Improving Teachers' Classroom Practices Using Social Network Based Collaborative Tools as an Alternative to Traditional Face-to-Face Collaboration Strategies: The Case of M'sila Secondary School EFL Teachers

تحسين الممارسة الصفية للأستاذ باستعمال أدوات تعاونية قائمة على شبكة التواصل الاجتماعي كبديل لاستراتيجيات التعاون التقليدية وجها لوجه: عينة اساتذة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية للتعليم الثانوي بالمسيلة

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Abstract: The profuseness of social network based collaborative tools manifested mainly in social platforms such as; Facebook groups, what's up, e-mail, and online chats, provide opportunities for English as foreign language teachers to collaborate virtually with peers and educators. Accordingly, they construct new teaching knowledge, exchange related documents, and elaborate new strategies to improve their classroom practices. Subsequently, they overcome the limits encountered in traditional face-to-face collaborative strategies. Therefore, the study aims to explore face-to-face collaboration limitations as well as the impact of informally incorporating social network collaborative tools on improving teacher's classroom practices. Besides, the study aspires to investigate their role in enhancing teachers' collegial partnership. The research opted for a qualitative method wherein online semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was conducted with fifteen (15) EFL teachers from different secondary schools in M'sila, Algeria. The findings emphasised the positive role of social network based collaborative tools in improving EFL teachers' classroom activities, overcoming the obstacles of traditional face-to-face collaboration, and raising partnership. Nevertheless, a blended collaboration is recommended to balance between teachers' collaborative styles. In addition, we recommend more research to corroborate or nullify their effectiveness for a formal integration into the educational realm.

Keywords: Classroom practices. Social network. Collaborative tools. EFL teachers. Face-to-face collaboration. Virtual collaboration.

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الملخص: أدى الانتشار الواسع للوسائل التعاونية القائمة على شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي والمجسدة أساسا في المنصات الاجتماعية كالفيس بوك، الواتس اب، الايميل والدردشة المباشرة، إلى إتاحة فرص لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للتعاون افتراضيا مع الزملاء والمفتشين. من هذا المنطلق فإن الأساتذة يبنون معارف تعليمية جديدة، يتبادلون الوثائق ذات الصلة كما يوظفون استراتيجيات جديدة لتحسين أداءهم في القسم. وبالتالي فإن هذا يمكنهم من تجاوز الصعوبات التي تواجههم أثناء تطبيق استراتيجيات التعاون التقليدية وجها لوجه. نتيجة لهذا فإن الدراسة تهدف الي كشف صعوبات التعاون التقليدي والتي ساهمت في تغير نهج التعاون بين الأساتذة. كما تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقيق في تأثير تبني أدوات تعاونية عبر الشبكات الاجتماعية على الاداء الصفي للأستاذ وتعزيز حس الزمالة والشراكة بين أساتذة المادة الواحدة. لتحقيق هذه الأهداف انتهجت الدراسة المنهج الكيفي باستخدام المقابلة الافتراضية نصف مقننة بأسئلة مفتوحة مع خمسة عشرة أستاذ إنجليزية للتعليم الثانوي من مختلف ثانويات ولاية المسيلة، الجزائر. أكدت نتائج البحث على الدور الايجابي لاستعمال الشبكات الافتراضية كأدوات للتعاون في تحسين الأداء الصفي، تجاوز عقبات التعاون التقليدي وتعزيز حس الزمالة بين الأساتذة. رغم ذلك يوصى بتبني الاستراتيجيتين معا لخلق التوازن بين المنهج التعاوني لكل أستاذ. كما يوصى بدراسات أوسع لإثبات أو رفض الإدماج الرسمي لهذه الأدوات الافتراضية في المجال التعليمي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأداء الصفي، شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي، أدوات تعاونية، أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية، التعاون وجها لوجه، التعاون الافتراضي.

- Introduction:

Technology integration into the teaching learning process to keep up with modern challenges and cope with educational complexities has brought about considerable changes in EFL teachers' teaching styles and pedagogical practices. Recently, a significant orientation toward EFL teachers' utilization of social network collaborative tools and platforms as means to enhance their pedagogy and to subvert the pitfalls of traditional face-to-face professional development interactive groups is interestingly growing. Taraun. I. M. (2019) stated that online collaboration tools are one of the recent educational technologies that become more popular among teachers. He defined online collaboration tools as web-based tools that permit individuals to do things collaboratively online. A current novelty in teacher virtual collaborative learning strategies are online group networks, which are often created and operated within a pure network-based platforms (Gorozidis, S.G, & al, 2020).

The proliferation of social network based collaborative tools mainly Face book groups, e-mail, online chats and what's up among teachers is commonly recognized as

a fruitful strategy to subvert face-to-face professional development collaboration barriers, more specifically, improve teachers' classroom instructional performances. Social network collaborative tools refer to a wide range of network-based platforms that serve as a refugee for EFL teachers to share knowledge, exchange expertise, reflect on their classroom instruction and evaluate their performance. They have significantly demonstrated their effectiveness in improving EFL teachers' classroom instruction, concurrently; they promote a sense of collegiality and connectedness among teachers. These network online tools and platforms have contributed in creating a new type of collaboration manifested in virtual communities and teams for teacher pedagogical and professional development.

Virtual collaboration is multifaceted working strategy that may take place via a variety of tools such as e-mail, online faculty forums, virtual learning communities, online mailing lists and other forms of communication facilitated by technology. Virtual collaboration tools profuseness has altered EFL teachers' collaborative strategies from traditional face-to-face professional learning interaction groups to more sophisticated virtual communities through the integration of social network collaborative tools as a medium to share and exchange related documents, prepare exam papers and solve common teaching problems. These tools helped teachers to overcome traditional professional development collaboration barriers as time, space and pace constraints. They provide asynchronous and synchronous access to virtual communities. They act as a medium to facilitate teacher professional learning of pedagogical and subject area content.

Concerning the Algerian context, specifically the region of M'sila, where the common teaching professional learning programs represented in one or two-day seminars organized by teacher educators or some teacher face-to-face discussion groups are not facilitative to develop and enrich teacher classroom practices. They are generally described as ineffective and insufficient. Subsequently, it becomes a necessity for EFL secondary school teachers to incorporate technological tools represented

mainly in social media platforms to collaborate as an alternative to traditional face-to-face collaboration groups. This latter becomes so far impossible for geographical, personal and administrative reasons. EFL secondary school teachers collaborate informally through social network tools to improve their pedagogy and classroom instructional practices. Therefore, this Article sheds light on the face-to-face collaboration limitations that led to use of social network collaborative tools and their impact on improving EFL secondary school teachers' classroom practice as well as connecting colleagues of the same subject. The Article aspires to answer the following questions:

1-What are the limitations in face-to-face collaboration that led to the use of social network based collaborative tools?

2-How do social network based collaborative tools improve EFL secondary school teachers' classroom practice.

3-How could the use of social network based collaborative tools enhance connectedness and collegiality among EFL teachers?

Accordingly, the literature review is divided into two parts; the first part discusses the limitations in traditional teacher collaborative interactive groups that played a crucial role in switching teachers' orientation towards the integration of social network collaborative tools for virtual collaboration. The second part reviews some practical studies on the impact of incorporating network based collaborative tools and platforms on improving EFL teachers' classroom instructional practices.

1. From Face-to-Face to Online Teacher Collaboration Communities

Recently, online collaboration strategies have dominated the educational arena as an alternative to traditional professional collaborative learning strategies. The online environment has continually proved to be better in promoting teachers' self-reflection on their pedagogical practices than is in the face-to-face environment (Blitz, C.L. 2013). Blitz's review of literature on whether online learning communities can achieve the goals of traditional professional learning communities deduced that a set of

barriers for traditional collaborative strategies compelled teachers to adopt an online collaboration orientation. Moreover, Blitz's review of literature pointed out that previous research agreed on several face-to-face collaboration limitations. First, the absence of supportive school leadership referring to teacher mentors' role. Second, lack of technical and logistical support for teachers such as time and meeting spaces for meaningful interactions. Third, school culture that places greater value on individual than collaborative teacher work; are the three main frequent limitations of traditional collaborative professional learning strategies mentioned in the literature. Subsequently, a failure to improve teacher pedagogical performances.

Similarly, conforming to Vangrieken, K & al. (2015) review of literature on teacher collaboration concluded that factors hinder teacher collaboration can be categorized into four characteristics. First, Personal characteristics which refer to lack of commitment, lack of in-service teachers' training for collaborative skills, discrepancies in teachers' personalities and pedagogical perceptions, as well as fear of exposure. Second, Group characteristics that entails balkanization, unclear collaborative objectives, group heterogeneity, lack of communicative and managerial skills for arising conflicts, absence of collegiality and group work spirit. Third, structural characteristics that include work pressure and less time. Lastly, impeding organizational characteristics referring to administrative and school collaborative culture.

Thus, throughout the aforementioned traditional collaboration barriers encountered by teachers, online collaboration environments through the incorporation of social network collaborative tools represents a novel orientation to enhance teaching and learning outcomes by providing facilities to overcome traditional collaborative strategies barriers. Admittedly, teacher online collaboration environments is a contemporary innovative approach geared toward the development and facilitation of teacher collaborative work; it is a promising perspective for the improvement of educational outcomes.

2- The Incorporation of Social Network Based Collaborative Tools for Improving Teachers' Instructional Practices.

It becomes a truism through the literature that teachers who use social network collaborative tools for teaching purposes are likely to be engaged in a teamwork, develop a sense of community, improve their knowledge of subject and pedagogical content, and intend to modify their instructional practices accordingly (Blitz, C.L.2013).

Furthermore, the advancement of the internet led to massive availability of social network collaborative tools that offer facilities for EFL Teachers to adopt a variety of virtual networking collaborative ways for teaching purposes. Thus, new communication technologies provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate with other teachers to build new knowledge, learn about new resources, and develop new strategies to enhance their teaching (Desislava. R. & al .2007).

As reported by Ellis and Renata (2000), collaboration through social network platforms pave the way for new teaching modes which may not be practiced before by teachers. They further supposed that collaboration through social network provides an ongoing and regular maintenance and updates in teaching materials and resources, as well as developing collaborative relationships for meaningful interactions. Additionally, Coughlin & Kadjer (2009) contended that four aspects are attributed to collaborative digital tools that include "Access to authentic, often global audiences, multimodal means of communicating meaning and knowledge, feedback that is often immediate, and opportunities for identity development and self-presentation". Thus, creative and sophisticated knowledge can be shared; innovative pedagogical strategies are elaborated within the online community through collaboration. Accordingly, a tougher collegial relationship is required to incorporate technology effectively; where teachers share ideas, model best practices, ask difficult questions, and support one another where and when is most needed.

Collaboration through social networking tools and platforms promotes in-service teachers' professional development being a potential resource for diverse

instructional processes. In this concern, Kabilan & al (2011) conducted qualitative research through a social network based online collaborative project between English language teachers in different Malaysian universities. Their project aimed at identifying how online collaborative experiences enriched teachers' professional development. Four themes were induced from their analysis of teachers' reflective reports; Teachers involved in online collaborative environment develop an envisioning of professional development, enhance their teaching skills, share and exchange knowledge, and get to be socialized. They further confirm that for teachers to gain and develop new competencies that are critically important to the enhancement of their knowledge and teaching repertoire, they peripherally utilize social network platforms. According to Bowman et al (2000 as cited in Kabilan et al 2011), online collaboration offers teachers "a rich treasury of teaching ideas through the responses of group members to their own and others' questions" and assist them to solve problems in their teaching. Admittedly, teachers' social network based virtual collaboration needs to be promoted and academically accredited due to its advantageous results on the realm of teaching.

In the same vein, several researches and studies have been conducted over the world to corroborate or nullify the positive role of virtual collaboration environments using social network collaborative platforms on the teaching process. For example, a phenomenological qualitative study was conducted by Schieffer. L. (2016) on the benefits and barriers of virtual collaboration among online adjuncts revealed virtual collaboration yield valuable outcomes; including a social connection, a sense of pride, a feeling of camaraderie, and a chance to engage in scholarship. He further concluded that virtual collaboration influences best practices, removes isolation, and offers means for professional development. Social researchers suggest that using social networking as a means for developing and operating Communities of practice has a wide range of benefits for the teachers and may eventually lead to the advancement of their teaching practices (Gorozidis, S.G, S.G. & al.2020). These social network technologies provide with high level of flexibility in communication facilitating collaboration in a virtual

context (Karoui.M & al.2010). Drawing on the mixed method study by Gorozidis, S.G & al. (2020) in the Greek context, on physical education teacher collaborative network using face book groups, the use of social network collaborative tools for virtual collaboration may provide teachers with a set of pedagogical and professional benefits such as:

- Teacher social network based online collaboration leads to improvement of teacher classroom practice.
- It is a shift from conventional professional development collaborative training to supportive collaborative learning partnership.
- It gives opportunities for teachers to be involved in cooperative and interactive activities regardless of their geographical locations.
- Potential advantages are offered to teachers, as they will be able to adopt their online interaction at their own pace.
- It incorporates successful aspects of previous interventions such as flexibility, accessibility and collaboration with and support from colleagues.
- These aspects can be reachable regardless the setbacks as time, location and absence.

Laiche. S and Ghaouar. N (2021) conducted a mixed method research, in the Algerian context, on the benefits of virtual communities of practice on the Algerian EFL teachers' education focusing on one face book group. On the one hand, their study revealed that virtual communities of practice allow for collaboration and interpersonal relationships among EFL teachers. On the other hand, the study focused on one face book group for EFL teachers of all levels (Primary, Middle and Secondary level) where the effects of adopting virtual communities for collaboration can differ from a level to another.

Overall, from the aforementioned literature, a positive attitude can be diagnosed on the role of virtual collaboration and the use of social network based collaborative platforms to improve teachers' education and pedagogical practice; as

well as the development of a sense of collegiality and connectedness among teachers of the same subject. As the integration of social network based collaborative tools is a novelty in the Algerian context, rigorous research on their incorporation for collaborative educational purposes is just beginning to emerge. Thus, regarding the region of M'sila, little research if none has been conducted on EFL teachers' face-to-face collaboration limitations and the impact of using social network based collaborative tools on enhancing EFL secondary school teachers' pedagogical and instructional practice. Besides, their role in developing a sense of collegiality, belonging, connectedness and collaborative partnership among EFL teachers. Therefore, the pivotal aim of this research paper is to explore face-to-face collaboration limitations that led to the promotion of social network collaborative tools among EFL teachers for educational purposes and the impact of implementing knowledge acquired from such platforms on teachers' classroom teaching performances and collegial partnership.

3- Methodology

3.1. Method:

The study opts for a qualitative methodology wherein the researcher conducted online chat semi-structured interviews to collect authentic data and ensure the effectiveness of the qualitative research. The qualitative research involves the gathering and analysis of textual data to get in-depth understanding of the research problem (Bhandari, P. 2020). As interviews are one of the most common data collection methods employed in qualitative research (Hofsi, C et al. 2014) with a small sample, and since teachers are the best experts in the domain, the researcher decided that the interview would be the best data collection instrument and appropriate method for collecting teachers' opinions.

3-2- Participants:

The participants in this study were 15 EFL in-service teachers from different secondary schools in M'sila, Algeria. They voluntarily participated in the study after being asked for their consent through Messenger and phone calls. The participants

were randomly chosen to represent the sample that would provide useful and authentic opinions about the use of social network collaborative tools to improve teachers' instructional practice.

3-3- Data Collection Instruments:

The qualitative research was conducted using online semi-structured interview with 15 EFL secondary school teachers in M'sila. They use social network platforms as collaborative tools to deal with pedagogical problems and improve classroom instruction. A set of open-ended questions were asked to get in-depth information about traditional collaboration limitations and the impact of using social network collaborative platforms on improving EFL teachers' classroom practice and raising collegial partnership among them. As teachers were in their summer holidays, it was not possible to meet them face to face. Therefore, the participants' answers were collected through online semi-structured interviews in a form of instant chat for Messenger. Fontes. O, O' Mahony. M, (2008) defined online instant interviews as "a sort of instant synchronous computer- mediated communication between two or more people using client programs such as MSN Messenger and yahoo Messenger". Interviewees were sent an invitation to participate in the study then scheduled an interview. The time allocated for the online interviews ranged from 30 to 40 minutes. As time was an issue for teachers, it took a week interviewing all the 15 teachers. The researcher used thematic content analysis to analyze the textual collected responses; and then categorized into themes and subthemes of relevant interest.

3-4-Interview Procedures

The online semi-structured interview consists of eight (8) open-ended questions which serve the focal aim of the study; and which are supposed to be answered by 15 EFL teachers from different secondary schools in M'sila, Algeria. The first two questions deal with the limitations encountered in face-to-face collaboration and teachers' opinions on the use of social network tools as alternatives. The third and the fourth questions are related to the knowledge provided by those platforms and its

impact on improving EFL teachers' classroom instructional practice. The last group of questions are concerned with teachers' opinions about the formal integration of social network collaborative platforms for academic purposes and their role in enhancing collegiality among teachers. Simple and direct questions were addressed so as interviewees would feel ease to answer the interview questions. The focal aim of the research is to find out how the use of social network collaborative tools prompts EFL teachers' classroom practice and enhances collegiality and connectedness among them, regarding the absence and limitations of traditional face-to-face collaboration strategies.

4- Results:

The results are categorized under two themes with subthemes for each category that seems relevant to the research aims and questions framework.

4-1- Face to Face Collaboration limitations:

According to teachers' views, the limitations that impede face-to-face traditional collaboration strategies can be grouped under three main subthemes:

4-1-1-Time Constraints:

When teachers were asked about the challenges encountered in face-to-face collaboration, the majority (73, 33**%**) of them referred to the lack of time for collaborative meetings as the major obstacle that impede face-to-face traditional collaboration communities. Besides, some teachers argued that the lack of time is mainly due to overloaded teacher weekly planning and personal responsibilities. This view can be evident in the claims of participants P2 and P9 as an example:

P2: " The fact that traditional face to face collaboration strategies can be time consuming and needs specific times make it hard to be arranged "**.**

P9**:** " One of the challenges faced by teachers when tending to collaborate in traditional face to face collaboration strategies is the lack of time for meeting together as most teachers' weekly planning is full, no space for collaboration".

4-1-2- Teacher Character:

Teacher character is another apparent obstacle that can be infused from teachers' responses. (53,33%) from participant teachers claimed that different styles, shyness, isolated teachers, stubbornness and egoism are main teacher characteristics that hinder face-to-face collaboration as in most circumstances it leads to conflicting misunderstandings. Some participants' responses in favour of that are:

P8: "Some teachers think they are superior to their peers whereas others feel shy and humiliating to ask for help".

P4:"...Besides some teachers tend to work individually, they   prefer to be isolated".

4-1-3- Lack of Organization Standards:

The lack of organization standards was another barrier expressed by participants. Third participant (P3) remarked that the inspectors and the administration do not provide sufficient accompaniment for teachers to collaborate. Meetings are not scheduled in the teacher weekly planning and if scheduled not taken into consideration. Besides, another participant added that Inspectors do not supervise their collaboration strategies it is almost teachers voluntarily work. One participant (P9) mentioned that:

P9**:"** Face to face collaboration has no obvious regulations that set the time or inspector guidance for such meetings to take place".

4-2- Social Network Based Collaborative Tools as a Revolutionary Alternative for the Improvement of Teachers' Classroom Practices.

After establishing a background that EFL teachers use a variety of e. collaborative tools which can be demonstrated in participants' responses, the following subthemes answer the questions why using social networking collaborative tools and how do it enhance teacher's classroom practice. All Teachers (100%) appraised their role in providing them with required knowledge that had a great effect on the improvement of their classroom pedagogical and instructional performance. Accordingly, a call for the integration of these tools for teaching purposes was intensively claimed. Nevertheless, teachers affirm

that the official integration should be highly supervised by teacher educators, inspectors and stakeholders.

4-2-1- Social Network Collaborative Tools as Teaching Knowledge and Problem-Solving Resource

Two notions that were emphasised by teachers are the Teaching knowledge-resource and problem-solving resource role of social network collaborative tools and platforms.

P3:"Social network collaborative tools provide opportunities for teachers to learn from each other, sharing practical experiences, related files and giving feedback on daily classroom practices as well as discussing teaching problematic issues".

P10:" ...they provide teachers with innovative teaching techniques and teaching materials such as Handouts, lesson plans and assessment strategies".

P1:"They provide teachers with knowledge that textbooks do not offer, they solve teachers' teaching problems through the availability of teaching materials and collegial feedback".

In the three above examples, the participants intensified the positive role of social networking collaborative platforms in providing teaching knowledge and solving teaching problems. The first Participant (P3) stated that these tools provide practical experiences of peers that accordingly will help teachers align between theory and practice. He further refers to these tools as being a space for discussing feedback and daily teaching classroom performances. The second participant (P10) pinpointed that social network collaborative tools offer a variety of teaching techniques and materials that enables teachers to build diverse teaching background through selecting and adapting what fits their teaching styles and learners' needs. The third participant (P1) pointed out that such collaborative tools have a crucial role in providing extra knowledge that supplements the textbook content.

4-2-2-Classroom instruction facilitator

The participants were asked to explain how the knowledge acquired through social network collaboration could improve their classroom performance. All teachers (100%) appreciated the supportive and supplementary role of the exchanged knowledge. An example of one participant response who claimed that:

P2:" In fact, the transferred knowledge can positively affect teachers' performance as it gives teachers opportunities to adapt and select from a wide range of teaching facilities that foster their teaching styles and their learners' needs".

The figure bellow illustrates the relationship between the two aforementioned subthemes:
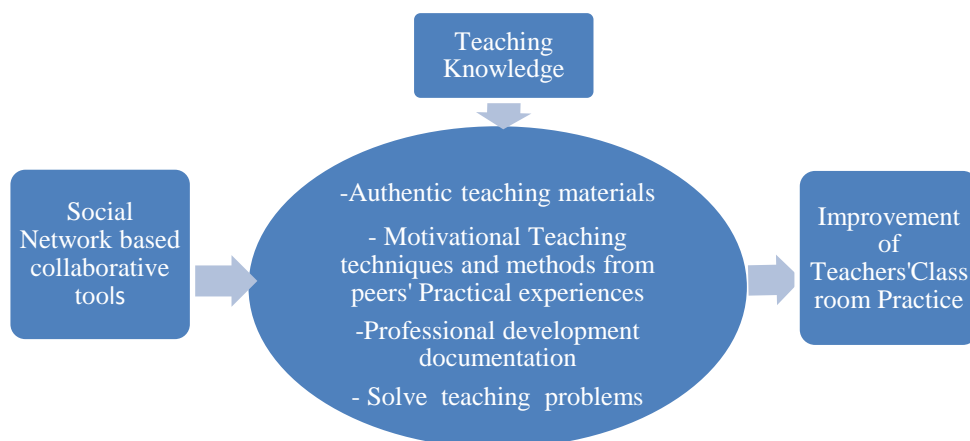
Figure 1: The Role of Social Network Collaborative Tools in improving teachers' classroom performance (Designed by the researcher)

4-2-3- Synchronous asynchronous facilities

Another facility provided by the social network collaborative tools, according to teachers, is time efficiency. All teachers (100%) gave credit to the synchronous and asynchronous access provided by such tools. Examples of teachers' responses complementing on their flexibility and availability are:

P5:" I think social network collaborative tools are the perfect alternative simply because it does not restrict you to specific places and times. It can be used at any time and place".

P1:" They facilitate collaboration in terms of time and place, more teachers would be able to exchange experience at ease laying at home".

4-2-4-Belonging and collegial feelings

When it comes to feelings of belonging and collegiality, teachers were asked to explain the relationship between using social network collaborative tools and establishing partnership and connectedness among teachers of the same subject. Participant teachers (80%) confirmed that sharing the same noble responsibility and working together for the progress of the teaching learning process will undoubtedly result ed in feelings of one team. As the third participant pointed out:

P3:" I think that collegiality and connectedness will automatically be raised because the focus is on problem solving together and sharing collective responsibility for the progress of teaching ".

4- Discussion

The results of the study demonstrated that the barriers encountered in traditional face-to-face collaborative groups and facilities offered in virtual collaboration constitute the major reasons for an orientation towards the use of social network collaborative tools for teaching purposes. Teachers' opinions emphasised the positive role of such tools in providing adequate teaching knowledge facilities and practical experiences that have a direct effect on their classroom performances and teaching styles. By sharing the same subject matter, responsibility and educational teaching objectives EFL teachers highlighted that their collaboration through using social networking collaborative tools notably contributed in creating a sense of connectedness and collegial partnership among them.

Drawing on participant teachers' responses on the barriers of face-to-face collaboration three main subthemes were induced. First, time constraints due mainly to work pressure and personal responsibilities. Second, teacher character that teachers explained as the different personal collaborative aspects such as isolation, shyness, egoism and lack of communicative skills. Third, organizational standards that entail a

lack of teacher educators and administrative guidance for promoting a culture of collaborative work among teachers. Notably, these hindrances encourage EFL teachers to think of an alternative to subvert face-to-face collaboration. Therefore, EFL teachers highly appraised the move towards incorporating social network based collaborative tools for virtual collaboration. This latter provides teachers with a set of facilities manifested in peers' practical teaching knowledge, professional development documentation, classroom teaching techniques, variety of lesson plan designs, collegiality, asynchronous and synchronous access to mention just a few. Eventually, an obvious improvement in teachers' pedagogy and classroom instructional performance skills.

The research findings go along with the findings of the reviews of literature conducted by both (Blitz, C, L.2013) and (Vangrieken, K. et al. 2015). Blitz and Vangrieken reported that lack of time, teacher personal characteristics and organizational and school cultural aspects as major face-to-face collaboration obstacles recurrent in past research. In terms of the impact of utilizing social network collaborative platforms for virtual collaboration on the advancement of teachers' classroom instruction. The present findings are aligned with those of (Gorozidis, S.G et al). This latter emphasised that potential advantages and facilities offered by the use of social network collaborative tools may provide teachers with a set of pedagogical and professional benefits such as providing opportunities for teachers to be involved in cooperative and interactive activities, regardless of their geographical locations. Concerning developing a sense of collegiality, the findings of this research are parallel to that of (Sheffield, 2016); his research findings persist on the role of virtual communities in developing a sense of camaraderie and belonging among teachers.

The findings of this research study can notably contribute to the improvement of educational practice. It orients EFL teachers to a set of facilities offered during the process of integrating social network based collaborative tools for the improvement of instructional practice. In terms of contributions to teacher professional development,

the research results can be useful for teacher educators in understanding the barriers and alternatives to traditional professional development collaborative groups. Thus, encourage the integration of collaborative technology-oriented strategies for educational purposes. The main research limitation lies in generalizability of the findings. The research sample small size population and the use of a qualitative research method does not allow for drawing broader inferences and extensive conclusions. The research results need to be emphasised with more quantitative results with larger sample size.

- Conclusion:

This study aims at exploring the impact of incorporating social network collaborative tools on EFL secondary school teachers' classroom practice and instructional pedagogy. It focuses on the limitations in traditional face-to-face teacher collaboration strategies as the main factor for an orientation towards virtual collaborative communities. In addition, the study aims at investigating the role of using social networking collaborative tools in raising a sense of connectedness and partnership among teachers of the same subject. Therefore, the study concluded that EFL teachers' informal incorporation of social network collaborative tools, mainly social platforms, has a significant positive impact on the improvement of teachers' classroom instruction. Teachers consider them as a resource for numerous facilities that help to overcome traditional face-to-face collaboration barriers.

Based on the findings of this qualitative research paper, more considerations and supervision should be given to the use of social network collaborative tools. Still, the use of such tools is voluntarily teacher contribution since they are not yet officially integrated and no supervision conducted on the transferred content. As a result, a continued effort to enhance teaching practices using technology has become a major challenge for both teachers and teacher educators.

To sum up, depending on the aforementioned perspectives, it is highly significant that EFL secondary school teacher's collaboration via virtual platforms

should be incorporated and acknowledged as part of teacher' professional development training programs for the precious afforded advantages. Nevertheless, a blended collaboration is recommended to balance between teachers' collaborative teaching styles. In addition, the fact that the integration of technology oriented collaborative tools to pedagogical contexts is still under experimentation and that great amounts of research should be conducted to corroborate or nullify the effectiveness of such platforms to be formally accredited and integrated into the educational realm.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Teacher semi-structured online interview

The impact of integrating social network collaborative tools on EFL teachers' classroom practice

1. What challenges have you encountered with traditional face-to-face collaborative strategies?

2. What is your opinion on using social network collaborative tools as an alternative to face-to-face collaboration?

3. What social network collaborative tools or platforms (Face book groups, emails, online chats, what sup) you use? Why?

4. What sort of knowledge they afford for EFL teachers?

5. How could the implementation of this knowledge affect your classroom performance and instruction?

6. What do you think of considering Collaborative social network-based tools as problem solving resource?

7. As an active participant in the teaching learning process, what is your opinion on integrating social communication platforms for academic purposes?

8. How could collaborative network-based tools enhance collegiality and connectedness among EFL teachers?