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Exploring Lecturers Ethical Dilemmas in Digital Communication: A Case Study of Telegram Usage in College Education in Russia

Ekaterina A. Santanna

Shanghai Jiao Tong University
800 Dongchuan rd., Shanghai, China
*Corresponding author: katoxi@yahoo.com

Abstract
This research examined the ethical implications of using Telegram chats in college education, focusing on the Social Penetration Theory (SPT) to understand its impact on interpersonal relationships. The study aims to identify ethical dilemmas faced by lecturers and chat administrators. Data was collected from the Creative Industry Faculty in Novosibirsk, Russia, using hermeneutic phenomenological interviewing between February and April 2023. The sample includes six female lecturers (age M=35, SD=15) and three chat administrators (two female, one male; age M=20, SD=2), who provided written consent and used pseudonyms. The findings of this research revealed ethical concerns such as students seeking attention and engaging in provocative behavior through jokes and intolerant remarks. Students also desired more informal communication with lecturers, crossing boundaries by sharing personal problems and engaging in discussions involving partying, smoking, and alcohol use. These behaviors presented ethical dilemmas for lecturers and chat administrators, including decisions about sharing received information and addressing online behavior offline. The study highlights the need for ethical regulations in online college communication. Limitations include the small sample size, and future research should include more diverse groups of lecturers and officials from various college departments.
Key words: online communication in education, students-teachers interaction, ethical issues, qualitative methodology, phenomenological approach

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have presented educational institutions with significant challenges, leading to a transformative technological revolution and reshaping of social dynamics (Grinin et al., 2022). As offline communication shifted swiftly to online platforms, institutions have had to adopt affordable or free programs to facilitate real-time interaction among teachers, officials, and students. Telegram, a popular information-sharing tool, has gained traction in the education sector (AlAwadhi & Dashti, 2021). This mobile application offers a range of features suitable for blended learning, including text, voice, and video messaging, file storage and transfer, and broadcasting capabilities through channels and groups

(Yinka & Queendarline, 2018). Furthermore, Telegram allows users to delete their own messages and entire conversations, ensuring privacy and control over shared information. While Telegram does not disclose extensive user information like Facebook, users can access channels and various media content, determining their level of self-disclosure.

The use of Telegram and other social networks presents opportunities for continuous communication between teachers and students, transcending traditional classroom boundaries and creating new teaching and learning spaces (Froment et al., 2017). These applications have been shown to enhance teacher-student communication (DeGroot et al., 2015; Sánchez-Rodríguez et al., 2015; Sobaih et al., 2016), contribute to increased academic motivation and performance (Imlawi et al., 2015; Sarapin & Morris, 2015), and foster student engagement (Annamalai et al., 2016; Schwarz & Caduri, 2016). However, studies also highlight negative outcomes associated with the inappropriate use of social networks, which can lead to a breakdown in the teacher-student relationship, negatively impacting perceptions of teachers, student motivation, and academic performance (Gettman & Cortijo, 2015; Nkhoma et al., 2015).

Despite the growing body of literature on the impact and implications of social media usage in education, there remains a significant gap in research regarding the influence of social media on teachers' perceptions of student behavior and the ethical challenges that arise as a result.

This study aims to investigate the impact of social media usage on teachers' perceptions of student behavior and the ethical challenges that emerge from it. Furthermore, the study aims to explore the ethical utilization of digital resources, specifically within the context of online communication in vocational education, with a focus on the use of Telegram. By addressing these research gaps, this study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the ethical dimensions of online communication in education and provide insights for the development of ethical guidelines and trainings for students and teachers in vocational education settings.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the current study is based on Altman and Taylor's (1973) Social Penetration Theory, which is widely applied in the analysis of online communication (Mason & Carr, 2021; Sillence, 2013). The Social Penetration Theory suggests that individuals in online communication platforms modify their level of self-disclosure based on their evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining relationships with others.

While there is a range of studies on the Social Penetration Theory and online communication in educational settings, the majority of them initially focused on platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp (Bazarova & Choi, 2014; Froment et al., 2017). As mentioned earlier, Telegram differs from these platforms in several aspects. For example, Telegram lacks features such as friending, which has been extensively studied in the context of Facebook (Bryant et al., 2011). Additionally, the ethical aspects of interpersonal communication between faculty and students remain relatively understudied, with only a few works dedicated to Facebook. Surprisingly, there are no known studies exploring student-teacher communications within a college setting on the Telegram platform, despite its growing popularity of this application.

The objective of this research is to explore the challenges faced by teachers and chat administrators due to students' online behavior and identify the ethical dilemmas they encounter as a result. Specifically, the research aims to address the following research questions: (1) What are the emerging ethical dilemmas that teachers face in their online communication

with students compared to offline communication? (2) How do these ethical dilemmas impact the work experience of teachers and officials in a college setting? (3) What are the possible ways to overcome these challenges?

Hence, current research explores the ethical implications of utilizing social networks for online communication in higher education, with its novelty lying in the inclusion of ethical issues pertaining to the use of information technology in the educational sphere.

Material and Methodology

In current study in frames of qualitative methodology a phenomenological interview with a hermeneutic approach is used as main method. It is chosen because it allowed a deep analysis of individuals' experiences to provide more comprehensive reconstruction of participants worldview (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences related to facing inappropriate behavior in Telegram chat from their students.

Context of study

Data was collected between February and April 2023 from the Creative Industry Faculty at an Autonomous Non-Profit Organization of Professional Education in Siberia, Russia. This educational institution distinguishes itself from similar institutions in the region by following the Liberal arts model and individual educational trajectories. This college's policy has resulted in a distinct group of pedagogical and administrative staff who value tolerance, loyalty to diverse student expressions, openness to new ideas, and a high level of involvement in college life. Because there is no policy related to online regulations in college chats, teachers are allowed to use their judgment.

Additionally, admission to the college only required an interview, with no consideration given to overall certificate levels or exam results. As a result, the college has a highly diverse student body, including those studying in the Faculty of Creative Industries. Some students and their parents intentionally chose this college to have more control over the educational process and create their own educational plans. Conversely, others chose the college due to limited options based on their school certificates.

Furthermore, it is worth noting the researcher's context. The researcher of this study also served as a lecturer at the Faculty of Creative Industries. To mitigate potential bias in data collection and analysis because of researcher experience as lecturer, the author made records and consulted with two additional specialists in the field of education while coding data and interpreting the results (Fitzpatcrick, 2011).

Participants

Participants for the study were recruited through a post in a group of college teachers in Telegram. Anyone could fill out a form and be invited to a meeting with a researcher. At the meeting, it was told about the goals and objectives of the study, and also explained that participation in the project is voluntary, at each stage of data collection and analysis, a participant can leave the project. After that, those wishing to stay were asked to sign a written agreement to participate in the study and record an interview.

Each of the participants received an explanation of how his personal data will be stored and how exactly confidentiality and anonymity of their use will be ensured. At will, the participants chose pseudonyms for themselves. Out of about a hundred officials, 9 people agreed to participate: three administrators of group chats and six teachers. At the same time, it should be noted that the very topic of ethical problems in online communication with students and the need to develop an ethical Guideline was recognized as relevant by many teachers who refused to participate in the interview due to lack of time.

The sample consisted of six lecturers (all female, age M=35, SD=15) and three chat administrators (two female, one male; age M=20, SD=2). Their experience of work with students in particular college varies from several months to four years (four years ago college was opened). The teachers also had different levels of digital literature. While two young lecturers are familiar with social media and have their own channels, for two others was complicated to communicate with students via Telegram. For example, they were not familiar with memes and have sometimes technical problems with uploading files or marking person in feedback messages. As for the administrators, they all had a high level of digital literacy and were the same age as the students. Teachers' pseudonyms are T, S, A, B, L, E, B; chat administrators' pseudonyms are P, K and C.

Procedure

Each participant was assigned an individual interview in her\his spare time. The researcher also requested that they bring a charged mobile phone with the Telegram app installed. The college's free classrooms were utilized for most of the interviews, except for two, which took place in a café with the teacher S and the administrator P.

Participants were informed that the interviews would be recorded. On average, the interviews lasted between 40 minutes to one hour. The questions focused on their experience using social networks, specifically Telegram. They also discussed the changes in their teaching or work at the college before and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The majority of the interview centered around their activity on Telegram, including the type of content teachers and administrators typically create, how often students ask questions, and the frequency and subjects of student interactions in group chats and private messages. An additional set of questions addressed challenges related to online communication with students.

While participants had the option to illustrate their answers with screenshots from their own social networks, only two teachers, S and T, and the administrator P chose to do so.

Once all the data was collected, it was transcribed by the researcher and two graduate assistants. The transcriptions were then presented to the participants, who had the opportunity to request the deletion of any of their answers (though no one exercised this right). Following the data analysis, the final results of the study were presented at an online debriefing meeting, which was announced through the official college Telegram channels.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the thematic content analysis method in MAXQDA (Eatough & Smith, 2017). To ensure rigor and validity in the analysis process, two experts in the field were invited to join the project.

Initially, a manual codebook was created, consisting of approximately 50 themes, to guide the analysis. This codebook was then presented to the experts for their input and revision, along with the raw interview transcripts. Through several rounds of revision, the codes were refined to effectively represent the content of the data.

The final subset of coded transcripts comprised 11 overarching themes, which were also presented to the experts for further review and refinement. During this process, the themes were labeled as either general, if they were mentioned by all respondents, or specific, if they were mentioned by few respondents.

By following these steps and incorporating the expertise of the invited experts (Eatough & Smith, 2017), the analysis of the data was conducted with rigor and validity, ensuring that the themes and subthemes accurately captured the participants' experiences.

Result and Discussion

Twelve themes have been formulated to explore various facets of teachers' and college officials' perceptions of students' online behavior in group chats, as well as the ethical dilemmas they encounter in this context. Interestingly, all of these topics can be categorized into two distinct groups.

The first group pertains to students' unethical behavior, which primarily involves a breach of accepted communication norms. Conversely, the second group revolves around behavior that deviates from generally accepted norms, but not in a destructive manner. Instead, it showcases excessive openness and familiarity exhibited by students.

It is worth noting the paradoxical nature of these findings, as both groups shed light on different dimensions of students' online behavior, raising important ethical considerations for educators and administrators.

Theme 1: Nicknames and anonymity

The first theme falls within the category of ethical regulations that are deemed necessary, but it doesn't elicit strong emotional responses or give rise to ethical dilemmas among respondents. In college group chat more than 95% of students use nicknames, and many also have images found on the Internet on their avatars. Since anyone who has a link can join the chats, this leads to the appearance of a large group of people who cannot be identified. This aligns with the college's policy, which does not require students to disclose their real names or photos.

However, teachers often find it confusing when a student with an avatar displaying an obscene gesture or a nickname containing vulgar or slang expressions asks a question or makes a comment. B expressed her perplexity, stating, "It's puzzling. On one hand, I want to ask, where are you from? On the other hand, I understand that choosing an avatar and nickname is a personal choice. So, I only respond if a student contacts me privately." L clarified her perspective, saying, "I use my real photo and name, and I expect the same from the students. How would they identify specific teachers in the chat if the teachers did the same as them?". Furthermore, a majority of teachers expressed the belief that students should utilize their real names when engaging in official interactions. One teacher, T, shared her perspective by stating, "Following group discussions, I often find it challenging to identify individuals, particularly when they use nicknames that are not easily recognizable. It becomes problematic, especially when reproducibility is a concern." Hence, it is crucial to consider incorporating methods for student identification in future ethical guidelines to address this issue effectively.

Theme 2: Violation of working hours

Another challenge encountered in establishing effective communication was the absence of well-defined rules for online interaction, including designated working hours. Hence, students tend to perceive any communication on social networks as a 24/7 availability. This poses a problem as it blurs the boundaries of hierarchy between teachers, college officials and students.

The chat administrator, P, highlighted the issue by stating, "Students seem to have no regard for time. They send personal questions at 11 PM on Sundays through private messages or in the general chat, inquiring about the upcoming lecture at 9 AM the next day." Administrator K further emphasized that students often lack the patience to wait for a response, resulting in reposting and adding comments such as "Where is my answer?" or "What's going on?" or "Can I get a response already?" This impatience and urgency create additional challenges in maintaining effective communication within the chat platform. If students come to the study office and it turns out to be closed during working hours, students immediately begin to engage in denunciations in general groups instead of waiting a few minutes.

Furthermore, students tend to reach out to teachers individually at any given time. As noted by E, "I have a strict demeanor, and students are hesitant to approach me during class. However, in Telegram, they seem to disregard this boundary. Messages often come in after the class has already started, with no explanation as to why they missed it." T added, "I receive messages frequently, with students neglecting to even greet me. If they see that I have read their message but haven't responded, they may send a dot or question mark to remind me about them, as if responding outside of school hours is an inherent part of my job responsibilities."

It is imperative to include the need for regulating student behavior and explaining the rules of professional communication within the list of regulations. However, similar to the previous concern, this topic reflects a broader issue related to the lack of established rules within the educational institution, resulting in shallow experiences.

Theme 3: Inappropriate behavior with chat administrators and teachers

Starting from the third theme, the behavior of students already causes strong emotional feedback. The chat administrators, who are the same age as the students, often find themselves being treated as peers. Requests are frequently written informally, and attempts to obtain official statements are often dismissed. Moreover, as P pointed out, terms of endearment like "honey bunny" or "sweetheart" are commonly used when seeking help from the administrators, further complicating their work.

This issue extends to the parents of the students, who, following the lead of their children, also adopt an inappropriate communication style. They disregard the administrators' professional status and treat them as friends of their own children. For instance, K admitted that he sometimes forgets to make schedule changes or respond to private messages, which leads

parents to contact him through his personal account and reprimand him as if he were their own child. This type of communication places an additional burden on the administrators and affects their ability to fulfill their duties effectively.

With teachers' students exhibit familiarity by communicating as if they were relatives, sometimes using strange and exaggerated forms. They may address teachers by their first name, without using proper titles or even using diminutive forms. Some students employ language and figures of speech typically reserved for close family interactions. T recalled, "I understand that for some teachers its ok, that students address them by their first name. However, for me, it's important to be addressed respectfully by my first name and patronymic. I take pride in my role as a teacher and expect to be addressed accordingly.

Unfortunately, some students have been messaging me without my consent, simply using my first name. Furthermore, some students do not use a polite form of address and instead write messages like, 'Hi, T. What's up?'". This behavior goes beyond the established norms of teacher-student communication and breaches the boundaries outlined by the Social Penetration Theory. It's possible that these students are not even aware of the implications. Due to the lack of prior experience in communicating with teachers before the COVID-19 pandemic, they may struggle to adapt to a new model of communication and engage with their teachers in a more appropriate adult-like manner.

As an example, T highlighted that students often fail to differentiate between their teachers and their relatives. They may send unrelated to education questions at one o'clock in the morning or share unrelated links. These situations raise concerns about the students' intentions. For instance, when a student asks a teacher to purchase energy drinks or cigarettes, it becomes evident that such requests could lead to potential

administrative consequences. T expressed confusion about the purpose of such requests, whether it is to provoke a reaction, test trustworthiness, or establish boundaries.

S reflected, "During our discussion with the students, we had a lighthearted atmosphere where we joked around. However, I unfortunately expressed myself poorly regarding one particular work. In response, one of the students, who happened to be the author of that work, accused me of being ignorant and threatened to involve her mother, claiming that I had caused her psychological harm. This sudden shift in tone was quite surprising, considering the friendly environment we had just moments ago. This incident highlights the importance of considering the psychological and emotional development of adolescents, as neglecting this aspect can lead to negative consequences."

These situations, as noted by P, not only create an uncomfortable environment but also have a detrimental impact on the well-being of teachers. Students seem to test boundaries in both directions - treating teachers as overly friendly confidants on one hand, while on the other, being quick to report any perceived offenses to higher authorities. Both of these extremes are unacceptable for maintaining effective communication between teachers and students.

Theme 4: Attempt at friendship

Another aspect related to ethical dilemmas was the loyalty exhibited by students when attempting to develop a close relationship with a teacher. Both young teachers, A and S mentioned that students are trying to interpret such simple gestures as, for example, a heart emoji as a manifestation of something more than just a detached reaction. This is interpreted as encouragement and the student continues to share further and often more intimate\personal things. S shared story when a student attending a late-night

concert found herself without money for a taxi in middle of the night. The student reached out to S, asking if they could stay with her for the night. S declined the request, and their communication ceased. Another example involves a student urgently borrowing money, claiming it was a matter of life and death, only for S to discover it was actually for gifts for student's boyfriend. The money was never returned. These situations highlight the inappropriate nature of such requests and the impact they have on interpersonal relationships.

Additionally, many students expect to receive special treatment based on their unique circumstances. For instance, students who work alongside their studies may directly communicate with teachers and administrators to explain the challenges they face in attending classes. Some students even share intimate details about their family life, particularly in cases involving difficult situations such as custody battles or a parent's illness. In such instances, administrators and teachers are confronted not only with moral and ethical questions about accommodating requests but also with the decision of whether it is necessary to involve other authorities to investigate potential illegal behavior within the student's family. These complexities further complicate effective communication within the educational setting.

Theme 5: Pseudo-confidential communication

This previously unexplored topic in the literature warrants attention as it sheds light on the creation of an illusion of intimacy by students with specific objectives, as outlined in the Social Penetration Theory. Often students write with their problem / question to the teacher and ask for her\his advice, because he\she is the only one student can trust. Therefore, it turns out in a conversation with other teachers that many of them received same message and this was done in order to build

personal relationships, to show how valuable the teacher is for his\her loyal attitude in the future.

On the flip side of students' attempts to establish trust with teachers, there is the potential for them to present personal correspondences with particular teacher without context to office staff or other teachers. E explained that, "as a professional educator, it is essential to exercise caution and maintain control over every word spoken or written. It is important to remember that while students may engage in irony or humor, teachers often cannot afford the same luxury. Any remark made by a teacher can be easily misconstrued or exaggerated, leading to unintended consequences". For instance, a student shared her decision to lose weight in a chat, and in an effort to show support, a teacher B responded with, "come on, right decision!"

Unfortunately, this response inadvertently triggered negative emotions in the student, as it reminded her of past experiences of being hated for her weight within her family. Consequently, B found herself blamed for the student's need to seek psychological support again. On the other hand, if B chooses not to respond, it may be perceived as a lack of support. Balancing these complexities can prove to be incredibly challenging. In the aforementioned cases, the presence of ethical regulations could significantly streamline the decision-making process for teachers.

Theme 6: Negative attitudes between students

A multitude of negative emotions arise when teachers witness negative disclosure in the intercommunication between students. Many teachers have expressed surprise, and some even shock, upon encountering the cruel and rude behavior exhibited by students towards each other in chat rooms. S described this phenomenon by saying, "It always appears that the students who write mean things in the chat are some sort of troublemakers - the ones who skip classes or have already dropped out. But when you realize that a diligent and modest student can suddenly lash out when someone doesn't understand a task and writes about it late at night, it elicits strange emotions. They can't be Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Somewhere, they must be pretending. And if I, as a teacher, don't notice who they truly are, what kind of teacher am I?". However, another teacher with 20 years of experience, B, as well as a recent graduate, A, didn't not perceive this behavior as something personally related to them and are more relaxed in their approach to such questions. B suggested that "children" (using the respondent's terminology) will always "show off" in front of each other, considering it all as a game, and, in fact, they are kind and good-hearted. Conversely, A believed that student chats can be much worse, making a group chat with teachers appear to be a comparatively censored and milder version.

Digital inequality is also evident within the college where the study is being conducted. The transition to using digital resources and software proves challenging for many students due to various reasons. Some lack the necessary equipment, while others struggle with downloading and installing specific programs. Consequently, when tasks requiring the use of digital resources arise, numerous students pose similar questions in chat rooms, such as difficulties in downloading a particular file. This frustration annoys many students who have already successfully completed the tasks. L recalled, "I couldn't understand why students would attack someone who is struggling with an online schedule. Yes, it has been explained multiple times. However, they still want to attend the appropriate classes, and forwarding a message is not difficult. It seems like some students lack patience and forget where they are".

However, all teachers and chat administrators noted that they had not witnessed open bullying. Exception is case

which remembered P and T, when one of the students not only engaged in bowling others in group chats, but also created his own channel to which there is a link in his telegram profile. In this channel, he shared screenshots from group chats and wrote mocking comments.

The presence of such attacks serves as a significant catalyst for teachers to contemplate the necessity of taking action to safeguard other students. However, verbal disputes often go unaddressed at the official level due to the absence of regulations. Consequently, teachers experience heightened levels of stress as they find themselves unable to hold perpetrators accountable. This situation highlights the urgent need for clear guidelines and protocols to address verbal conflicts, ensuring that teachers have the necessary tools to effectively address such situations and protect the well-being of all students involved.

Theme 7: Plagiarism and academic dishonesty

Within the Faculty of Creative Industries, students primarily engage in individual creative projects. However, the curriculum also includes shared homework assignments and tests. Consequently, concerns arise regarding the issue of academic integrity among students.

All three chat administrators received messages asking for the solutions to homework or test problems if they had access to them. C considered this normal, stating, "They are conscientious enough not to ask teachers directly, and we are not obliged to assist them."

Nevertheless, students have also made similar requests in general chats, even in the presence of teachers. E expressed frustration, saying, "It infuriated me to see someone requesting shared work that students had been diligently working on for months." However, such instances occur relatively infrequently.

Theme 8: Involvement in family problems

The accessibility of teachers' and administrators' contacts through Telegram has allowed parents to directly communicate with them. Consequently, teachers and administrators have inadvertently become witnesses to family issues. Administrators S and P, along with teachers T and S, have observed that parents frequently reach out to inquire about their children's attendance and completion of tasks. It is worth noting that parents, who do not live together with their children and often do not communicate directly with them, prefer to keep their communication with teachers confidential. This request raises concerns regarding the well-being and psychological climate within families, as well as ethical dilemmas surrounding the reporting of problems involving minor children to social services.

Theme 9: Encouraging freedom of thought and expression.

The college's policy is centered around promoting freedom of expression for students in various fields. As a result, it is considered normal for students to share their projects and seek advice, as well as share their accomplishments through photo reports. However, there has been a lack of understanding among students regarding what is considered ethical when sharing personal information with a teacher.

One notable incident involved a student approaching T, a teacher, with a request to evaluate her poster for a local kinky party. Upon learning that the student actively participates in such events, T found it difficult to maintain impartiality as these events clashed with her personal values. Consequently, despite being asked to supervise the student's thesis, T struggled to establish a personal connection and interact with her.

Theme 10: Disclosure of personal information

The disclosure of personal information by students arises one of the

ethical dilemmas in this context. Telegram enables users to share not only text messages but also voice and video messages, resulting in the regular appearance of personal videos from students. These videos often capture moments when students are socializing at parties or going out with friends, sometimes involving smoking or consuming alcohol.

The motivations behind such videos are not always clear to teachers. However, in 2022, a tragic accident occurred that claimed the life of a college student, highlighting the potential consequences of not paying attention to students' social media activities. As a result, late-night videos can be unsettling for some individuals. T explained, "I always watch these videos if they come in late because I worry. What if someone needs help on their way home?" P believed that these videos serve as a way for students to showcase their popularity, with teachers being incidental witnesses. On the other hand, B suggested that students often mistakenly send videos to the wrong chats due to their involvement in multiple chat groups.

However, it is important to acknowledge that these videos often display inappropriate behavior, and each student could face potential administrative penalties. This raises the question: is it justified for a teacher to report such situations? L argued that "action should be taken if there are any concerning signals. For example, if a previously high-achieving student starts to disappear while engaging in activities that involve creating such content." B disagreed, asserting that the students are of legal age and that the dilemma is not about their personal lives but rather the negative image they create for college students as a whole.

The problem becomes more acute when students disclose information about other students' personal life. For example, students don't want to make group work with one student and wrote to teacher an explanation that contains details of personal relationships. A explained that "reading this

is always unpleasant. Why do you believe it's necessary to know about it at all? As you gaze at the student, you find yourself unable to shake off the unintentionally acquired details about them."

Theme 11: Disappointment

One of the consequences stemming from emerging ethical dilemmas is the frustration teachers experience with their students, which subsequently impacts the educational process.

E, as she described, reached a point where she no longer felt motivated to accompany students to events or complete the ongoing elective. She expressed her disappointment with certain students' actions, leading her to limit her communication with them. While she tried not to openly display her sentiment, she acknowledged that others might have sensed it. However, it was not something that students would approach a teacher about directly. T had a similar experience, stating, "Initially, I designed a variety of engaging tasks with the goal of formulating questions that would resonate with each individual. Unfortunately, hardly anyone actually read the tasks. Instead, they would simply ask for instructions in the general chat without reviewing previous messages. This left me feeling utterly helpless, as I found myself repeatedly sending the same explanations ten or twenty times. This repetitive process significantly diminished my motivation."

Discussion

The ethical issues that concern teachers and chat administrators encompass a wide range of concerns, ranging from inappropriate nicknames to crossing boundaries in interpersonal relationships. Interestingly, the findings of this study align with previous research, highlighting that teachers face similar ethical problems, such as the use of inappropriate language, subjective interpretation of information, difficulties in processing information, and

challenges in maintaining a healthy student-teacher relationship (Mâță, 2022).

Moreover, the study by Hank and colleagues (2014) revealed that students generally prefer to keep their social media content hidden from their teachers. However, in the current study, some students expressed a desire to share their experiences and even created content specifically for group chats where teachers were present. This finding, although contradictory, partly supports previous research indicating that disclosing information about personal issues, such as alcohol consumption or emotional problems in relationships, can negatively impact students' perception of a teacher's credibility (Wang et al., 2015). Interestingly, some respondents in our study mentioned that students wished to share personal and family problems due to a high level of trust.

Additionally, the results of our study lend support to the idea of separating student-teacher and official online communication into academic-instructional, psycho-pedagogical, and social-relational categories (Asterhan & Rosenberg, 2015).

Overall, the research findings not only reinforce existing data from previous studies but also provide new insights into the consequences of encountering ethical dilemmas. A notable aspect of this study is the relationship between teachers' well-being, their motivation to teach, and the level of disappointment experienced when facing inappropriate student behavior.

Conclusions

The current model of communication between teachers and students surpasses traditional paradigms that were limited and based on hierarchical roles. However, without regulations, it raises questions regarding the prevention of inappropriate self-disclosure by students and the establishment of boundaries (Nippert-Eng, 1996). The boundary theory suggests that individuals must navigate the boundaries between different domains, such as college and non-college settings, by segmenting or integrating their roles. In this case, the issue arises when students struggle to effectively establish boundaries, leading to teachers and officials often finding themselves in inappropriate roles, such as being seen as friends or confidants. While this may present opportunities to influence student motivation and engagement, teachers believe it would be preferable to maintain a hierarchical system of relationships similar to offline classes. They perceive potential risks and question the legitimacy of discussing certain topics that may involve personal information and specific characteristics of individual students.

It's crucial to understand that the relationship between students and teachers in the online environment should not be confused with a friendly relationship. Moral dilemmas impact teachers' well-being, causing frustration when they can't choose the relevant action. This is especially true in cases related to substance use and unhealthy family climates. Knowing the negative aspects of students' personalities can also become a traumatic experience for some young teachers. Furthermore, inappropriate behavior impacts the educational process indirectly, as teachers may cancel future plans for activities and optional courses.

All of these factors highlight the necessity for the development of ethical guidelines to moderate and navigate online chats, including the use of formal language and appropriate timing for requests. It is also important to provide digital literacy classes for students to educate them about the dangers and consequences of unethical behavior.

However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Firstly, the sample size of teachers and administrators was small. Additionally, all the lecturers interviewed were women, limiting the examination of online communication issues between male teachers and male/female students. Another

limitation was the specialization of the teachers, as the Faculty of Creative Industries generally adopts a more lenient approach towards students. This may affect the dynamics between students and teachers, leading to a more forgiving attitude from students. Given the opposing views of many teachers, a focus group could provide a valuable format for gathering different insights. Furthermore, the researcher's dual role as a teacher at the

institution may have influenced the honesty of colleagues during the interview process. The ongoing interaction with the researcher in college life may have deterred some individuals from expressing their opinions and experiences. Future research will involve a more extensive and diverse sample, encompassing various educational institutions and including teachers, staff, and students.

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