

Effectiveness of Facebook as a Social Networking Site used by the Students

Jay Niel B. Mercado¹, Benedict Q. Abag²,
Jemuel B. Banaag³, Jaypee L. Cacao⁴, Roy Vincent B. Herico⁵,
Luisa P. Macatangay⁶

College of Business Administration, Lyceum of the Philippines University,
Batangas City, Philippines

¹Jayniel_mercado@yahoo.com, ²dexterqa@yahoo.com,

³banaagjemuel@gmail.com, ⁴Cacao_jaypee@yahoo.com,

⁵roy.herico03@gmail.com

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Abstract - *The study aimed to assess the use of Facebook as social networking site being used by the students in one Private Higher Education Institution in the Philippines. Specifically, it sought to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of their age and gender, uses of Facebook as a social networking sites in terms of its reliability, functionality, accuracy; test the significant difference on the effectiveness of using Facebook as a social networking sites when grouped according to profile variables, identify the problems encountered in using Facebook. Descriptive type of research method was used in the study with 200 respondents. Result showed that students perceived that the use of Facebook was essential since they can have a peer to peer communication that would later develop into collaboration. The most common problems encountered in using Facebook inside the University is the restriction of browsing social networking sites including Facebook in the school wherein the students are using mobile data instead but very slow most of the time.*

Keywords: *Social Networking Site, Facebook, Assessment*

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, technology has significantly changed the way people communicate. Originally, the telephone replaced the telegraph. Now, cell phones, email and the Internet top the list of preferred communication methods. As more businesses and educational institutions use technology to communicate, society seems to have accepted, if not embraced, the increased role technology now plays in everyday life.

The proliferation of social networking sites (SNS) and their pervasion in everyday practices is affecting how Western societies manage their social networks. To a significant extent, SNS have shifted social networking to the Internet. In less than five years, these sites have grown from a niche online activity into a phenomenon through which tens of millions of internet users are connected, both in their leisure time, and at work. There are various factors which have prompted us to consider the implications of these technologies for policy-making. One of these is the willingness of users to embrace SNS as a means of communication and social networking in everyday life. The increasing

dependence on technology for basic communication also highlights the importance of analyzing how SNS are affecting daily processes [1].

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) such as Facebook are one of the latest examples of communications technologies that have been widely-adopted by students and, consequently, have the potential to become a valuable resource to support their educational communications and collaborations with faculty [2].

The growth and popularity of online social networks has created a new world of collaboration and communication. More than a billion individuals around the world are connected and networked together to create, collaborate, and contribute their knowledge and wisdom [3].

Social media has become such an essential part of business that universities have begun to implement social media courses across a variety of programs – from communications to marketing to business management. Universities are fortunate to already have such a specific and dedicated audience. This audience is made up of students (prospective, current, former), faculty, educators, and more; all of whom are directly

connected with or interested in the university. Using social networking to promote your university has many advantages but also requires some dedication and work on your part like reach students, build an active community, keep audiences informed and updated, monitor reputation and measure campaign success. Instead of just employing social media experts and teaching successful social media techniques, universities should practice what they preach and establish a strong social media presence [4]. Based on the researchers' experiences, accessing Facebook in the school is strictly prohibited because of the reason that it is a Social Networking Site, which of the Management Information System (MIS) most students don't agree. Their reason for blocking social networking sites just like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter or Instagram is that social networking sites give a lot of traffic load of data which will cause the time-consuming speed of the internet connection in the university. The results of the research will provide valuable insights about the effectiveness of Facebook to the students in one private HEI in the Philippines. Since the researchers are Business and Computer Management students, they consider themselves future marketers and businessman who will use the advancement of technology and social networking sites especially Facebook as way of communication to its stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to assess the use of Facebook as social networking site being used by the students. Specifically, it sought to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of their age and gender; uses of Facebook as a social networking sites in terms of its reliability, functionality, accuracy, test the significant difference on the effectiveness of using Facebook as a social networking sites when grouped according to profile variables, identify the problems encountered in using Facebook.

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers utilized the descriptive method of research in order to gather and determine the necessary data and information regarding the effectiveness of Facebook as a Social Networking site used by the students of one Private HEI in the Philippines.

Descriptive research is conclusive in nature, as opposed to exploratory. This means that descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be

used for statistical inference on your target audience through data analysis. Most often, it will be used as a method to reveal and measure the strength of a target group's opinion, attitude, or behaviour with regards to a given subject. But another common use of descriptive research would be the surveying of demographical traits in a certain group (age, income, marital status, gender, etc.). This information could then be studied at face value, measuring trends over time, or for more advanced data analysis like drawing correlations, segmentation, benchmarking and other statistical techniques [5].

Participants of the Study

Since the study focused in the effectiveness of Facebook to the students of one Private HEI in the Philippines. The researchers used the Quota Sampling which is a method for selecting survey participants. A total of 200 students served as respondents.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researchers developed a self – made questionnaire as the principal instrument in gathering the necessary data in the said study which was validated by the statistician. The said questionnaires were proportionately distributed to the target respondents.

The questionnaires for the respondents were divided into four (4) parts. The first part is about the personal information of the respondents in terms of their name, year, age and course, the second part includes questions that evaluate the effectiveness of Facebook as a social networking site used by the students with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.837, the third part presents the problems encountered by the users while using Facebook with Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.822 and the last part asks suggestions or opinions regarding user's experiences in using Facebook.

Procedure

The researchers selected the topic for the research proposal and presented it to their adviser for consultation. They submitted it to the Dean of their college for finality of the approval.

In order to complete the study, the researchers utilized library resources. They spent most of their time in the library for gathering relevant information. Also, through the internet, related theses and journals, they obtained sufficient information.

Upon the approval of the thesis proposal, the researchers constructed a self-made questionnaire with the consultation from the research adviser and our

statistician for validation. After the validation of the questionnaire, the researchers distributed the instrument to the respondents and immediate retrieval followed.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaires were collected, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted. The researchers used the following statistical tools such as Frequency Distribution, Percentage, Weighted Mean and F – tests. The above-mentioned tools were used. Based on the objectives of the study. In addition, all data were treated using statistical software, PASW version 18 to further analyze the results of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Program		
16-18years old	153	76.50
19-21 years old	44	22.00
22 years old and above	3	1.50
Sex		
Male	57	28.50
Female	143	71.50

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of the respondent's profile. In terms of age, majority of them fall on the age bracket of 16-18 years old with a frequency of 153 or 76.50 percent, followed by 19-21 years old with a frequency of 44 or 22 percent at last is the 22 years old and above students, 3 or 1.50 percent. As to age level, the users of Facebook in the University under study were mostly in the First Year and Second Year level. There are 7 billion people in the world, roughly 3 billion of them are on the internet. Facebook dominates the space with over 33% of all the users. Facebook users base is dominated by 25+, but they still have 50+ million user under the age 25. Facebook is a great place to start social media marketing, because your audience will generally lie within one of their age demographics [6].

Most of the users were female which has a frequency of 143 or 71.50 percent compared to male, only 57 or 28.50 percent. It implies that females are more often using Facebook as observed by the researchers.

Table 2. Effectiveness of Facebook as Social Networking Site in terms of Reliability

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Facebook offers unity of idea or opinions among students	3.29	Effective	3.5
2. Students have a chance to connect to the world	3.60	Very Effective	1
3. Teachers may help keep students engaged	3.29	Effective	3.5
4. A chance exists to promote student responsibility in terms of time management	3.10	Effective	5
5. It encourages students to share their thoughts or opinions	3.43	Effective	2
Composite Mean	3.34	Effective	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very Effective; 2.50 – 3.49 = Effective; 1.50 – 2.49 = Less Effective; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not Effective

Table 2 shows the effectiveness of Facebook as social networking in terms of its reliability. With 3.60 as weighted mean, it shows that the students agree that they have a chance to connect to the world by using Facebook. It is one of the main reasons why students keep using Facebook in their daily lives. Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites popular social networking sites [7]. The statistics shows a timeline with the worldwide number of active Facebook users from 2008 to 2015. In the second quarter of 2015, Facebook had 1.49 billion monthly active users. In the third quarter of 2012, the number of active Facebook users had surpassed 1 billion [8]. A large portion of students use Facebook as a mean of communication.

Most students believe that they can share their thoughts, opinions and views in life through Facebook, it is the second perception which obtained 3.43 weighted mean. Some students don't want to share their knowledge or opinions in a face-to-face manner. Some consider using Facebook and become themselves behind technologies. (Computers, tablets, smart phones) Pempek et. al. [9] reported that about 55% of Facebook users log into Facebook website several times a day to integrate their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

The third item, of 3.29 weighted mean shows that the students were eager to communicate and share their thoughts to develop a one single idea. Most students are making different social groups for their benefits, sharing and communication regarding school works and upcoming events. Groups are a Facebook page that

is associated with a real organization or an online group. Similar to a user's page, the group can post items and have discussions. The difference is that a Facebook group page is administered by a small group of people or just by one. Other Facebook users can join a group and if there is any activity in the group, the users associated with the group will be notified of the activity. Each post will also count and display who has seen it [8].

With the same weighted mean of 3.29, the respondents or the students agree that teachers should allow students in using Facebook to keep them engaged in school work, by posting different school tasks and discussions in their social group in which the teachers is also a member, and students could have different levels of comfort when knowing their professors are on Facebook. One study found that the professors' sex and age could influence the levels of appropriateness among male and female students [10]. Knowing the ways students use Facebook academically can allow faculty and staff to develop a curriculum that is relevant to the student's perspective, facilitate discussions among students outside of the classroom, and allow for different levels of learning experiences.

The least item with 3.10 weighted mean and rank 5 yet still effective suggests that students want to be responsible in their time management when they are using Facebook as a past time when they have. It could also be said that it is the least item because some or most students weren't able to manage their time properly when using Facebook but it is effective which means students want to change the way they behave when using Facebook.

Table 3 illustrates the Effectiveness of Facebook as Social Networking Site in terms of Functionality in students. It can be seen in the table that there is no doubt that students Facebook find functional, having the highest weighted mean of 3.46, Facebook is effective in contacting a person whenever and wherever he/she is. Instant messaging is similar to a post. However, in instant messaging, the user is sending the item privately. Also, with instant messaging, the user can have instant conversation, similar to text messaging on a cellular phone [8].

It is also supported by the study of Nhan [11] stating that functionality is all the functions; attributes of the system to satisfy user requirements. Some features such as the name of the website, loading time, this place make the first impression of users. The website is the place where anyone can access, surf or visits therefore we need an interesting interface, adapt with any

browsers, support Multilanguage, contain accurate information or important things.

Table 3. Effectiveness of Facebook as Social Networking Site in terms of Functionality

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The website has improved the quality of information gathered	3.35	Effective	3
2. The website provides unlimited resources for anyone to find someone with ease	3.31	Effective	4
3. The website is relevant to or addresses the need of the student	3.16	Effective	5
4. One may able to contact a person whenever and wherever	3.46	Effective	1
5. One can directly call a person from as long as he/she is your friend in which you could save money	3.41	Effective	2
Composite Mean	3.33	Effective	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very Effective; 2.50 – 3.49 = Effective; 1.50 – 2.49 = Less Effective; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not Effective

With 3.41 weighted mean, interpreted Effective, students claimed that they may able to save money through calling someone by using Facebook Messenger, and today, one can quickly start a video call from any conversation with just one tap. If you're messaging with someone and realize that words just aren't enough, one can simply choose the video icon in the top right corner of the screen and start a video call right from within an existing Messenger conversation.

According to Chua [12] and Mebrate [13], functionality is a set of attributes that bears on the existence of a set of functions and their specified properties; the functions are those satisfy stated or implied needs. They also cited that functionality s the essential purpose of any product or services. In terms of Functionality, Facebook has improved the quality of information gathered got the third rank and have a weighted mean of 3.35 and is effective; means that Facebook is functional in terms of information gathering, each school were creating different pages for their departments and official page for information and advertisement purposes. In which the admin of the page posts different information's and clarifications regarding future events and happenings. Postis an action on Facebook. Post is when a person wants to

share a picture, send a small message, send an article, a video, or other forms of media to their own or a friend's profile, or on group's page. When someone posts something, it is meant to be open to the public [8].

In the article in Computer World Philippines, the writer suggested to incorporate social media in to the web design and strategy in order to engage and convert visitors to as website, companies and organization should design in ways that complement the social media user experience and vice versa. Additionally, Baltzan & Philips [14] and Carraig [15] supported that web services must contain repertoire of web-based data and procedural resources that used protocols and standards permitting different application to share data and services that are used to transmit and process information on and across a network.

With a weighted mean of 3.31, rank fourth viewed as functional, Facebook provides unlimited resources for anyone with ease, most students and individuals nowadays have Facebook account so that it wouldn't be so hard to someone, based on statistics 968 million daily active users on average for June 2015, 844 million mobile daily active users on average for June 2015, 1.49 billion monthly active users as of June 30, 2015, 1.31 billion mobile monthly active users as of June 30, 2015. The least item with a weighted mean of 3.16 states that the website is relevant or addresses the needs of the students.

Table 4. Effectiveness of Facebook as Social Networking Site in terms of Accuracy

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Provides specific information to someone you want to know	3.29	Effective	4
2. Can validate different posts from different people	3.21	Effective	5
3. Provides an updated news from different groups and pages	3.51	Very Effective	1
4. Students can collaborate with their teachers/friends regarding a specific assignment/projects to make it error-free	3.33	Effective	2
5. Student profiles showing name and portrait	3.31	Effective	3
Composite Mean	3.32	Effective	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very Effective; 2.50 – 3.49 = Effective; 1.50 – 2.49 = Less Effective; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not Effective

Table 4 displays the Effectiveness of Facebook as a Social Networking Site in terms of Accuracy having the composite mean of 3.32; all the items yield high

scores ranging from 3.21 – 3.51 and interpreted as “Effective”. In terms of accuracy, Facebook provides updated news from different groups and pages, with the highest rank, a weighted mean of 3.51 interpreted as “Very Effective”. Facebook pages were very helpful in giving and disseminating of information. Based on the study of the researchers, most students have their own Facebook account. It is followed by the thought that students can collaborate with their teachers/friend regarding a specific assignment/projects to make it error-free having a weighted mean of 3.33.

From the very start, the usefulness of Facebook is noticeable in studies, in using Facebook accurateness of ideas and information needed could be collaborated to make a project /homework or school works an error-free. However, the lowest three in rank but is interpreted as “Observed” having a weighted mean of 3.31, 3.29 and 3.21 are having priorities and targets in someone's corresponding profile that is readily available when one visits a profile in Facebook where one may able to see his/her personal profile (Name, Nick Name, Age, Gender and etc.)

In terms of the accuracy of the results, as mentioned in ThirdPower.Net Regardless of the field of study or preference for defining data (quantitative, qualitative), accurate data collection is essential to maintaining the integrity of research. Both the selection of appropriate data collection instruments (existing, modified, or newly developed) and clearly delineated instructions for their correct use reduce the likelihood of errors occurring.

Table 5. Difference of Responses on the Effectiveness of Facebook as Social Networking Site When Grouped According to Profile

	Profile Variables	F-value	p-value
Reliability	Age	3.473	0.033
	Sex	1.036	0.301
Functionality	Age	0.067	0.936
	Sex	1.656	0.099
Accuracy	Age	0.800	0.451
	Sex	1.669	0.097

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

Table 5 reveals that there is a significant difference observed on the effectiveness of using facebook as a social networking site in terms of reliability when grouped according to the age of the respondents. This was observed since the obtained p-values of 0.033 is less than 0.05 alpha level.

This means that 16 to 18 years old have different view compared to those who are 19 to 21 years old using scheffe method. On the other hand, variables do not show significant difference and indicate that the respondents' have the same level of observation.

Table 6. Problems Encountered in Using Facebook as Social Networking Site

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Can't access the website in school	3.31	Sometimes	2
2. Lack of technology availability	3.04	Sometimes	6
3. The Facebook is blocked based on the University Internet Policy	2.98	Sometimes	8
4. Facebook application were not supported if using smart phones or tablets the	2.83	Sometimes	9
5. Mobile data were slow	3.55	Frequent	1
6. 3g or lte connection weren't available	3.15	Sometimes	4
7. Limited time available to socialize	3.20	Sometimes	3
8. Security Problem	3.08	Sometimes	5
9. Inability to access account for whatever reason	2.99	Sometimes	7
10. Lack of Internet connection at home	2.63	Sometimes	10
11. Parents/guardians don't allow students to socialize	1.85	Seldom	11
Composite Mean	2.96	Sometimes	

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Always; 3.50 – 4.49 = Frequent; 2.50 – 3.49 = Sometimes; 1.50 – 2.49 = Seldom; 1.00 - .149 = Never

Table 6 presents the problems encountered in using Facebook as social networking site. In the usage of Facebook as a whole, there were problems encountered as obtained by the composite mean value of 2.96 sometimes. Among the problems mentioned, most of the respondents agreed that most of the tie mobile data were slow with a highest weighted mean of 3.55 and interpreted as “Frequently encountered”, Mobile data refers to mobile devices accessing the Internet via a cellular system. (Dictionary.com) it is most likely the same weighted mean 3.15 or the 3g or lte connection weren't available and is interpreted as “Sometimes”.

Further, Nielsen [16] an Engineer at Sun Microsystem, affirmed that website speed and page

load times are so important to the online reader. Response times are a matter of user experience. The reasons behind delays do not matter to the user. A website that is responsive and fast-loading makes the user feel empowered and in-control, whereas long page loading time makes reader impatient, and frustrated. Response times are relevant as ever because responsiveness is a basic user interface design rule that is dictated by human needs, not by individual technologies. Followed by not being able to access the website (Facebook) in school with a weighted mean of 3.31 and interpreted as “Sometimes”, most of the time Social Networking Sites including Facebook were prohibited in the school grounds and Wi – Fi internet policy and because of that students failed to connect into the website, this problem is the same of the weighted mean 2.98, the Facebook is sometimes conforming blocked the University-Internet Policy.

The third problem with a weighted mean of 3.20 and interpreted as “Sometimes”, there is limited time available to socialize, most students were busy in their school and some of their hobbies based on the table of the problems encountered. With a weighted mean 1.85, parents seldom not allow their children to socialize, the least item. The researches could say that most students are allowed to use Facebook to socialize.

Lack of technology availability is the sixth “sometimes” experienced problem having a weighted mean of 3.04 Based on table 3, the researchers could say that there is a time when the students want to use Facebook but their phone isn't supported by the application or they don't have their tablets or computers with them; This is also the 9th problem encountered by the respondents with a weighted mean of 2.83 and interpreted as “Sometimes”.. Based on table 2.3, sometimes there is a problem in accessing account or the so-called “bug” in to the website this is a problem that even researchers also encountered.

Some of us students don't have an internet connection at home, and this is the 10th problem encountered based on the respondents with a weighted mean of 2.63 and interpreted as “Sometimes”.

Based on the study of Rojas [17], few empirical examples exist of how colleges and universities have used Facebook for improving their services and operations. Few studies have provided specific examples on how Facebook has helped students and none on the student perspective of how Facebook can be used to enhance their learning. Given the prominence of Facebook in young people's lives, more

empirical studies are warranted about whether Facebook offers an outlet for simply social interaction.

CONCLUSIONS

The users of Facebook in the campus are mostly female with an age range of 16 to 18 years old. The use of Facebook as a social networking site is effective. Restriction of browsing social networking sites including Facebook in the school, slow mobile data were the common problems encountered. The effectiveness of Facebook as a social networking site in terms of reliability varies according to age.

Internet Server Providers and Management Information System Department may improve the internet connectivity of mobile data. Facebook website offers a lot of reliable information, so students may be allowed to explore the website. There is a need to improve the bandwidth of internet connectivity through mobile data. The Management information system department may give an exemption for blocking facebook. Future researchers may do similar studies on other variables like online behavior, data privacy, responsible use of social media.

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