



FACEBOOK USAGE AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Ilfa Zaidi¹

¹ *Ph. D. Research Scholar, Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Delhi, India.*

Harjeet Kaur Bhatia²

² *Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Delhi, India.*

ABSTRACT

Academics and researchers are interested to study how social networking sites affect the students who are enrolled in higher education. Among all social networking sites, particular interest towards “Facebook” is quite evident. Previous researches have documented positive, negative or no significant relationship between Facebook usage and student engagement. Owing to paucity of similar studies in Indian landscape, the present study attempts to explore the relationship between Facebook usage and pre-service teachers’ engagement. Data was collected from 120 pre-service teachers of two central universities. Questionnaire was developed by the researchers to examine the general use of Facebook by pre-service teachers. The second section of questionnaire dealt with student engagement which was ascertained by adapting certain items of National Survey of Student Engagement (2013). Data was analysed both i.e. quantitatively and qualitatively. Results indicated that use of Facebook pages was significantly correlated with active and collaborative learning. However, there was no significant correlation between some dimensions of Facebook usage, such as messenger, groups and events with student engagement.

KEY WORDS: *Facebook, Student engagement, Facebook usage and student engagement*

INTRODUCTION

With increased access to Internet, the number of users at various social networking has upsurged. In the present digital era, social networking sites (hereafter referred as SNS) are one of the most popular online destinations. From facilitating relationship building to online social discourse, social networking sites have blossomed into a platform for individuals to share and voice their opinion. Amongst all social networking sites, Facebook scores high on popularity index with a wide and diverse user base at varied levels of education. In India, there are around 260 million active Facebook users that are expected to reach 444.2 million in 2023 (Statista, 2019). Around 47% of Facebook users fall in the age group of 18 to 24 years. The next prevalent group of users are in the age group of 25 to 34 years (Socialbakers, 2011). Research findings from various studies provide that almost 85-99% college students use

Facebook (Junco, 2012) which brings to light the immense potential of SNS which can be exploited to support learning (Kear, 2011). Because of rising popularity, Sendurur et al. (2015) recommended that social networking sites could be a favourable platform for different academic activities. These SNS accelerate, advance and innovate the ways of communication, expression, as well as entertainment. Students can make a small community as per their interest in order to share their ideas and views with each other. So, owing to widespread use of Facebook, the level of interest to explore is there any correlation exists between Facebook usage and student engagement has increased.

Facebook

Facebook is a social networking site which was created by Mark Zuckerberg and his fellows (Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes). When Facebook was



created in the year 2004, it had limited features only. There was no feature of live videos, poking, notifications, and status updates. But today, Facebook houses many features such as Friends (including friend requests and people you may know), uploading of unlimited number of photos on profile, privacy options for selection of audience (friends only, friends of friends, only me, public and custom) and other features, like timeline, newsfeed, pages, groups, videos, application and games, Facebook messenger, life events, reactions, live videos, # tag, profile picture guard, DP frame, save links, etc.

Student Engagement

The term “student engagement” is used to indicate readiness, need, desire as well as compulsion of pupils to make active participation in everyday activities (school) such as attending classes, submission of required course works/ assignments. According to Kuh et al. (2008), “Student engagement” includes both time and energy which pupils devote on productive educational activities and the effort institutions apply in using effective educational practices. Strydom and Mentz (as cited in Mbodila, 2014) stated that student engagement has two components— “what students do” and “what institutions do”. Further, Kuh (2009) specified that student engagement can be “in-class engagement” as well as “out-of-class engagement” in any educational programme. Nelson et al. (2014) said that student engagement involves both academic as well as non-academic activities of pupils’ in university that are likely to produce high quality learning.

National Survey of Student Engagement (2013) has defined student engagement componentially, i.e., active and collaborative learning, level of academic challenge, enriching educational experience, student-faculty interaction as well as supportive campus environment. In consonance with the need for study, researchers have selected only two dimensions of student engagement, i.e., level of academic challenge, and active and collaborative learning. Student engagement with using Facebook was as not taken into account.

Level of Academic Challenge means challenging logical and creative work that is crucial for pupils learning and educational excellence. It further refers to analysing, applying and evaluating any idea or information by the students. *Active and Collaborative Learning* means active participation of pupils in different educational activities. Pupils learn a lot while they take part in various educational activities individually as well as collaboratively. Through collaboration with peers, students develop abilities that prepare them to cope with different kinds of situations and problems that they face during and after college.

Facebook Usage and Student Engagement

In this contemporary period, one thing has become persistent i.e. ‘change’. Internet has transformed the world radically. Emerging use of digital platform provides an ease for teaching-learning without threaten the socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils (Bhatia, 2008). Increasing number of Facebook users has aroused the interest of researchers towards exploring Facebook usage and student engagement among college students. According to Paculan (2013), Facebook is valuable in the life of students’ as Facebook groups and pages create community of people who have similar interests and views that helps to learn each other’s hobbies, interests, favourite books. Balcikanli (2015) stated that Facebook may help pre-service teachers for improving their reflective skills by looking at their own teaching practices more constructively. Students can share ideas with others and get feedback from online community via Facebook. In other words, it provides opportunity to engage actively in sharing of information and knowledge such as speaker events, topics related to course and lectures through live videos. According to Nielsen et al. (2013), social media platforms can be used in teacher education courses to design different tasks as well as assignments. Students can enhance their technical and pedagogical skill for using the facilities offered by different social media tools for learning.

Therefore, this is to say, using Facebook can prove to be beneficial for college students in learning so many things which may be helpful for in their course of study. So, there is possibility for students to use Facebook in a way that enhance their engagement and participation in different educational activities.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The present study was conducted by taking into consideration B.Ed. students from two central universities of India i.e. Jamia Millia Islamia and University of Delhi. These universities facilitate different courses for pre-service teacher education such as B.Ed., B.EL.Ed., D.Ed. and B.Ed. (Special). B.Ed. is a course which prepares pre-service teachers to teach up to secondary as well as senior secondary level of school.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

According to NCFTE (2010), “ICT can be imaginatively drawn upon for professional development and academic support of the pre-service teachers.” According to ICT policy (2012), courses need to be revised to meet the changing requirements of teachers with emerging trends in technology. So, pre-service teachers should be trained appropriately to use ICT in schools.



Clements (2015) suggested that use of Facebook can be beneficial for enhancing extracurricular engagement among students of higher education. Its usage can be advantageous for college students beyond the scope of achievement marks. According to Singh (2012), student teachers use Facebook for sharing educational material, project, homework, resources or ideas. Other most popular reasons to use Facebook includes keeping up with people they know in the real world and following photos, videos, events etc. Fagioli et al. (2015) revealed that student teachers seemed to feel that Facebook should be used in their learning because it creates a more interesting learning environment. According to Deng and Tavares (2013), Facebook groups provide student teachers with informational, social as well as intellectual support during their teaching practice. Rizvi (2013) found that a negative correlation exists between use of Facebook for general purposes and engagement of student-teachers with course. Oginni et al. (2016) stated that students were negatively affected by the use of social networking sites as they used it to chat with friends. So, their activities were ignored.

As different studies on Facebook and student engagement have documented both negative and positive impacts, only few studies are available in India regarding effect of using Facebook on engagement of pre-service teachers. Therefore, a need is felt to examine general usage of Facebook by pre-service teachers and if there is a relationship between Facebook usage and student engagement. This will enable us to ascertain if use of Facebook is fruitful for pre-service teachers and answer the following research questions:

1. Is Facebook usage related to student engagement?
2. How does Facebook usage relate to pre-service teachers engagement?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the use of Facebook by pre-service teachers for general purposes in terms of
 - Facebook messenger
 - Facebook pages
 - Facebook groups
 - Facebook events
 - Other Facebook activities (including news feed and wall activities)

2. To study the student engagement among pre-service teachers in terms of
 - Level of academic challenge
 - Active and collaborative learning
3. To study the relationship, if any, between Facebook usage for general purposes and student engagement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Following research methodology was used to achieve the objectives of this research.

Participants

Convenience sampling technique was followed to select the 120 B. Ed. students (who use Facebook) from two different central universities i.e. Jamia Millia Islamia and University of Delhi.

Questionnaires

Section I: Questionnaire on Facebook usage was developed by the researchers to examine the general usage of Facebook (including dimensions: Facebook messenger, Facebook pages, Facebook groups, Facebook events and other Facebook activities such as news feed and wall activities) among pre-service teachers. Some items were selected from the studies conducted by Singh (2012), Rizvi (2013), and Junco (2012) and rest of the items were developed by the researchers. In this section the items were based on 5-point scale from 'Never' to 'Very Frequently'. Two open-ended questions were also asked from the respondents by the researchers.

Section II: The second section of the questionnaire was on student engagement. Items were adopted from National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) scale to measure the student engagement of pre-service teachers. Permission was taken by the researchers for the purpose of using NSSE scale. NSSE is the most used scale in the context of student engagement. Kuh (2009), Junco (2012), Jayarathna and Fernando (2014) have been used some items of this instrument in their respective study. In this section the items were based on 4-point scales from 'Never' to 'Very Often'.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

In the analysis of data, the statistical measures used are mean, mean % and Pearson correlation. Pearson correlation was used to examine if a correlation exists between Facebook usage and student engagement. Qualitative analysis of data was done by coding. Analysed data was presented by tables.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings have been reported as per the objectives of the study.

Objective 1: To study the use of Facebook by pre-service teachers for general purposes

Table 1: Use of Facebook for general purposes (Sample 120)

S.No.	Dimensions	Number of items	Mean	Mean %
1	Facebook Messenger	14	29.29	209.21
2	Facebook Pages	9	23.40	260.00
3	Facebook Groups	8	16.58	207.25
4	Facebook Events	3	5.91	197.00
5	Other Facebook activities(including news feed and wall activities)	26	71.23	273.96

Table 1 shows that on an average, pre-service teachers use other Facebook activities (including news feed and wall activities) mostly (mean = 71.23, mean % = 273.96) followed by Facebook pages (mean = 23.40, mean % = 260), Facebook messenger (mean = 29.29, mean % = 209.21), Facebook groups (mean = 16.58, mean % = 207.25), and Facebook events (mean = 5.91, mean % = 197). This suggests, on an average, Facebook messenger, Facebook

pages, Facebook groups and other Facebook activities (including news feed and wall activities) are used between 'Rarely' to 'Sometimes' by the pre-service teachers for general purposes. Whereas Facebook events are used between 'Never' to 'Rarely'.

On being asked what kind of challenges do they face while using Facebook for general purposes, the participants responded as:

Table 2: Challenges faced by pre-service teachers in using for general purposes

Responses	No. of Pre-service teachers with %
No comment	15 (12.50%)
No challenge	43 (35.83%)
Slow network connection	8 (6.66%)
Privacy issue and security concern	3 (2.5%)
Authenticity of information	5 (4.16%)
Unwanted materials and friend requests	7 (5.83%)
Messages from unknown people	4 (3.33%)
Unnecessary tags	5 (4.16%)
Lot of advertisements	7 (5.83%)
Too many posts, photos and videos	23 (19.16%)

Table 2 shows that 12.50% participants did not give any response to this question, whereas 35.83% do not face any challenge in using Facebook for general purposes. As many as 19.16% pre-service teachers mentioned that too many posts, photos and videos irritates them and 6.66% answered that they

have network problem while using Facebook. Rest of the respondents reported that they face challenges while using Facebook for general purposes such as privacy and security, authenticity of information, unwanted materials and friend requests, messages from unknown people, unnecessary tags, and



advertisements. Some of the statements given by pre-service teachers were:

"Its sources are not trust worthy. Anyone can share post from any site/blog"

"There are many useless photos and videos which keep popping up on the newsfeed"

"A lot of advertisements appeared which are not relevant for me"

"Sometimes I found fake information and vulgar photos, videos, etc."

"No, I didn't face any problem in using Facebook."

Objective 2: To study the student engagement among pre-service teachers

Table 3: Student engagement (Sample 120)

S.No.	Student Engagement	Number of items	Mean	Mean %
1	Level of academic challenge	15	38.27	255.13
2	Active and collaborative learning	5	15.59	259.83

Table 3 shows that, on an average, the mean value of active and collaborative learning (mean = 15.59, mean % = 259.83) is followed by level of academic challenge (mean = 38.27, mean % = 255.13). Thus, it can be concluded that pre-service teachers have done different academic and collaborative activities between 'Sometimes' to 'Often'.

Objective 3: To study the relationship, if any, between Facebook usage for general purpose and student engagement

For achieving the third research objective, researchers had applied the method of Pearson correlation and calculated the requisite measures with the help of SPSS.

Table 4: Relationship between Facebook usage for general purposes and student engagement

		Level of academic challenge	Active and collaborative learning
Facebook Messenger	Pearson Correlation	-.007	.087
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.940	.344
Facebook Pages	Pearson Correlation	.132	.234*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.151	.010
Facebook Groups	Pearson Correlation	.001	.162
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.987	.077
Facebook Events	Pearson Correlation	-.009	.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.921	.595
Other Facebook Activities (including news feed and wall activities)	Pearson Correlation	.174	.242**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	.008

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that general usage of Facebook messenger, groups and events are not correlated significantly with level of academic challenge and active and collaborative learning at any level of significance. However, Facebook pages and active and collaborative learning are associated positively at 0.05 level of significance. Besides, there is

significant positive correlation between other Facebook activities (including news feed and wall activities) and active and collaborative learning at 0.01 level of significance.

When participants were asked if Facebook can be an effective tool for student engagement, they had given the following responses:

**Table 5: Responses given by participants for Facebook as an effective tool for student engagement**

Responses	No. of pre-service teachers with %
No comment	21 (17.50%)
No idea	7 (5.80%)
Creating and liking more educational pages and groups	31 (25.83%)
Proper use and time management	5 (4.16%)
Creating academic events	6 (5.00%)
Going live	4 (3.33%)
Sharing and expressing views on groups	7 (5.80%)
Another account for educational purpose only	5 (4.16%)
Sharing class information, educational links, audios, videos and assignments on groups	34 (28.33%)

Table 5 shows that 17.50% participants did not give any response to this question, whereas 5.80% do not have any idea about it. Majority of respondents (28.33%) mentioned that Facebook can be used effectively by sharing class information, educational links, audios, videos and assignments on groups and 25.83% stated that creating and liking more educational pages and groups can enhance their engagement. As many as 54.16% pre-service teachers reported that there should be filter option of using Facebook for educational purposes, whereas 54.16% answered that there should be another account for educational purpose only. Rest of the participants reported that creating academic events, going live, sharing and expressing views on groups can lead to better student engagement. Some of the statements given by pre-service teachers were:

“An academician or teacher can use ‘Go live’ feature for interaction with students”

“Facebook can be effective for student engagement if they have another Facebook account to link only for education”

“Students may create groups with their friends and talk related to study”

“Students can post or share educational materials with classmates”

The study revealed that general Facebook pages and Facebook activities (including news feed and wall activities) were positively correlated with active and collaborative learning, and hence calls for the institutions to change their traditional way of engaging students by using Facebook. Findings are consistent with study of Clements (2015) who also suggested that Facebook can be used for promoting and developing engagement in an educational institution.

As, respondents suggested that Facebook should be used by faculty, academicians and their peers (pre-service teachers) for sharing class information, educational links, audios, videos and assignments on groups as well as creating and liking

more educational pages and groups. Thus, the study confirms the findings of Fagioli et al. (2015) that student teachers were interested to use Facebook in their education because it provides interesting learning environment. Although, this study found some challenges faced by pre-service teachers such as privacy issue but this may be due to ignorance about privacy setting. So, efforts should be directed towards training of pre-service teachers to maintain privacy of their Facebook account to limit the audience. As per the current study, usage of Facebook pages was significantly related with active and collaborative learning. So, institutions should make efforts to increase use of Facebook in educational settings especially for level of academic challenge. Teacher educators may use Facebook for pre-service teachers as part of their educational experiences so that they can use online system of learning via live videos because majority of pre-service teachers were found to be active in using Facebook.

CONCLUSION

The study reflects the usage of Facebook among pre-service teachers and brings forth the student engagement among pre-service teachers. In addition, the study also provided an understanding whether general use of Facebook correlated with student engagement. As per the results emanating from this research, the researchers concluded that using Facebook in education can be rewarding for pre-service teachers in the 21st century as positive but not significant relationship was found between Facebook usage and engagement of pre-service teachers. Learning environment can be changed from traditional to technical, as innovations are taking place in Facebook day-by-day. Various features of Facebook can be used to increase student engagement, but there exists some challenges which cannot be overlooked.



In the light of the findings of this research, some recommendations are made for future researches. Further researches can be conducted on other teacher education institutions with respect to other social networking sites and applications such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Imo, You Tube, etc.

REFERENCES

1. Balcikanli, C. (2015), "Prospective English language teachers' experiences in Facebook: Adoption, use and educational use in Turkish context," *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology*, 11(3), p.p: 82-99, Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1086653.pdf>
2. Bhatia, H.K. (2008), "Blended learning: A case for multisource learning", Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319273020_Blended_Learning_A_Case_for_Multisource_Learning
3. Clements, J. C. (2015), "Using Facebook to enhance independent student engagement: A case study of first-year undergraduates," *Higher Education Studies*, 5(4), p.p: 131-146, doi:10.5539/hes.v5n4p131
4. Deng, L., & Tavares, N. J. (2013), "From Moodle to Facebook: Exploring students' motivation and experiences in online communities," *Computers & Education*, 68, p.p: 167-176, doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2013.04.028
5. Fagioli, L., Rios-Aguilar, C., & Deil-Amen, R. (2015), "Changing the context of student engagement: Using Facebook to increase community college student persistence and success," *Teachers College Record*, 117(12), p.p: 1-42, Retrieved from https://www.coe.arizona.edu/sites/coe/files/HED/Changing%20the%20Context%20of%20Engagement_0.pdf
6. Kear, K. (2011), "Online and social networking communities: A best practice guide for educators," Routledge.
7. Indian Facebook users demographics, Socialbakers, Retrieved from <http://trak.in/tags/business/2011/06/24/facebook-india-statistics/>
8. Jayarathna, L. C. H., & Fernando, W. M. N. (2014), "Relationship between Facebook usage and the student engagement of Sri Lankan management undergraduates," *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 8(8), p.p: 2689-2693
9. Junco, R. (2012), "The relationship between frequency of Facebook use, participation in Facebook activities, and student engagement," *Computers & Education*, 58(1), p.p: 162-171, doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2011.08.004
10. Junco, R. (2012), "Too much face and not enough books: The relationship between multiple indices of Facebook use and academic performance," *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(1), p.p: 187-198, doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2011.08.026
11. Kuh, G. D., Cruce, T. M., Shoup, R., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. M. (2008). *Unmasking the effects of student engagement on first-year college grades and persistence. The journal of higher education*, 79(5), 540-563. doi:10.1080/00221546.2008.11772116
12. Kuh, G. D. (2009), "What student affairs professionals need to know about student engagement?" *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(6), p.p: 683-706, doi:10.1353/csd.0.0099
13. MHRD (2012), "National Policy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) In School Education," Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.
14. Mbodila, M., Ndebele, C., & Muhandji, K. (2014), "The effect of social media on student's engagement and collaboration in higher education: A case study of the use of Facebook at a South African University," *J Communication*, 5(2), p.p: 115-125, doi:10.1080/0976691X.2014.11884831
15. National Survey of Student Engagement (2013), "A Fresh Look at Student Engagement-Annual Results 2013," Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Centre for Postsecondary Research.
16. NCTE (2009), "National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education – Towards Preparing Professional and Humane Teacher," National Council for Teacher Education, New Delhi, India.
17. Nielsen, W. S., Moll, R., Farrell, T., Mcdaid, N., & Hoban, G. F. (2013), "Social media use among pre-service primary teachers," *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*, 10(8), p.p: 3-13, Retrieved from <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1648&context=sspapers>
18. Nelson, K. J., Clarke, J. A., Stoodley, I. D., & Creagh, T. A. (2014), "Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions," Retrieved From https://eprints.qut.edu.au/68701/1/ID11_2056_Nelson_Report_2014_%281%29_%281%29.pdf
19. Number of Facebook users in India from 2015 to 2023 (2019), Statista, Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/304827/number-of-facebook-users-in-india/>
20. Oginni, A. M., Saibu, S. O., Awobodu, V. Y., & Alaka, M. O. (2016), "Influence of students' engagement with social networks on their study habits and cognitive skills in science classrooms," *International Journal of Digital Society (IJDS)*, 7(3), p.p: 1201-1205, Retrieved from <http://infonomics-society.org/wp-content/uploads/ijds/published-papers/volume-7-2016/Influence-of-Students-Engagement-with->



Social-Networks-on-their-Study-Habits-and-Cognitive-Skills-in-.pdf

21. Paculan, R.P. (2013), "Research paper on the study of the effects of Facebook on students," Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/doc/128848382/Research-Paper-on-the-Study-of-the-Effects-of-Facebook-on-Students>
22. Rizvi, S. M. A. (2013), "A study of relationship between student- teachers' Facebook use and their engagement with the course," (Unpublished master's thesis), Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India.
23. Sendurur, P., Sendurur, E., & Yilmaz, R. (2015), "Examination of the social network sites usage patterns of pre-service teachers," *Computers in Human Behavior*, 51, p.p: 188-194, doi:10.1016/j.chb.2015.04.052
24. Singh, A. (2012), "A study of student teachers' and teacher educators' participation in and potential of social network site in education," (Unpublished master's thesis), Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India.