

Students' Motivations for using Facebook for Academic Purposes: Qualitative Approach

Asma Alwreikat*

Department of Library and Information Management, Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan.

Received: 29/11/2020

Revised: 8/8/2021

Accepted: 2/11/2021

Published: 30/1/2023

* Corresponding author:

wrykatasma@gmail.com

Citation Alwreikat, A. (2023).
Students' Motivations for using
Facebook for Academic Purposes:
Qualitative Approach. *Dirasat:
Human and Social Sciences*, 50(1),
99–110.
<https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v50i1.4391>



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Abstract

Social media is a tool of communication, and the number of undergraduate students using Facebook is increasing. This study aims to identify the motivations for using Facebook by LIS students in Jordanian universities. The study deployed a thematic analysis approach that best identifies motivations in this context. The data collection tool is semi-structured interviews. 40 students were interviewed. The findings revealed four themes; Facebook facilitates studying, Facebook is a source of academic information, Facebook eases involvement in university activities and it is a source of communication. The implications of this research would help higher education institutions to develop strategies for incorporating social media use within traditional learning and E-learning process. Limitations and recommendations were presented at the end of the study.

Keywords: Information behavior, social media use, Facebook, motivations, LIS students.

دراسة نوعية: دوافع استخدام الفيسبوك للأغراض الأكاديمية من قبل الطلبة

أسماء الوريكات

قسم المكتبات وإدارة المعلومات، جامعة البلقاء التطبيقية، الأردن *

ملخص

تعد وسائل الاتصال الاجتماعي أحد أهم أدوات الاتصال، وأعداد طلبة البكالوريوس الذين يستخدمون الفيسبوك بزيادة مستمر. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد الدوافع وراء استخدام الفيسبوك من قبل طلبة تخصص المكتبات والمعلومات في الجامعات الأردنية. جرى اعتماد منهج التحليل الموضوعي الذي يعد أكثر ملائمة من أساليب البحث العلمي الأخرى في تحديد الدوافع من وجهة نظر المشاركين. أداة جمع البيانات كانت المقابلات شبه المقتنة 40 طالباً جرت مقابلتهم، أظهرت النتائج أربعة عناصر توزعت تحتها دوافع الطلاب لاستخدام الفيسبوك وهي: الفيسبوك يسهل متابعة الدراسة، الفيسبوك مصدر للمعلومات الأكاديمية، الفيسبوك يساعد على الاندماج بالفعاليات الجامعية، وهي مصدر للاتصال مع الأقران و الهيئة التدريسية، تعدّ نتائج الدراسة مهمة في وضع توصيات لمؤسسات التعليم العالي لإدماج وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في العملية التعليمية بطريقة ممنهجة للفائدة منها، جرى تقديم مجموعة من المحددات والتوصيات في نهاية الدراسة.

الكلمات الدالة: السلوك المعلوماتي، استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، الفيسبوك، الدوافع، طلبة المكتبات والمعلومات.

Introduction

The use of social media is spreading all over the world, the number of social media users are increasing every year. According to Statista (2020) the number of social media users has been forecasted to reach some 3.02 billion monthly active users by 2021. Social media is defined as “a *group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content*” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010.p61). Social media is becoming one of the communication tools that keeps people up to date. Joinson (2008) mentioned possible motivations for using social media particularly Facebook “*Looking at, looking up or keeping up with people*” (p. 1027). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Social media makes use of mobile and web-based technologies in order to create highly interactive platforms through which communities and individual jointly create, discuss, share and modify user generated content.

Advancement of technology in recent years has affected the information seeking behaviour, especially in the academic environment. Information seeking behavior includes identifying information needs, identifying sources, exploring and selecting information (Al-wreikat, Rafferty, & Foster, 2015). Social media is an interactive product in the virtual environment (Wickramanayake and Jika, 2018) Undergraduate LIS students in Jordanian universities use social media, particularly Facebook as a platform to communicate for learning and studying purposes (Al-Shawabkeh et al. 2017). This research study focuses on the use of social media as one of the topics of the LIS field; that is information behavior. The study aims to explore and identify LIS students motivations when using social media particularly Facebook for educational communication purposes. Identifying motivations for using social media by students would help higher education institutions in developing strategies and plans for engaging social media in the learning process.

Problem statement

Using social media is very popular among university students. Various studies has explored its use and its pros and cons on university students academic performance (Alwreikat, Abu Zaid and Shehata, 2021; Lalith Wickramanayake 2018; Mohammad Said Ibrahim Alshuaibi 2018). According to (Alwreikat, Abu Zaid and Shehata, 2021) despite the use of e-learning platforms, students in Jordanian universities are heavily depending on social media as a tool to facilitate their studies. Therefore, it is necessary to keep abreast of these developments and to exploit them positively, in order to understand the motivations behind this heavy dependence on such tools.

Context of the study

Students have used social networking sites as a communication method to connect with other university students, exchange academic information and to facilitate studying process (Alwreikat, Abu Zaid and Shehata, 2021). Many studies have explored how social networking sites affect students’ academic performance with no conclusive results. For example, (Habes, et al., 2018) argued that spending more time using social media negatively impacting students’ academic performance and reduces the students’ ability to spend time studying. However, other studies found the use of social media has positively impacted student’s performance (González & Llopis, 2016). Alwreikat, Abu Zaid and Shehata (2021) found that students are motivated to use social media for academic purposes for the benefits they would

gain after use. Nevertheless, qualitative studies in the information behavior field that investigate motivations of using social media are lacking. This research study will add knowledge to the literature by investigating the motivations behind using social media by LIS students using thematic analysis which enables to achieve a better understanding of the motivations behind this use.

Literature review

Facebook is a social networking site with 1.69 billion monthly active users in first quarter of 2020 (Statista, 2020). Facebook has become a social phenomenon to people who have access to computers, tablets and smartphones. A social networking sites are web-based service that allows individuals to present a profile, follow other users, create a list of friends, with whom they share a connection, navigate their own list of connections, and view those made by others within the system (Aharony, 2013, Ellison et al., 2007). Students are connected online almost all the time. The acceptance, and usage of social media is rapidly growing among students. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) states that 98 percent of all college-aged students use social media.

Social Networking Sites (used interchangeably with social media) are being recognized as learning tool in recent research, such as (Ainin et al, 2015; Fasaee and Adegbilero-Iwari, 2016). Recent studies showed the potential impact of social networking sites on students learning in higher education, in light of increased capacity of mobile hardware to access such sites (Wickramanayake and Jika, 2018). Al-Shawabkeh et al. (2017) support this point and state that adoption of technology led into using it in content delivery, grade reporting and communication. Anin et al. (2015) highlighted positive association between students Facebook use and academic achievement. Nevertheless, other studies focused on the negative impact of social networking sites on the academic process (Paul et al., 2012; Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010).

The heavy use of social media by university students has led researchers to study this phenomena and it has been an attractive subject of research in the field of information and library science in the last few years (Al-Shawabkeh et al. 2017). However, few of this research were conducted in developing countries, particularly Middle East, and no studies were found on Jordan despite the heavy use of social media among students. Most studies on developing countries are with African context, but, these studies lacked the focus on effects of social media use on campus involvement.

Asiedu and Badu (2018) conducted a study on the motivations affecting students' use of social media sites in Ghanaian tertiary institutions. The study indicated the motivations for using social media by students and found that students are highly influenced by social media sites and such sites become their main medium for communication within and outside campus. Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) studied students' experiences and intentions in using social media in higher educational institutions in Nigeria, and found that social media is widely used by students, and effective use enhanced their learning skills. Fasaee and Adegbilero-Iwari (2016) investigated the academic use of social media by science students in Nigeria. The study came out with percentages of the most used social media sites by students and the barriers of less or no use of social media. Other studies focused on social media use by students in higher education, such as Alshuaibi (2018); Chizwina et al. (2017); Fujita (2017); and Hamid et al. (2017).

Studies on the use of social media sites indicated that students use these sites to chat, maintain existing friendships, find new friends, receive and share information (Wickramanayake and Jika (2018); Mustafa and Hamzah (2011)). Alt (2015) argues that the fear of missing out is a motivation of students to use social media and it is related to the motivation of students' seeking connectedness or avoiding social isolation. In the same manner, Ahn and Shin (2013) and Shao (2009) state that students use social media is significantly associated with connectedness. Luet al. (2018) added another motivation, they found that students in campus use social media for sharing and creating information content. Studies on mobile social networking sites including Facebook, such as (Hamid et al., 2017; Dabbagh and Kitsantas, 2012) state that the adoption on social media can serve as a platform to facilitate personal learning, sharing of knowledge and students engaging in educational practice. A more recent study found that students are keen to use Facebook for learning purposes and out-of-class communication (Goh et al., 2019, p118).

Methodology

The study deployed a qualitative research approach using thematic analysis. The researcher used semi-structured interviews as a qualitative research tool. The qualitative approach is thought to give an insight into motivations of using social media among university students for studying and educational communication purposes, and it enables to achieve a better understanding of the impact of using social media on students learning and educational communication. Wilson (1981, p.7) supports the use of qualitative approach, which is better used to understand information behavior that is related to motivations and needs in using social media by university students. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the research tool because they offer the opportunity for discussion and identifying of unanticipated insights. The quantitative method would not have been appropriate for this research. Quantitative approach will not be able to deeply examine the phenomenon of the research that is participants' perceptions of their motivations to Facebook use for educational and academic purposes.

The population of the study is LIS departments in two public Jordanian universities (A-Balqa Applied University, University of Jordan). They were selected on the basis of geographic location. A sample of 40 student participants from the LIS departments was interviewed to explore their motivations in using social media for educational purposes. A purposive

sampling was used as the sampling technique, by excluding first year students from the sample as they may not have enough experience in using social media for scholarly communication. The saturation was reached after interviewing 34 participants; nevertheless, the researcher continued to interview 6 more participants to confirm the results. The interviews were conducted in Jan-March 2021. The gender distribution of the sample was 27.5% males and 72.5% females, see table 1. The analysis revealed no significance difference between genders' motives and triggers in using Facebook for educational purposes.

Table 1: Sample distribution

University	Males	Females
Al-Balqa Applied university	7	19
University of Jordan	4	10

The interview questions aimed to explore triggers and motivations for using social media particularly Facebook for educational purposes, and the impact of using such media on their study and campus activities. Researchers in qualitative research that uses thematic analysis depend on data collection and analysis to develop their research questions. Nevertheless, the big question is always there before starting data collection (Yin, 2003). The main question, and sub questions of this research that were emerged after data collection and analysis are:

Main Research Question: What are the motives behind using Facebook by university students for educational purposes?

RQ1. Do LIS undergraduate students seek information on Facebook for educational purposes?

RQ2. Does the use of Facebook facilitates students' study?

RQ3. Do information gained from Facebook have academic value?

RQ4. Does using Facebook facilitate communication with academic staff?

RQ5. Does the use of Facebook affect students involvement in campus activities?

RQ6. How using Facebook contributed to enhancing learning and studying among university students?

All interviews were tape recorded after seeking consent from all participants. Interviews were then transcribed. All interviews were subjected to thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke

(2006) described thematic analysis as “*identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic*” (p. 6)

The researcher coded the data for the purpose of analysis by using NVIVO software. The researcher started by open coding at first for labelling concepts, then axial coding which aims to find relationships among open codes and at the end the researcher used selective coding that aimed to find the core codes in this study which reflects themes found in data.

Ethics

Ethical considerations are very important aspect in conducting a research in social science. Bernard (2000) argues “*The biggest problem in conducting a science of human behaviour is not selecting the right sample size or making the right measurement. It's doing those things ethically*” (p.22). Bryman (2001, p.479) offers four questions relating to ethics in social research about harm caused to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and if any deception involved. If a researcher answers yes to any of these questions, they should reconsider the methods he/she used. For this research, all ethical considerations were taken seriously before starting the research, the four questions were answered by no.

Results

This section reports the results and findings from data analysis. The data analysis revealed the following themes as triggers and motives for using Facebook for educational communication purposes:

1. Facebook facilitates studying

For almost all of the interviewees using Facebook, in particular, the LIS department page has an effect on their interaction and engagement within academic and leisure activities in university campus, and it facilitates their studying and learning process, see figure 1. Examination period is the most time participants use the department's Facebook page, to keep informed

about exams dates and any announcements about exams. Nevertheless, every student has an access to formal educational communication channels such as university e-learning application (Moodle App in both universities) and email accounts, the use of these communication channels happens occasionally. Participants tend to count on Facebook pages while they are engaged in educational communication for being informed about exams more than e-learning app and emails inbox. Seeking information about past exam questions, and past questions of efficiency exam are examples of participants' use of Facebook during exams period. 38 of the participant mentioned that they count on Facebook pages to keep informed on any activities and to ask questions regard modules especially during exams period.

"I usually use the Facebook page during exam period, I post asking anyone who took the module before to comment on my post with questions from past mid or final exam, and sometimes you can't imagine how many people would response to the post, students start to comment with questions and expected questions. I guess this is great way to prepare yourself to the exams." (Participant 11)

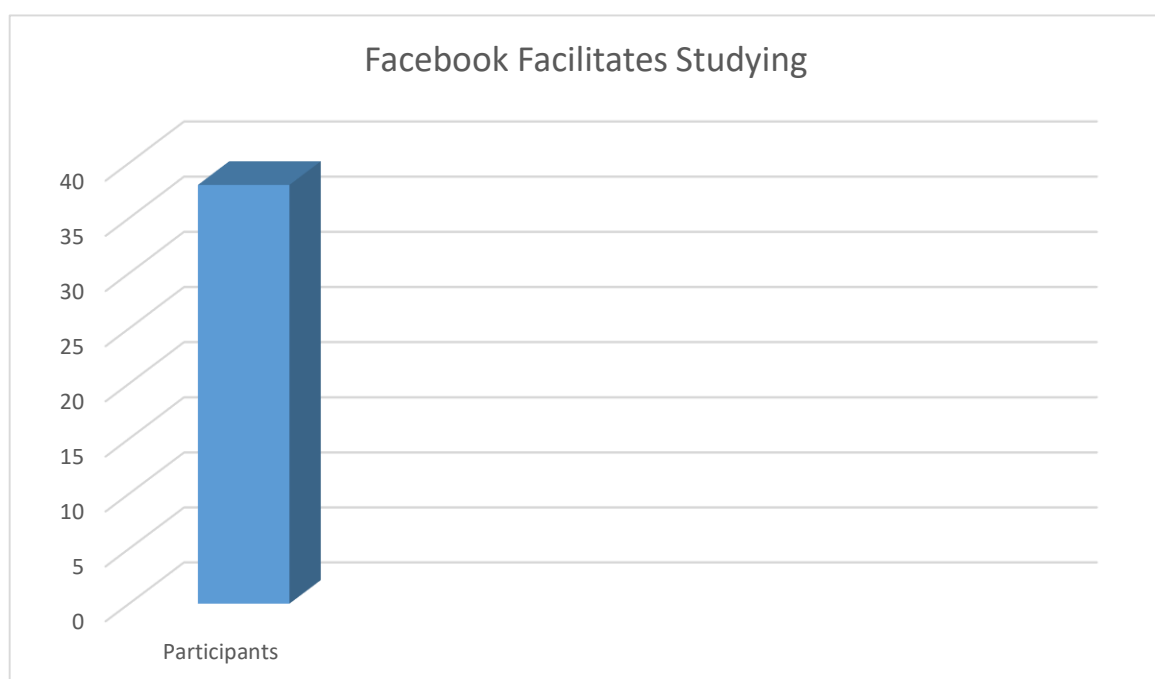


Figure 1: Facebook Facilitates studying

Figure 1 shows high number of participants who state that they use Facebook to facilitate their studying, such as to seek past exam questions and prepare themselves during exams.

The data analysis revealed that some students may use their mobile phones during exams to take screen shots of the online exams.

"Students who took the module before take photos of exam questions during the exam, and they post it later to what we call students exchange pages on Facebook" (Participants 33)

In addition, three of the interviewees mentioned that they may take the risk during the exams by taking photos of the exam questions displayed on the monitors in front of them, in order to post it later to students' Facebook group pages. These interviewees believe that by posting exams questions they gain the badge of storyteller of such pages and this in a way increase their followers, this finding is linked with theme (4) below in this research about facilitating communication with other students.

"I may take the risk to take photos during exams, then I post them later to closed student groups on Facebook. In this

way I become one of the top people who post on the page. This is how I gained the badge of storyteller from Facebook, and you can't believe how many students check my personal profile and follow me after posting questions" (Participant 6)

Participants 4, 7, 12, 14, 17, 22, 31, 34 and 38 mentioned the use of the Facebook pages for the purpose of collecting past efficiency exam questions, which help students in their preparation for the efficiency exam in their graduate year.

"Recently, in May I posted asking about the efficiency exam, as I'm supposed to take this exam in August, many students commented on my post with past exam questions, and raised my attention to the nature of the exam, which is different from university exams, as students in this exam need to answer questions related to general knowledge and questions specialized in their fields" (Participant 17)

Interestingly, it was found that participants don't pay attention and ignore announcements posted on bulletin boards, but they do follow Facebook pages for any updates and important activities during the semester. It was found also that reading from Facebook page suits participants more than reading from paper sheets and posters posted to bulletin boards inside the department.

"I ignore reading announcements from the bulletin board down stairs in the department, I have my smart phone right in my pocket, and I receive notifications whenever there is a post on the department page"

The analysis revealed that the use of university email was affected by the use of Facebook groups, participants count on Facebook and messenger on uploading files and exchanging information. According to participant 4 using Facebook decreased reliance on email day by day

"I found myself relying more on Facebook day by day, and sticking with one mean to exchange information, I think it is more convenient to me" (Participant 4)

Data analysis revealed that departments rely on Facebook pages for any announcements, which could be a topic for another research, this as a result makes students to rely on Facebook than their emails. For instance. Participant 16 comments on the reasons students rely more on Facebook pages than their email accounts and the e-learning system.

"The lecturers and even the head of the department post announcements on the department's Facebook page too, which I guess is the reason why we stick on Facebook" (Participant 16)

Commenting on receiving notifications from one source, participants 21 explained:

"...receiving notifications from one source on my mobile phone, is much easier for me than checking my email account and log in to the e-learning system. The e-learning system still has no app on Google play, if they have one in the future, certainly I would have it on my mob and follow department's notifications from there." (Participant 21)

2. Facebook eases involvement in university activities

Facebook can increase students' participation in university different activities such as student union elections, sport activities, cultural and leisure events. Participants mentioned that Facebook is a tool informs them about various activities in university campus. 35 participants mentioned using Facebook as a tool to participate in activities inside the campus. See figure 2.

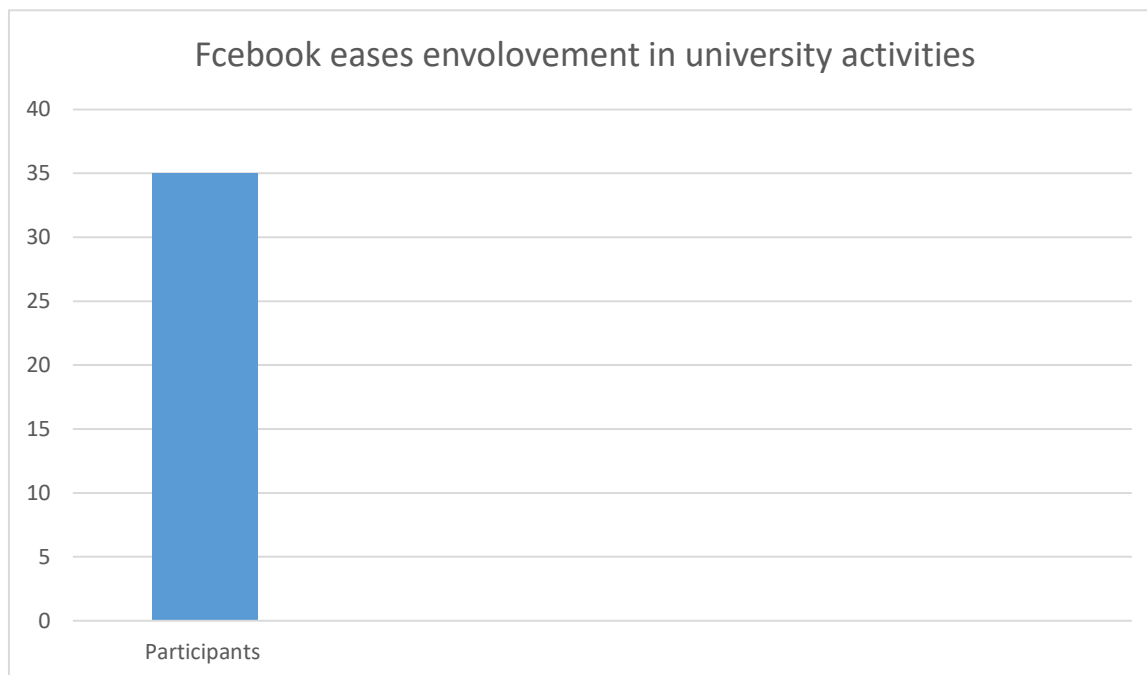


Figure 2: Facebook eases involvement in university activities

As shown in figure 2 almost 88% of participants stated that Facebook helps in engaging in university activities. Participant 14 mentioned heavily using Facebook during student union election period, which in her opinion is more environment friendly.

“when I was elected as a member of the student union last year, Facebook was the only tool I used for publicity, I’m now a member of a group called (eco-green) we encourage the use of electronic resources rather than printed” (Participant 14)

Participants 1,3,8,14,19,23,24,25,33,39,and 40 explained relying on the department’s and the student union Facebook pages to follow any sport activities and any call for participation in championships.

Depending on Facebook as a tool to post announcements to students seemed to be a very effective tool for reaching students in short time. Participant 32, and 12 state that using Facebook pages by university departments for announcements is much easier than sending emails.

“ we don’t read emails, sometimes they send us important information but we tend to ignore reading these emails, while with Facebook it is very easy, If I miss reading any post relevant to me, many friends would mention me on the post” (Participant 32)

3. Facebook a source of academic information

Despite the belief that students need to obtain valuable information from formal sources, many students asserted that it is a good practice to obtain scholarly information from social media pages. Facebook would be considered as a way to shape students search skills and it is still considered as a valuable channel for information for 31 of the participants, see figure 3.

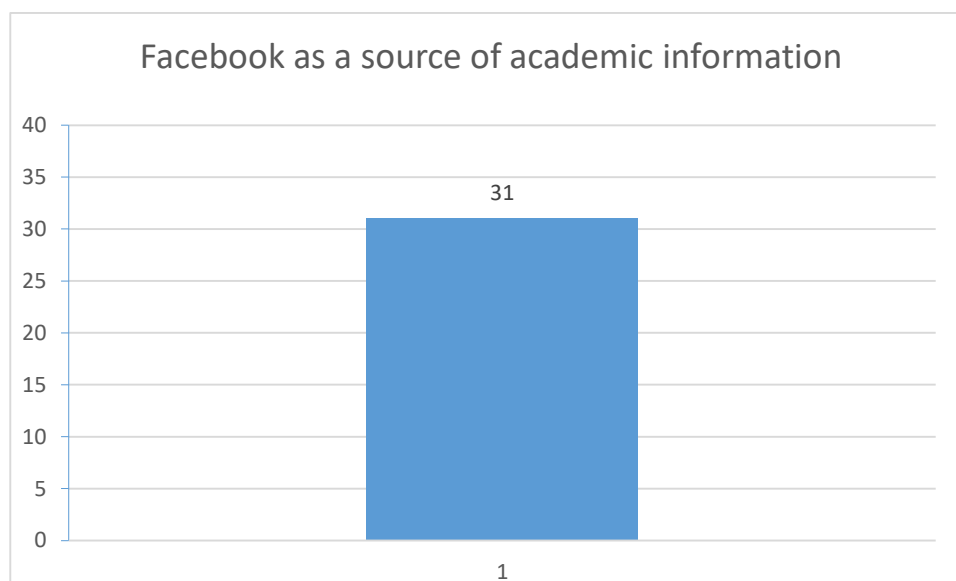


Figure 3: Facebook a source of academic information

“ looking for information on Facebook pages when writing a research or an assignment might be very useful when you ask questions or clarifications on that page”(Participant 23)

Figure 3 shows that 78% of participants believe that Facebook can be a sources of academic information.

Facebook as a social media website that involves feedback and discussions that allow students to decide what is good for them was proposed during the interviews. Students believe that even when it comes to research and assignment writing they may seek help of other senior students on Facebook groups. Nevertheless, students are aware that this way of seeking help in writing would not be accepted from their professors and may contain the risk of plagiarism and other saving their drafts and use them.

“I would use Facebook groups to check if any one suggests sources or even specific articles related to my topic.” (Participant 5)

“...but usually I use these pages carefully, as a friend of mine posted a report he was drafting asking other students to read and review the report for him and suggest him new subheadings in his report, but someone stolen the report and submit it as it is his own report.”(Participants 33)

Interestingly, one of the students concerns in seeking scholarly information from Facebook pages is that it may affect their writing. Large number of students do not support getting information for research wiring from Facebook. Facebook groups are channels to disseminate research findings and seeking reviews. Research and assignments writing require any researcher to seek information from scholarly sources. Thus depending on Facebook groups may consider as a threat to the value of students' writing.

“For me depending on these pages definitely would affect my writing skills, so I'd rather to stay away from them. I would search the library source and I may use Facebook pages to get some reviews.” (Participant 18)

4. Facebook is a platform of communication

Undoubtedly, there are various channels for student- academic staff communication, such as emails, phone calls, and face-to-face communication. However, not all of these channels are adequate for students to share and retrieve information and sources in various types. The data analysis show that students prefer communicating with academic staff through Facebook pages and messenger, 31 of the participants mentioned Facebook as a platform of communication, see figure 4. This way of communicating seems to be more convenient and time saver and enable students to exchange various types of

information with their academic staff.

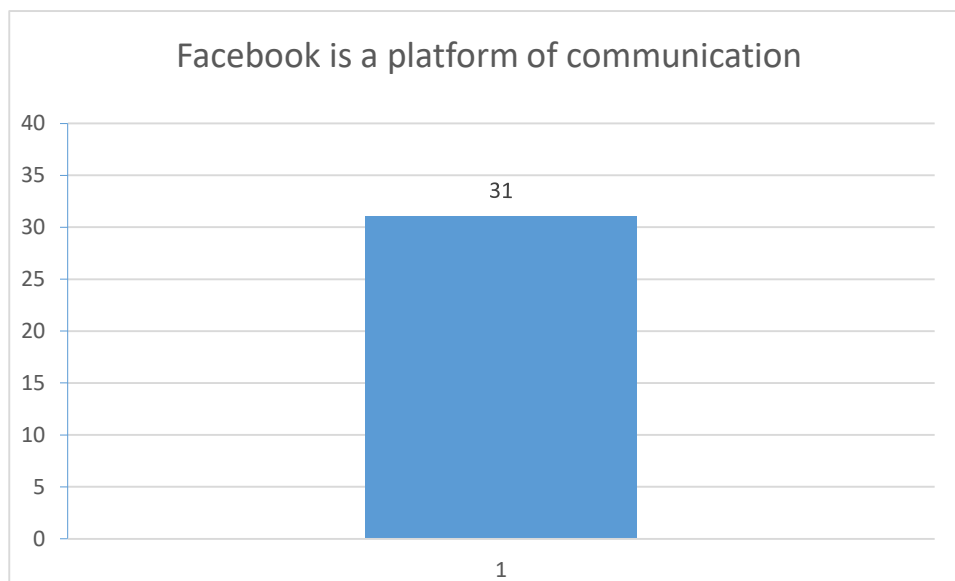


Figure 4: Facebook is a platform of communication

“... The attractive thing about Facebook is that it allows you to share different type of information, such as videos, voice recordings and even edited photos.” (Participant 34)

Figure 4 shows that 78% of participants use Facebook as a communication channel of wider audience. Students are attracted to use it as it is interactive and students get direct feedback from peer students and other followers.

“I use Facebook because most of the other students use it” (Participant 15)

In another form of communicating, it was interestingly found that posting on Facebook is a way to avoid face to face communication. Participants mentioned that they prefer to make communication through Facebook posts and choose what questions or comments they like to replay at. According to participant 17

“having this sort of communication would save my time, and it is more convenient” (Participant 17)

The data analysis revealed that having communication with others on Facebook is more comfort and less stressful, as Facebook works as a wall that absorbs all first or wrong impressions that may affect the communication process.

Participants 26 explain

“I may make a smooth communication on messenger or in the comments box with some other students that I don’t know, and the curiosity may leads me after communicating with some people to check their profiles, sometimes I discover that I had a good communication with people that I avoid to talk with in the campus or people that I don’t pay attention to” (Participant 26)

The analysis revealed that 22 of the female participants mentioned that they feel more comfortable to communicate with other male colleagues on Facebook rather than face to face. Which is due cultural reasons as socializing between males and females students is unaccepted with the majority of the community.

“ Using Facebook is more convenient to me when communicating with my colleagues especially male colleagues” (Participant 4)

While other participants commented that communicating with professors and instructors through writing on Facebook is more convenient and make them to express themselves better than face to face communication.

Discussion

The data analysis has revealed four themes reflecting motivations of Facebook use for academic purposes among students of LIS in Jordanian universities. The first motive is “Facebook facilitates studying”, this finding supports the argument from the literature that Facebook provides students with opportunities to gain more knowledge, share ideas and identify new information resources that would benefit them in their educational activities, and knowledge transfer to enhance their learning performance (Al-Rahmi et al., 2015, Al-Rahmi and Zeki, 2017, Lam, 2015). Bernard and Dzandza (2018) state that the use of Facebook has positive effect on students learning process. According to Barczyk and Duncan (2013) Facebook use by students enhanced students experience in participating in their course. Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) found that the use of social media can be an effective medium for enhancing students’ critical thinking skills and problem-solving in the learning environment. In a recent study investigated the determinants of Facebook use among students and its impact on the collaborative e-learning, the researchers found a positive relationship between the time spent on Facebook, and the best academic performance students achieve through collaborative learning (Alwreikat, Abu Zaid, & Shehata, 2021).

In addition, other motives for using Facebook for academic purposes were found in the literature. Kirsi et al. (2009) found that students’ motives for using Facebook could be achieving effective cooperation in their studies. Another motive is overcoming crucial problems in communication in the very early days at the beginning of studies by fresher students and maintaining and increasing social networks, these results are linked with theme 4 of the current study “Facebook is platform of communication” (Kärkkäinen, 2007; Eid, 2016; Knight-McCord et al., 2016; Drašković et al., 2017; Das and Sikder, 2018; Valkenburg, 2006; Ellison et al., 2007). Other established motivations are keeping up-to-date with any changes during the academic year, discussing academic matters, completing homeworks and writing essays and projects (Walubita, 2018).

Alwreikat, Abu Zaid, & Shehata (2021) investigated determinants of Facebook use in academic context in Jordanian universities, they found that the more benefits students gain from Facebook use to facilitate their out of class activities, the more they would use it for academic purposes, they modeled the students behavior in using Facebook for academic context into three determinants; motivations, perceived benefits, perceived disadvantages. Their findings support findings of the current research in focusing on the benefits of using Facebook, such as in theme 1 “Facebook facilitates studying” and theme 3 “Facebook is a source of academic information”.

Toker & Baturay (2019) in align with Joinson (2008) found that Facebook is used among students because it is a good tool for communication and collaboration, and added that psychological needs are motivations for use too. Hewitt & Forte (2006) State that Facebook interaction have positive impact on student-professor relationship. To sum up, the findings in the literature provide support for the findings of this research; motivation and ease of use led for using Facebook for academic purposes. Facebook appeared as a source for information, a platform for student-student and student-professor communication that helps more in engaging in university activities. More interestingly, previous literature supported our finding that Facebook facilitates studying (Al-Shawabkeh et al., 2017).

The importance of this research can be explained by its context, Facebook is still widely used by students in Jordanian universities (Al-Shawabkeh et al., 2017). The outcome of this research has several implications, it helps higher education institutions in Jordan to better understand students triggers and motives for using Facebook for academic purposes and help them to develop strategies for incorporating social media use within traditional learning and E-learning process as interactive and reflective activity tool. This study most significant contribution is that it shed lights on the relationship between Facebook use for academic purposes and the learning process by understanding the motives behind Facebook use among students.

Limitations of the study

The study used thematic analysis approach which usually used in qualitative research. The sample of the study was 40 of LIS undergraduate students in two Jordanian universities. Results can only be generalized in a similar context, opposite to quantitative research which can be generalised in a wider context. However, thematic analysis best suits this kind of research that seeks to identify motivation from participants’ perspectives.

Conclusion

This study aims to find and identify LIS students' motivations when using social media particularly Facebook for educational communication purposes. The study deployed thematic analysis approach for data analysis. The findings of the study indicate that the motivations for using Facebook by LIS students are: Facebook is a tool to facilitate studying, students count on Facebook to collect materials related to their modules, such as past exam papers. Facebook eases involvement in university activities, such as student union elections and it substitutes the department bulletin board. The third theme was, Facebook is a source of academic information, as a mean to exchange different academic information. The final theme was about Facebook and communication, where it was found that it facilitates smooth communication with students and academic staff at the same time. Recommendations were presented for higher education institutions to benefit from blending social media in the e-learning process.

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