



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FEATURES AND FUNCTIONALITIES OF FACEBOOK AS A SOCIAL NETWORK SITE

ARVIN BUNCAD ALONZO, DIT Faculty Member College of Business, Entrepreneurship and Accountancy Cagayan State University, Andrews Campus Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, Philippines 3500

ABSTRACT: *The Internet has revolutionized the world. From “word of mouth” communication to sending letters via snail mail, then now the fastest and best mode of communication – the Internet. Today, vast array of Internet services are available such as the world-wide web, electronic mail, information retrieval, file transfer, social media and many more. In the year 2004, when a young man created TheFacebook which was primarily use as a social media for the Harvard University students, now, Facebook became a popular social networking site. Today, millions of users know about Facebook. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the level of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook as a Social Networking Site among first year students of the College of Business, Entrepreneurship and Accountancy of Cagayan State University Andrews Campus. A survey questionnaire was used to gather data. Weighted mean was used to determine the of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook while Frequency and percentage distribution was used to determine if respondents have Facebook account, their frequency of visit and if Facebook is recommended to support on-site learning. The analysis of data was carried out using MS Excel application. The findings of the study showed that almost all features and functionalities of Facebook are important to the respondents except one. Also, it revealed that all respondents use Facebook and majority open their Facebook account daily. Lastly, almost all respondents recommend Facebook to be used by teachers or professors to support on-site learning.*

KEYWORDS: *Internet, Social Media, Social Network Site, Facebook*

INTRODUCTION

Information Technology has a great contribution and influence on the lives of most individuals nowadays. From the stone age where long distance communication was difficult and slow to the present age – the ICT age where communication is very easy and fast. It



actually transformed lives of humankind from a primitive way to a fast-changing world where most of what people do is with the aid of computers and the Internet.

With Internet, it has made communication so fast and quick. One of the services of Internet which is Social Networking sites, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc. made communication even better and more interactive. These social networking sites have affected the way people communicate, behave and react to situations.

Among these social networking sites, Facebook is one the most commonly used and even most abused since millions of users have an account to it. Perhaps this is due to the reason that Facebook has been included as one of the applications available on smart phones. Facebook being at the forefront of the social media craze, has over 500 million active users on its website every month. It emerged on February 4, 2004, when a 19-year-old sophomore Harvard student named Mark Zuckerberg founded the revolutionary site to connect Harvard University students (Grossman, 2010). Today, Facebook is the most common social media website, perhaps because of the many functions and features such as posting messages on walls, reading notifications, creating and joining a group or page, playing games on-line, to name a few.

With Facebook, it is a great way to keep in touch with family members and friends that live far away. With instant messaging and even video chat, Facebook is the perfect place to stay connected. With the status updates, photos, and profile information, it can keep you up to date on the happenings of the people you are connected with. By making new friends, Facebook creates the possibility of meeting new people extremely easy due to the feature that it allows you to add up to thousands of friends, and acts as a social melting pot of the internet. If you comment on someone's picture then someone else but at the same time you gotta know when to stop using it and do the most important things (Shaulis, 2011).

With all of these, this research will assess its importance among first year students of the College of Business Entrepreneurship & Accountancy of the Cagayan State University, a state university that offers free tuition from all walks of life, whether, rich or poor, "techy" or not. The study is focused only among first year students since most of them come from areas where Internet connection is slow or not even present.



The Online Social Networks

Today, the digital technology is a big contributor to people's lives and the society in general. In almost all fields or areas of our society, computer and the Internet contributes to efficiency and productivity of people. Before, Information Technology and Communications Technology were two separate entities, it came to a point that it merged in order to provide better services; that is why computers nowadays are not only for data processing but also for communication.

The Social Media and the Social Networking Sites.

Social media is a form of computer mediated communication that runs through Web technology. Web 2.0 facilitate the creation and up gradation of online social network sites in digital environment (Kashif, 2013). The social media impacted the lives of most individuals. The creation of web logs(blogs) that allow people to post and react, social networking sites that allow people to create account and be connected to people, content communities that allow upload and download of information, and discussion boards and newsgroups that allow members to react to issues and share information were among the products of social media.

Social media have rapidly gained share and attention among all kinds of consumers and companies, often at the expense of traditional media. Recognizing this, companies have started to redefine key aspects of their marketing mix. With advertising and online word of mouth competing for shrinking marketing budgets, many companies regard having an active presence in social media as a viable alternative to traditional advertising (Armellini & Villanueva, 2011). Now, Social Networking Sites have invaded almost all people. As if you don't belong to the society if you don't have an account to any of the social networking sites or visited any social media site. In fact, today, the world of the young is the social networking site and the word of the young are words in Facebook, You tube, Twitter, Instagram, Wikis, etc. such as *like, post, accept, upload, notification, page, group, comment, share, and many more*. It was Friendster that became the first popular social networking site created but it was down when Facebook became worldwide.

The importance of social media and social networking site permeated almost all aspect of the society. In Education, over the past decade, communication methods have changed



significantly, with Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and many other platforms it has become the easiest and the fastest way of connecting.

THE FACEBOOK

In February 2004 an undergraduate student of Harvard University Mark Elliot Zuckerberg launched 'The Facebook' network site for the student of the university. Only within 24 hours, around 1,200 Harvard University students had got membership and signed up. In 2005 the new name has been purchased and it became from TheFacebook.com to Facebook.com. At that time, membership to the website was limited to Harvard and all almost all US universities students. In time for the fall semester of 2006, Facebook began accepting membership of anyone over the age of 13 around the world (Grossman, 2010).

Today, Facebook has millions of users, in the Philippines alone; millions of people have a Facebook account. Even the young age created their own accounts, perhaps this is one of the reasons why Philippines is called the "Facebook" capital of the world. If you come to browse the Facebook, really, the young age has invaded this site.

With the popularity of Facebook as a social network site and with its many features and functions, this research was conceptualized just to assess the importance of features and functions of Facebook among the First Year students in a state university located in a province of the Philippines.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aimed to assess the level of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook as Social Network Site.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

1. What is number of respondents with Facebook account?
2. How frequent the respondents use their Facebook account?
3. What is the level of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook?
4. What is the respondents' perception of utilizing Facebook for communication between the instructor and classmates?
5. Are the respondents recommending the use of Facebook to support onsite learning

METHODOLOGY



This study used descriptive – quantitative research design to assess the Level of Importance of the Features and Functionalities of Facebook as a Social Network Site of the respondents. The respondents are the First year students of the College of Business, Entrepreneurship & Accountancy of Cagayan State University Andrews Campus for the School Year 2015-2016. A Survey questionnaire was the instrument used to gather data to uncover this study. In the questionnaire, a 3-point Likert’s scale was used to assess the level of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook. Random sampling technique was used to select the 273 sample size. The respondents are first year students enrolled during the second semester, school year 2015-2016.

For the statistical treatment, a weighted mean was used to evaluate the level of importance of the features and functionalities of Facebook as a social networking site while frequency and percentage distribution was used to check if respondents have Facebook account, frequency of visit to their account, and if respondents recommend Facebook as a tool to support onsite learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Number of Respondents with Facebook Account

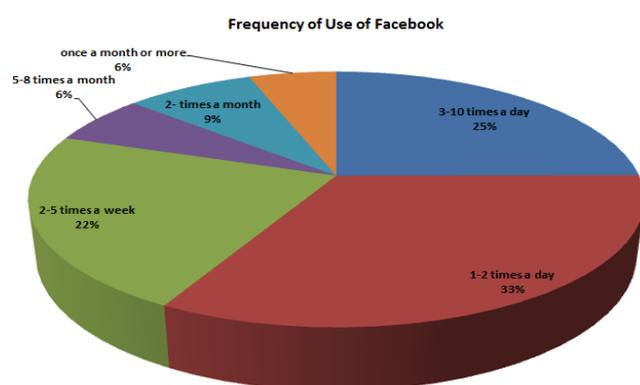
ITEM	F	%age
YES	273	100
NO	0	0
	273	100

Facebook has really captured the attention of all university students. Table 1 shows that out of 273 respondents, 100% of them have a Facebook account.

Table 2 - Frequency of Use of Facebook

ITEM	F	%
3-10 times a day	68	24.91
1-2 times a day	90	32.97
2-5 times a week	61	22.34
5-8 times a month	17	6.227
2-4 times a month	22	8.059
once a month or lesser	15	5.495
	273	100

Figure 1 - Frequency of Use of Facebook





The table and chart shows that among the two hundred seventy-three (273) it shows that 90 or 32.97% and 68 or 24.91% use their Facebook 1-2 times a day and 3-10 times a day, respectively. This means that more than fifty-five percent (57%) of them use, or perhaps visit, their Facebook account daily. While, 61 or 22.34% use Facebook at least 2-5 times a week, 17 respondents or 6.227% open their Facebook account 5-8 times a month, 22 respondents or 8.059 use Facebook 2-4 times a month and only 15 or 5.495% use their Facebook account once a month or lesser. The chart clearly shows that the largest part of the respondents open their Facebook account 1-2 times a day, followed by 3-10 times a day. This clearly manifests that Facebook as a social networking site is very common and popular among students.

Table 3: The Level of Importance of the Features and Functionalities of Facebook according to the Respondents

Items	Wt. Mean	Interpretation
a) Posting messages on the wall	1.769	Important
b) Viewing and reading posts on News Feed	2.557	Very Important
c) Liking status and whatever posted on News Feed	2.018	Important
d) Writing a Comment on posted status (photos and messages) on the wall	1.93	Important
e) Joining groups for discussion and being updated on issues of members of the group	1.828	Important
f) Searching (or finding) friends	2.048	Important
g) Accepting friends request	2.158	Important
h) Monitoring and reading notifications	2.549	Very Important
i) Joining or looking for a Facebook Page to get updates	1.938	Important
j) Playing games available on Facebook	1.344	Not Important
k) Updating and viewing my timeline and timeline of others	1.952	Important
l) Reading Advertisements	1.81	Important
m) Creating, writing, monitoring and updating My Events	1.681	Important
n) Chatting with friends online (either using text, call or video)	2.304	Important
o) Greeting friends on their birthdays	2.187	Important
	2.005	Important

Facebook offers a lot of features and functionalities. Facebook actually is a website where many of the Internet services are put into one. Table 3 shows the level of importance of the different features and functionalities of Facebook based on the perceived experience of the respondents. In the table, it revealed that the most important for respondents are: *Viewing*



and **reading posts on News Feed** and **Monitoring and reading notifications** with a weighted mean of 2.557 and 2.549 respectively while **Playing games available on Facebook** is appeared to be *Not Important* to students with a weighted mean of 1.344. This shows that not all students play the online games available on Facebook and it's not one of the features or functionality that they prioritize. The table also revealed that others features and functionalities of Facebook are just important. Below are the features and functionalities of Facebook that seemed important to the respondents, presented in order: a) **Chatting with friends online (either using text, call or video)**, b) **Greeting friends on their birthdays**, c) **Accepting friends request**, d) **Searching (or finding) friends**, e) **Liking status and whatever posted on News Feed**, f) **Updating and viewing my timeline and timeline of others**, g) **Joining or looking for a Facebook Page to get updates**, h) **Writing a Comment on posted status (photos and messages) on the wall**, i) **Joining groups for discussion and being updated on issues of members of the group**, j) **Reading Advertisements**, k) **Posting messages on the wall**, and l) **Creating, writing, monitoring and updating My Events** with their corresponding weighted mean of 2.304, 2.187, 2.158, 2.048, 2.018, 1.952, 1.93, 1.828, 1.81, 1.769 and 1.681, respectively.

Table 4: Level of Perception of the Respondents on Utilizing Facebook for Communication between the Instructor and Classmates

	Wt. Mean	Interpretation
With the instructor	2.89	Strongly Agree
With Classmates	2.67	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	2.78	Strongly Agree

Table 4 shows that the respondents strongly agree on the utilization of Facebook for communication between the instructor and classmates with a weighted mean of 2.89 and 2.67 respectively. The overall mean clearly manifest that Facebook is strongly suggested as a means of communication between the teacher and classmates.



Table 5

Distribution of Respondents' Response of Using Facebook to Support Onsite Learning

Response	F	%
Yes	211	77.289
No	57	20.879
No Answer	5	1.832
Total	273	100

Figure 2

Chart Showing the Respondents' Response of Using Facebook to Support Onsite Learning

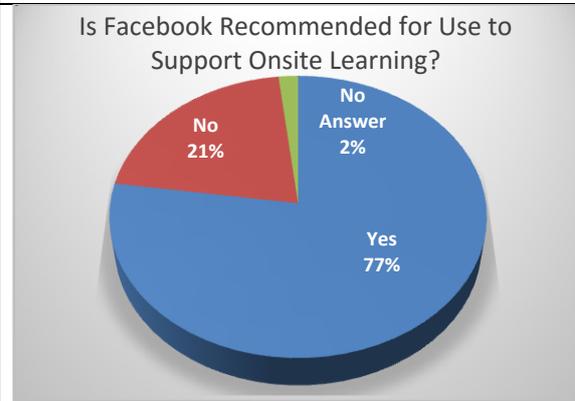


Table 5 shows the response of the respondents whether or not Facebook will be used to utilized to support onsite learning. As revealed in the table, 211 out 273 or 77.289% respondents answer Yes, which mean that they recommend the use of Facebook to support onsite learning. On the other hand, only 57 or 20.879% doesn't support the idea of using Facebook to support onsite learning while 5 or 1.832 are uncertain because they did give an answer.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. On the number of Respondents with Facebook account. Out of 273 respondents, 100 per cent of them have a Facebook account.
2. On the frequency of use of Facebook. Out the 273 respondents, 90 or 32.97% use Facebook 1-2 times a day, 68 or 24.91% frequent Facebook 3-10 times a day, 61 or 22.34% open their Facebook account 2-5 times a week, only 22 or 8.059% use their Facebook account 2-4 times a month, 17 or 6.227% use Facebook 5-8 times a month and only 15 or 5.495% open their Facebook account once a month or lesser. There are more than 57% of the respondents use their Facebook account daily while less than 14 % use it 2-8 times a month. This implies that the most of the respondents use their Facebook account more often.
3. On the level of important of the Features of Facebook. The features that appeared very important to the respondents are: a) *Viewing and reading posts on News Feed*



Monitoring and reading **notifications** and b) *Monitoring and reading notifications* with a weighted mean of 2.557 and 2.549, respectively. The only feature that is not important to the respondents is **Playing games available on Facebook** with a weighted mean of 1.344. The other features and functionalities of Facebook appeared to be important only to the respondents.

4. On the level of Perception of the Respondents on Utilizing Facebook for Communication

between the Instructor and Classmates. The respondents strongly agree on the utilization of Facebook for communication between the instructor and classmates with a weighted mean of 2.89 and 2.67 respectively. The overall mean, which is 2.78, clearly manifests that Facebook is strongly suggested as a means of communication between the teacher and classmates.

5. On whether or not Facebook is recommended to support to onsite (classroom) learning. Out of the 273 respondents, 211 or 77.289% recommended that instructors may use Facebook to support the onsite (classroom) learning of students while 57 or 20.879% do not like the idea to use Facebook as support to onsite (classroom) learning. Five (5) or 1.83% of the respondents was undecided.

CONCLUSIONS

Social network sites specifically Facebook is widely used by people in almost all walks of life. Facebook is used by millions of people especially among the young generation. In the result of the study, all the 273 respondents have a Facebook account and more than fifty-seven percent (57%) of them use Facebook every day.

Based on the findings, it revealed that the two most important feature and function of Facebook is on *viewing and reading posts on News Feed* and *monitoring and reading notifications* while the other features and functions still appear to be important except one which is *Playing games available on Facebook*. The top features and functions that appear to be very important to the respondents is good manifestation that Facebook is a good means of communication and a tool to support onsite (classroom) learning since most of the respondents' view and read post on news feed and monitor and read notifications.



RECOMMENDATION

Based on the summary of findings and conclusions, the following are recommend:

- a. The Facebook can be used as communication tool between students and teachers;
- b. Teachers or professors may use Facebook to support on-site (classroom) learning since all respondents have a Facebook account and that most of them frequent their account daily.
- c. Teachers or professors can maximize the features and functionalities of Facebook to enhance learning and support learning.
- d. Further study on Facebook should be done such as looking into the advantages and disadvantages of Facebook and how Facebook contribute to the lives of individuals especially in areas of social, emotional, educational, personal, financial and spiritual.

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