعلمين في تعلمهم، كطرق مساندة للمحاضرة، مع تركيزه على المترددين منهم، من خلال قدرته على خلق الدافعية وإثارة الانتباه، مقدماً لهم- من خلال ديمومة النقاش معهم- عصارة جهده وفكره، برؤية جديدة بعيدة عن التقليد.

ومن المعروف أن رسالة أستاذ الجامعة، تتضمن القيام بأداء دور مهم في تنوير الطلبة وصقل مهاراتهم، إلا أن هناك دوراً أغلغله العديد من الكتابات المعنية بمهنة التدريس الجامعي، وهو الدور المتعلق بأهمية التركيز على الأثر الذي يتركه الأستاذ على شخصيات الطلبة، من منطلق احتكاكه المتواصل معهم، ولاعباره المثل لهم والقدوة في الكثير من الأمور التي يسعون الى اكتسابها من أساتذتهم، والتي ستنعكس لاحقاً على بناء شخصياتهم. ولذا سنجد أستاذ الجامعة ناصحاً وقدوة حسنة ومثالاً يحتذى به، يرعى القيم هنا، وقائداً واعياً ومؤظراً للاتجاهات السلوكية هناك. وسنجده مؤمناً بأن دوره يتجاوز بقاؤه في إطار المهنة وواجبه الوظيفي الى امتلاك الدافع الداخلي نحو السعي الى تسخير كل طاقاته وإمكانياته في سبيل رسالته، فهو خارج أسوار الجامعة كما في داخلها، منارة علم لا تخبو، في داخل أسوار الجامعة، أستاذ يتابع كل ما هو جديد لتحقيق نموه المهني جنباً الى جنب مع نموه الأكاديمي، وخارج أسوارها، باحث متخصص ومؤلف متمكن ومفكر فذ وأديب لامع وكاتب مبدع، ومناير لا يتوقف عن التعلم والتجديد، ومتابع لكل ما هو جديد، وفاعل أساسي في مجتمعه.

## Quote of the Week

*“Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life”*

*-Immanuel Kunt*

من روائع الشعر العربي

إن الكلام في الفؤاد وإنما \*\*\* جعل اللسان على الفؤاد دليلاً

-الأخطل