

## **A Study to Explore the Views of Students Regarding Facebook as an Instructional Tool at University Level**

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### **Abstract**

In this era of science and technology, e-learning can be helpful for masses in providing them access to education. This study involved students of 6<sup>th</sup> semester enrolled in a Bachelor of Computer Science Program and master degree programs at university level. The purpose of the study was to explore the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool. Intact class of 24 students was selected from Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) and 17 students from 3 different programs of University of the Punjab (PU). Qualitative research approach was used to get understanding of multiple meaning. The views of students were explored through focus group discussions and their teachers were interviewed also. These discussions and interview data were audio recorded. Data were transcribed, generated nodes and then coded in NVivo 10 software accordingly. Themes were generated and presented in graphs and tables. Findings were very interesting which provided sufficient evidence that Facebook is prospective source of learning. It is flexible in use and not time specific, therefore, feasible for students who work day time and can access to the material when they get free time. In short, Facebook is a potential learning source for every individual who have access to online sources living at any part of the globe.

**Keywords:** Facebook, instructional tool, higher education

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## **Introduction**

The opening of internet in early 1960s shortly attracted professionals' through effective and efficient source of communication (Selwyn, 2009). This establishment introduced E-Learning as potential source in educational institutions. E-Learning may be a term means something different to almost everyone who uses it. Some assume it as web-based self-study whereas others notice that e-Learning will comprehend period learning and collaboration. Almost all agree that e-Learning is of strategic importance. It is considered as a good methodology that has to be merging into a corporation's current learning (O'Neill, Singh & O' Donoghue, 2004).

### **Social Network Sites (SNSs)**

Social networking sites can be defined as Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they can share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 211).

Boyd defines social networking sites as "a group of websites having profile, public comments on the profile, and a crossable social network expressed by public" (2006).

There are different Social networking sites (SNSs) which are playing vital role in learning. These SNSs are often used to develop or produce new options at the demand or requirement of users. Social networking is a quick source of communication which provides users option of sharing of their feelings; express themselves apart from their physical features (Tess, 2013). It is a large, computer connected network system that is used around the world to attach with each other and transfer information besides communication. It is conjointly used for entertainment, research, and academic purposes. Today, it can connect all the online computers so that individuals may exchange information from across the globe within seconds (Selwyn, 2009).

They use it for different purposes such as completing their academic assignments (46%), e-mail or instant messaging, (36%) and playing computer games (38%) (DeBell & Chapman, 2006). Social networking sites are the latest online communication sources that allow users to create a public or private profile to interact with the other people within their networks (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

Micro blogging is a relatively new phenomenon defined as “a form of blogging that lets you write brief text updates (which contains minimum 200 characters) relating to our life on the go and which we convey to friends and interested observers through text messaging, instant messaging (IM), email or the web.” Other social networking websites also used like Myspace, Twitter, Blog, LinkedIn and Facebook (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Micro-blogging>).

Social media is currently working as a powerful tool for students’ learning through these networks (Churcher, Downs & Tewksbury, 2014). The users of social network sites express themselves via on-line profile, gain friendships, and write comments or information to profiles of others or the social content. Among them, Facebook is basically an online social network site in which individual can share their personal information, photographs, and join groups or friends with one another. It has become one of the most popular social networking sites among different age groups especially, students of higher classes. Students can made groups on social network and can communicate to each other through this media site (Tiryakioglu & Erzurum, 2011).

Many social network sites has been used to communicate across the globe and sharing their ideas but Facebook has become one of the most popular social networking sites among students (Prensky, 2001). Most of the university students are aware of recent uprising social networking sites and their potential usage (Russell, Bebell, O’Dwyer & O’Connor, 2003).

### **Facebook as an Instructional Tool**

Students also used Facebook as an instructional tool. Facebook is utilized within the delivery of information, reference books, cluster assignments, and course sessions. Teachers and students send materials, locations of sites, and videos concerning courses on Facebook and shows, assignments, and different documents of the scholars that may be shared by forming links to Google documents. Facebook may be used to share materials (video files, audio files, pictures, computer programmed, presentation, database, websites etc.) effectively with follow up current events, news, people or groups (Tiryakioglu & Erzurum, 2011).

### **Interaction with peers**

Facebook may be a source to increase each teacher-student and student-student interaction in the form of web-based communication. Facebook helps teachers to connect with their students for assignments, coming events, helpful links, and samples of work outside of the classroom. Students can use Facebook to contact classmates regarding queries relating to class assignments or examinations still as they will collaborate on assignments and group projects in an online environment. Building on the face-to-face, teacher-student relationship, social networks permit students to glimpse teacher profiles containing personal information, interests, background, and friends, which may enhance student motivation, affective learning, and classroom climate (Mazer, Murphy & Simonds, 2007).

### **Interaction with faculty**

Students can also interact with their faculty members through Facebook. A lot of adults and including faculty were joining on social networking sites like Facebook. These sites provided lecturers with new opportunities to succeed in their studies and improve their learning. However, as college registrar and using Facebook, they were confronted with; however, they should interact with students on the site (Teclhaimanot & Hickman, 2009).

### **Creating a group page for a class**

Some colleges and universities have made their own pages where students can interact with the faculty members to get academic information. A separate page can be created specifically for a course. Students can virtually find other classmates through this page, learn about their classmates, and communicate with their classmates and teachers, and post/discuss relevant class information. Teachers can send an announcement to the entire group, set up and remind students about events. Students also share study material in class group page (Munoz & Towner, 2009).

On their supposition that students have open access with networking sites through smart phones and other means. Definitely student spent their excessive time on working with these sites. Among different nature of sites Facebook is an interesting option for students to use in their daily work. It is important to know that whether students are using Facebook for academic purposes or not. Owing to open access and feasible mean to use for students, there is enough chance that they may use it for their academic need. However, this study is designed to explore the views of students regarding Facebook as an instructional tool at university level.

### **Objectives and Research Questions of the Study**

The objectives of the study are: a) to explore the number of students who use Facebook as an instructional tool at university level b) to explore the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool. The research questions to get information to address these objectives were: a) how often/frequently students use Facebook? b) are students using Facebook as an instructional tool? c) How Facebook can help students for their educational purpose?

### **Methodology**

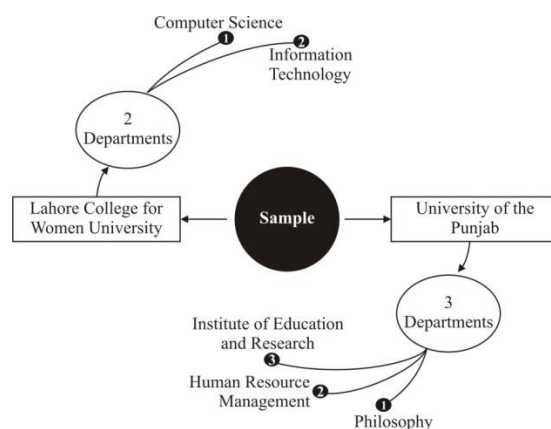
The study explored the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool. In this section we explain the procedure and methodology of the study. It includes theoretical framework, sample and sampling procedure, nature of participant, instrumentation and procedure of data collection.

Paradigm of our study is social constructivism view of learning which is based on Vygotsky (1978) theory of learning. This theory believed that knowledge was constructed through dialogue and interaction with others. It is important here to make a distinction between knowledge and learning. According to social constructivist theory, knowledge is co-constructed in the environment with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Although learning may occur through collaboration, it is still an internal mechanism within the individual (Churcher et al., 2014).

### **Sampling and Sample of the Study**

The sample was conveniently selected. Informed consent was taken and only those students were taken who were willing to participate in the study. Firstly, we selected two general universities from the province of the Punjab. Secondly, the students selected were studying at Master and Hon. program.

The participants of the study were 41 students and their 3 teachers. They were in their final semester of Master and Honors degree program and selected conveniently from two universities i.e. Lahore College for Women University (24) and University of the Punjab Lahore (17). Both of these universities were public sector universities and situated in Lahore city. One of them is women university while other one for both genders.



**Figure 1** Detailed distribution of sample

Seven focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in total in which four FGDs were conducted from Lahore College for women university (LCWU) and three FGDs from University of the Punjab (PU). From LCWU, three groups from Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) program and one group from department of Information Technology (IT) participated in this study. From PU, one group participated from each department i.e. Philosophy, Institute of Education and Research (IER) and Human Resource and Management (HRM).

We conducted seven focus group interviews in total in which 6 groups consisted of 6 participants and one of five participants. Further to this, In-depth interviews were conducted from three teachers as supplement of data that use Facebook as an instructional tool. We also used pseudonyms for students and teachers. Gender wise distribution of participants is given in the table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Gender wise and Universities wise distribution of sample*

	FGD	FGD	FGD	FGD	FGD	FGD	FGD7
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Male	6	0	0	0	0	5	0
Female	35	6	6	6	6	0	6
Total	41	6	6	6	6	5	6

(FGD1 – FGD 4 belong to LCWU) (FGD 5 – FGD 7 belong to PU)

## **Method and Procedure of Data Collection**

Qualitative research approach had potential benefits to generate an in-depth understanding about the phenomena under investigation (Hesse-Biber&Leavy, 2011). We conducted FGDs with students mainly and supporting this data with their teacher's interviews. Multiple data allowed to present rich, thick description of the process and to ensure the trustworthiness of the data.

### **Focus group discussions**

We provided flexible atmosphere to participants to share in the FGDs freely to express their views on the topic. They could easily interact with each other. We also asked some probing questions to clearly understand their opinions. We also followed professional ethics during data collection. We asked them that they could leave at any time during participation if they feel uncomfortable. We assured them that their identity would not be disclosed to anyone. We assigned pseudo name to all participants. Through this protocol we recorded and noted down how the students explain and share their ideas on Facebook and use this social site as an instructional tool.

In each FGD students from same program were included. Researcher introduced them topic of the research and its importance and then started the discussion. Initially, discussion started in slow pace but later on an extensive sharing was produced by the members of focus group. At the end, some probing questions were generally asked to explore real information or to clarify earlier statements or responses of the participants (Masadeh, 2012).

### **In-depth interview**

We developed interview protocol which was outlined by extensive review of literature. We sought permission from head of departments (HODs) for the study in their departments through a letter given by the university. We ensured to the relevant departments that all the data will remain confidential and not damage the reputation of the department. We asked participants to sign a consent letter. We interviewed only those teachers who were willing to participate in the study. The questions of interview protocol were to explore the views of participants about using Facebook as an instructional tool.

In-depth interview was a qualitative research technique. Unlike focus group discussions, in-depth interviews were conducted on individual basis. The purpose of interview was to explore teachers' point of view being partner of learning process of students which enable us to explore facts about Facebook as an instructional tool (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

### **Development of Instruments**

Two instruments were used to collect data for the study.

1. Open ended questions were asked in FGDs followed by probing questions to know the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool.
2. A separate interview protocol was developed to know the views of teachers about Facebook as an instructional tool.

These instruments were developed by extensive review based on factors contributing from Vygotsky (1978) theory of learning. We developed nine open ended questions to explore the views of students because purpose of the study is exploration not verification. For example, assisted learning, cooperative or scaffolding are the main factor. These factors also helped to develop interview protocol. Many meetings were arranged to discuss the interview protocol with researchers working in this field. The instruments were also shared with peers and in the light of their comments instruments were improved.

### **Data Analysis**

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of results, it is important to understand that qualitative analysis does not proceed in a systematic fashion there is no one right way which to go about analysis. We began by transcribing our data, establishing codes then interpreting the findings (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The NVivo 10 software was used to develop themes and then coding into these themes.

### **Transcription of Data**

The process of transcription of data was done in tow steps. Firstly, we listened the audio recordings of FGDs and interviews and then write the whole conversation word by word manually on papers.



### **Preparation of Transcribed Data**

The transcribed data of Teacher's interview and student's FGDs were typed. To address any discrepancy, data files were read and matched with the manual files. The typographical, grammatical, spelling and any other mistakes were rectified.

### **Coding**

The data was coded initially to examine, compare and find similarities and differences in it. Simple queries were run to have insight of the data. After organizing the data, themes were generated to reduce it. Data was coded in the software NVivo 10 for further analysis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The ethics in qualitative research ensure the rights and interests of participants who take part in a research study which should be well-protected (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Researchers observed ethical guidelines by providing information letters to the participants and seeking their informed consent. It was repeatedly assured them that the identities and information provided by you would remain completely confidential. It was further reminded them on multiple occasions that their participation is voluntary and they can refuse to participate in this study at any time during the focus group interview without any obligation.

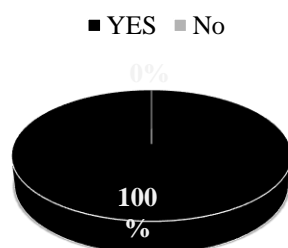
### **Results**

This study intended to investigate the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool at university level. There are two types of data like students FGDs and teachers' interview. This part deals with analysis and interpretation based on focus group discussions. The other part is comprised of interpretation of teachers' interview. The data is analyzed through NVivo 10 software and some extracts are given in the tables. But it is important to note that text quoted as examples in the table is in Urdu language and written in Roman English. The interpretation is not solely based on examples given in the tables but covers overall domain of the discussion raised by the respondents.

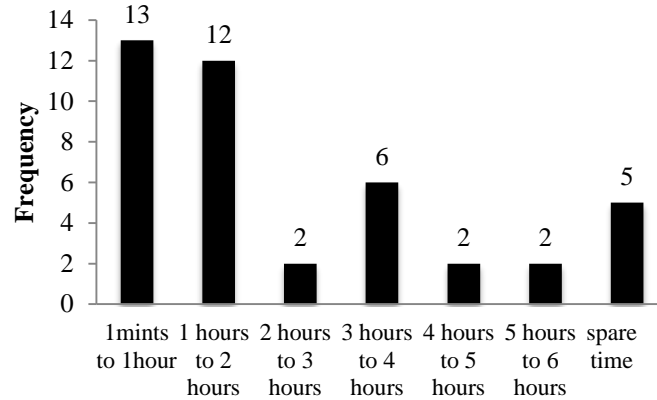
### **Analysis of Students' Interview**

For this study, open coding was used for student interviews with the help of NVivo 10 software. It significantly facilitated the process of organizing; re-arranging and managing the considerable amount of data. Following the questions of FGDs nodes were developed in the software. By seeing into data through queries, pattern of data codes were made in the software. At the end of this coding exercise, sheets were generated having categories and codes. The list of codes was revised continuously as more interviews were coded. The codes were modified and verified by applying them on further interview transcripts.

Figure 2 shows that all participants of the study have account on facebook. Students use facebook frequently. As it is used for different means, like for study, entertainment and socialization. It is important to know further that how much time students spent on facebook on daily basis. It is important whether facebook is being used for academic purpose by the students or just for enjoyment. Data shows level of use of facebook which is evident in figure 3.



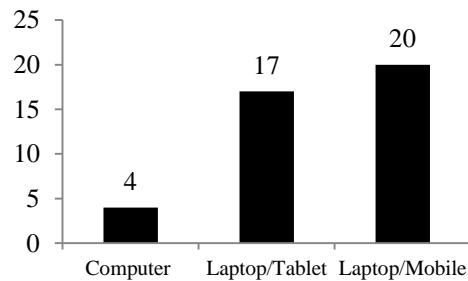
**Figure 2** Use of Facebook



**Figure 3** Time spent on Facebook

The students who participated in this study reported that they use facebook from ten minutes to Six hours during their spare time. Graph showed different time intervals when students used facebook.

A reasonable number (32%) of students spent (1 min – 1 hour) time on facebook, while 29% stay on facebook for (1 hour/ 2 hour) on daily basis. The range of facebook use by remaining 39% is (2 – 6 hours) or beyond. But small number of students lies across this range of time. Few students frequently use facebook whenever they have spare time. It is evident from data that majority of students use facebook for 1 – 2 hours time on daily basis. It can be inferred from this result that all the students spent reasonable time on facebook on daily basis but there is need to explore the mean and purpose of using facebook to get answer of the questions of the study.



**Figure 4** Medium of using Facebook

The students frequently use Facebook due to easy internet access on mobile phones. The students also revealed that they not only use Facebook on their mobile phones, but also use it on their laptops or Computers. Mostly students login facebook on their laptops while working on their assignments or Projects, which is clearly evident in the graph. These days it is very easy to shift or get help of e-sources in teaching learning process as all students studying at university level have frequent and easy access to internet.

**Table 2**  
*Nature of Use of Facebook by University Students*

Sr.#	Statement	Response	Type of Group	%	Examples
1.	Are you member of any educational group?	Yes (100%)	Open	65	Yes, main boht sari studies group main add hoon. jisy CSS MCQs walyhoongy. Virtual University kyhoongy. Iistarah main nykaye educational group add kiyehuyhain.  G class katouhai ii sky ilawa educational corner aik group hai aur learn to English, calculation group
			Close	35	“ . . . g hamara close group hai class ka jaisa ky pehly bata yai is main hum class fellow sy interact karny ky liye banaya hai aur is main hum study ky sath sath class ki activity bhi share karty hain”  “ . . . G hamara class ka group hai iis main hamara CR teacher sy notes lykar share karta hai aur hum download kar laity hain. Is ky ilawa koi breaking news ho tou bhi is sky zariy esy asani sy communicate ho jati hai

Table 2 shows nature of using facebook by university students exploring information given in figure 2. All the participants are member of some groups in facebook. These groups are of two types; open group and close group. Majority of students (65%) are member of open group while 35% are member of close group. Actually when student get enrolled in the university, they are not aware of such groups and other online activities going on the campuses. Through old students and teachers student become aware of different online resources and functionaries active on the campus. Initially, students are hesitant to join these groups but later on join

these due to their benefits in their daily academic matters. These groups help students in general getting assistance in different activities.

The open group provides a platform for its members to discuss their requirements. Students' comments show that they joined groups like "BSCS study Corner", "LCW IT" and "MCQs". Moreover, students are members of open groups like CSS corner, educational corner, learn to English and calculation groups. Likewise, there are varieties of open groups in the universities to whom students join and get benefits according to their interests. These groups are general in nature which provides assistance to the students according to their targets. It can be inferred from the number of students joining open groups that students have more tendencies towards open groups which is quite natural.

Closed groups connect students in particular course material and to get extra support from each other. It helps students in a course and provides related material to the curriculum. Students share their material like assignments, slides and link of different websites. Students want that their questions to be answered through this group, they put their queries on the page and get help from others on the platform of this group. They join their class group on Facebook to answer each other questions, exchange essays and plan discussions. Student's comments revealed that Educational group on Facebook help them to receive different types of information and complete their assignments and projects. Alternative social networking platforms in education now allow students to look up assignments or quizzes set by their teachers Unlike Facebook, some of these sites are spelling sensitive and students cannot post on each other's pages. Teachers also upload attachments for the assignments. This type of groups of all subjects is not active at the same level but varies according to the nature of the subject and interest of the teacher. The trend seems to be evident that groups based on subjects are more discussion-based and productive.

**Table 3**  
*Range of Use of Facebook by University Students*

Sr.#	Purpose of Using Facebook	Means of Usage	Evidence of Students from FGDs
1.	General use of facebook by university students	Entertainment	“... Sometime entertainment ky liye sometimes time pass karny ky liye, sometime information lainy ky liye”
		Checking Notification	“... group main notification check karny ky liye ky assignment ki date mili hai kynahi. Page ki admin hoon tou post check karny ky liye”
		Interaction with friends relatives	“... main facebook koapny friends aur relative sy interact karny chill karny aur apny business ko promote karny ky liye use karta hoon. Iisky ilawa study main bhi help milti hai”
2.	Academic use of facebook by university students	Study	“... Main study purpose ky liye is ko use karti hoon. aur is kyilawa friends sy baat cheet karny ky liye”
		Assignments	“... Yes, hum study sy related discussion karty hain. Assignment ky bary main puch liya ky kia highlight points huy thy. Agar kisi ny assignment bana li hai tou wo upload kar daity hain ky agy further hum bhi bana lain. Yehi discussion hoti hai”
		Exams	“... Group main study sy related discussion hoti hai. Exams aagy hain. Agar kisi ky paas kuch missing hai tou wo us ko bata daita hai aur agar koi point kisi ko clear nahi hai. kisi lectures sy related tou hum links waghaira kar daity hain”

The most popular website having 100% membership of university students it is important to further explore the purpose of using facebook by students at campuses. Mainly it is divided into two sections; general usage and academic usage. In general, students use facebook for social interaction to get entertainment. Being online social media it has become a wide source of communication. Students can interact with their friends and family members through Facebook. Although, several studies have illustrated that students with more engagement in Facebook are more likely to get academic success but only using facebook for academic purposes. It can directly be beneficial towards academic performance and the other uses are more likely to have negative impact on their academic performance.

Students use Facebook for different study point of views like assignments, projects, slides and exams. They receive different kind of information and enhance their knowledge. They help their classmates during exams, if any students ask any question related to paper. They also help their classmate to share their specific knowledge about assignments and projects. They students also participated in other class activities. They also arrange functions and Parties on facebook in an online conversation. Overall, the university students who participated in this study claimed that they do assignments in groups through Facebook. They also use Facebook to complete their assignments and receive information.

**Table 4***Interaction of University Students with their teachers on Facebook*

Sr.#	Statement	Response	Frequency (Percentage)	Examples from transcribed data
1	Do you have interaction with your teacher on facebook?	Yes	33(80.48)	G, bilkul hum teachers kysath interact kartyhain. Facebook yeh jab bhi hum ny koi question karna ho tou teachers answer kardaityhain
		No	8(19.51)	I have no interact with my teachers on facebook, no kabhizaruraatmehsoosnahihuijocheezpuch ni ho class main ya office main jakarpuch laity hain.

Table 4 shows university students interaction with teachers on facebook. Majority of the students (80%) interact with teachers through facebook. There are reasonable numbers of students (20%) who do not interact with their teachers on this page. Students are agreed that they ask questions from teachers through facebook interaction and sometime for liking their posts and pictures. It is easy way to interact with their teachers through facebook. Student also reported that teachers share ppts., pdf files and notes through facebook. The respondents revealed that chat box and video calling encourages for discussion, to clear doubts. It is established that majority of the students' opinions are in favor of the statement that the stuff like, ppts., pdf files and notes are informative, comprehensive and beneficial for their academic use. The material posted on page provides us important information which facilitates us in solving our daily problems and balancing ourselves though actual fact.

Some students do not interact with their teachers. They feel that there is no need to interact with their teachers through facebook. They have opinion that if they need help then interacts with their classmates or teachers easily. But mainly they avoid interacting with their teachers. They prefer to interact with their teachers in the

class and with their mates outside of the class. But the transcribed data visibly supported that students have the opportunities to ask in the offices of their teachers what they do not understand in the class. Students consider facebook as a medium of interaction with their teachers in solving their problems but still there is less intensity towards academic issues. Mostly students are engaged of facebook for entertainment related sites instead of academic matters.

**Table 5**

*Opinion of university students regarding Facebook as an instructional tool*

Sr.#	Statement	Response	Frequency (Percentage)	Examples from transcribed data
1.	Facebook as an instructional tool	Yes	37(90.24)	g, instructional tool hai kiun ky is py hum apni friends sy different logo onsy communication karty hain aur different type ki information provide bhi karsa kty hain aur lybhi saky hain.
		No	4(9.75)	Mera nahi khayal ky facebook py study ho sakti hai iunky yeh entertainment kyliye hai.

At the end of the focus group discussion a question to know opinion of students regarding facebook as an instructional tool was asked. The students' point of view regarding this question is presented in table 6. Majority of the university students (90%) agreed that facebook can be used as an instructional tool in the teaching learning process. They consider it a potential source of information which support students in resolving their problems through facebook on daily basis. They get information from educational groups and through these groups they can take help from their senior students. However, a few students (10%) disagreed that Facebook cannot be considered as an instructional tool. They feel that Facebook is an online social networking site which is mainly used for amusement. And they revealed that Facebook features are interesting and workable as a instructional tool as well if used in that context for academic purposes.

The students' responses on question that how facebook can be used as an instructional tool is very meaningful. Almost all students are agreed that through facebook a quick and update information can be seek which is prompt and verified in nature. There is a space for discussion through which someone can give his/her argument in favor or against statement. A quote against this question given by a student is presented as a reference.



Basically, is py slides upload kardaityhainjo data hotahai. woh share karsaktyhain views ko share karsaktyhain instructions dysakthyhain kykistarahaap upload karsaktyhain.

The quote is in Urdu language which is written in Roman English to avoid loss of meaning. The student supported facebook as an instruction tool which can help them through uploading different nature of stuff on this page. A lot of information can be place on this site by different group members which can be helpful for one another. Students are of the opinion that teachers can upload slides, documents and notes on this page. They can give different instructions to the students through facebook. Facebook can provide help in making assignments, preparing projects and other academic purposes. If someone is not able to join the class at the campus can easily log in facebook and can get all relevant information regarding classroom activities and can prepare his task accordingly with the help of his peers and posted information on the page. Overall, students are clearly in favor of facebook as an instructional tool at university level as they have easy access to facebook and without bondage of time.

### **Interpretation of Teachers' Interview**

All teachers (3) are using Facebook on daily basis according to time available and their mood. They mainly use their personal computers for using Facebook with mobiles and laptops. They use mobile phones for checking notifications but for maintenance of page and groups they use their personal computers and laptops.

Teachers use Facebook frequently with range of 2-4 hours. The purpose of using Facebook is for delivery of assignments, instructions and entertainment. Mostly teachers spent more time on Facebook on weekends. They answer their students' questions and address educational queries.

Three teachers involved in the study use Facebook for posting research articles, reading and writing blogs, some posts from group and uploading of new information in the forms of articles and for self-presentation, socializing with friends, family and even some students for news and information.

**Is Face book can be used as instructional tool?**

All teachers involved in the study have opinion being teachers of multidiscipline universities that facebook have potential openings for instructions of students. As due to vast information stores on facebook shared by heaps of relevant professionals can be helpful for university students to clarify their misconceptions.

In fact Facebook plays vital role in rationalizing and molding people thinking and behavior towards information shared or being shared there. It gives very neutralize form of news and information, most of the youngsters would rather consider Facebook as reliable source and there are lots of educational pages and vast variety of information is available on Facebook. It provides an opportunity of sharing vast information in minimum time. There is no need to post papers or exams it can be done through one click. Teachers often share their notes on Facebook.

**Do you interact with your students on Face book? If “Yes”, for which purpose?**

All teachers involved in the study are agreed that they interact with their students on Facebook for educational purpose. Teachers have made a page on Facebook which includes all the students of their class. They share their lecture notes, animations regarding different techniques to solve the problems. Students can easily download all this stuff from page and can use it for their educational purpose. Teachers created a blog too for students, where they can check their assignments and comments as a whole.

**Are you member of some educational group (close/open) on Facebook? If “yes”, how does it help you in your educational activities?**

All the teachers reported that they are member of group related to their subjects. For example one of them have “chemistry for all” open group. He gives answer to different questions raised by students of different institutes. He tries to solve the queries of chemistry students of different universities and colleges, so this feature of face book helps me in my educational activities.

One teacher said that he is co-admin of some educational pages on Facebook and he interact and consult with his students there. Teachers are managing creativity and event sections of University page and as a result it gives him lot of opportunity to interact with students in knowing their ideas. One of them is a member of a close educational group. Teacher’s responsibility is to manage the activities there and it helps teachers to know the ideas of students regarding some event or activity in which they are interested. They consider it a social media site which facilitates interaction without any expenses between teachers and students.

**Have you any close group of class members on Facebook? If “Yes”, for which purpose you use class group on Facebook?**

All the teachers are agreed that they have close group of class members on Facebook. They use this group to share lectures ppt. files, animations of techniques etc. They also discuss about their subject, class and other academic issues. They even post project, assignment with due dates of submission. Any announcement and notices are also posted there for students to know about further plans for students. Overall, planning related to assignments and projects are posted on Facebook. Teacher use Facebook for discussions related to academic purpose but sometimes students discuss their issues related to their behavior and classroom discipline too. Facebook provide assistance in filling the gap between students and teachers. Students interact with students of different cultures and languages on Facebook. It provides lively interaction between student and teachers.

**Nature of discussion you made in the class group on Facebook?**

Teachers try to solve students’ problems regarding their related subjects. One teacher says that they made discussion on one topic per day. Another teacher reported that he give one hour time daily for discussion on random topics, in which they face any difficulty in understanding. Also they do some extra activities like develop arguments and establish discussion among the students about daily routine events. The discussions are related to academics, sports events, and examination and general activities going on in the universities. Some other relevant stuff especially related to students behavior and classroom discipline is discussed on Facebook.

**Discussion**

This study explored the views of students about Facebook as an instructional tool at university level. The data was collected through multiple sources that is focus group discussion and teachers interview. This discussion drawn from both sources are organized and presented around the following research questions of the study.

1. How often/frequently you use Face book?
2. Are you use Face book as an instructional tool?
3. How Facebook can help students for their educational purpose?

### **Use of Facebook by University Students**

Students and teachers agree that this social media provide great platform for academic learning. Some students spent a lot of time on Facebook like 4 to 5 hours and beyond. Teachers maintain their academic groups and pages on daily basis to communicate their students which help them in learning. All students are using Facebook for variety of purposes. They interact with peers and relatives through Facebook. It is an important source of entertainment for them. They also use it for their studies. But it is general perception that majority of students spent least time on Facebook for educational purpose. There is need to give them exposure to shift on this social media which is quick and huge source of information which can be helpful in their studies if used sensibly. Otherwise, they will lose their time and may spoil their carriers. Teachers can contribute and motivate them towards Facebook which can engage them positively on this site in a productive way. Particularly, Facebook is useful because all students and teachers are already members of this social site and have experience of using this page. But the use should be shifted towards purpose oriented tasks or activities planned by teachers in groups so that students may interact at maximum on this social site for getting information and solution of their problems. The abundant use of Facebook without check/control will be a source of wasting time of the students and consequently we could not be able to get benefit of this e-source of learning. But there is supposition that it will contribute negatively in the lives of students by damaging them physically and morally. Their family life will be disturbed badly due to wrong usage of this web site. It has capacity to capture someone completely which can be a source of success or failure of students as per their tendency to use of this site.

### **Facebook as an instructional tool**

Primarily Facebook is used to facilitate group discussion, but it is very pleasant thing about Facebook that all students are already familiar and comfortable with it. It is known software for each student being enrolled in the university. Another valuable thing addressed through this study is bifurcation of its use as a wall between academic use and the personal use of students. There are so many ways in which today's Internet based tools can play a creative, constructive role in the educational process, but Facebook is one of them which is more popular among both; students and teachers. Teacher use Facebook for assigning homework, tasks, projects, assignments and class discussions. Teachers are uploading academic tasks on Facebook which is helpful for students understanding of different concepts. It can be more effective if some initiative can be taken towards use of this social web site by the government for academic usage. Everybody at universities is acquainted with this site but divergent use which is can be more productive with little effort.

The findings produced through this study indicated that university students use Facebook as an instructional tool especially students enrolled in computer related programs. They have close groups on Facebook which frequently visited by teachers and students. They use this site for developing projects, making assignments and getting academic information from their group fellows or classmates. Teachers should also be given a common platform wherein they can share their Facebook method experiences with each other and clarify doubts on the same so that it can be used in more productive way. The day to day challenges can be addressed through sharing and using innovations being introduced on day to day basis. It can be inferred through comments of the participants that student who are member of subject groups are better in their studies as directions and inputs received through Facebook are quick and reliable as millions of people are sharing their texts and other data on this site. But there is need for its potential use through better communication to the students from side to side seminars and workshops.

#### **How Facebook can help students for their educational purpose?**

Student-teachers agreed that Facebook motivate users to comment on more posts and sharing. It is evident that a significant proportion of students are in favor of Facebook users to comment on more posts and sharing. Facebook users can create and customize their own profiles with photos, videos, and information about themselves. Friends can browse the profiles of other friends and write messages on their pages. It can provide range of activities and forum to students for discussion.

This study shows that these networks not only help students achieve higher academic success, but also build more positive relationships with their peers. It helps to discuss with the teacher any time on Facebook wall informally in case if they do not have sufficient time about their cognitive clashes. Therefore Facebook is beneficial in terms of interaction with teacher and peers. Facebook also develop productive behavior of student, anybody can provide supplementary materials about the content and makes contribution in the passage of action to fulfill the objectives of a particular course. Therefore Facebook is a mode of high value of motivation for the learner and has user friendly operation to exchange their views.

The findings of the study implicate that when Facebook is being used as a tool of learning, it has positive academic and social impacts on classroom environments. Students complete their assignments work and participate in classroom activities. Throughout in this study a majority of students' responses are in favor that they enjoy using internet and having comments by their respected teacher on this page which help them in their classroom learning. Some of these students also shared that they are able to have meaningful educational experiences with Facebook which in very influential in completing education tasks.

It is supported by the study that Facebook as a tool helpful in enhancing understanding of the students in educational subjects and contribute in students learning. It is very interesting through providing a platform to engage students for mutual sharing. It helps student-teachers to enhance their number of basics of social interaction skills and the number of elements of attitude towards use of Facebook. The study indicates that Facebook is an effective teaching strategy which is not only helpful in academic gains but also in developing the facets of the learner, which at present, is the need of the time. Implementing Facebook as an instructional tool and assessing needs demands a lot of patience and time which is not an easy task. Only with the joint efforts of educational institutes' authorities, teachers, students and parents, these goals of Facebook as a method and tool can be achieved. So it is high time that more researches be done to investigate these areas in depth. The present study is a step made in this regard. It is very small in nature and scope which can be extended to different universities and disciplines across the country.

Facebook is a prime example of an educational environment in which students can interact with their classmates as well as teachers comfortably and motivate each other towards academic success. Teacher in this study are giving assignments through this site in which students have to cover the scope of the topic according to they have already perceived knowledge which is followed and reinforced by peers through their Facebook interactions. It can be better utilize with sensitization the educational institutes through launching campaign of shifting towards e-resources.

Social networking sites can play vital role in human life. Technology is vast and continually in process and progressing on day and night basis. The teachers' perceptions and students' expectations should be matched on this site which is primary concern. However, hearing the voice of the students is essential to truly understand the depth and impact technology has on education and the future of the students. For this study we chose university students only because of supposition that may the student in colleges or schools may not have access to internet and Facebook. It is implicit through this study that social networks can play a key role in the lives of university students. In the light of potential benefits of this site the younger students should be provided access to these social networks like Facebook. Policy makers can help in this regard through providing alternate means to the students to get advantage of e-resources of this era. It will be high favor and support which will be helpful in nation building and fulfilling the dream of our government.

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