

Facebook Group and Student Engagement

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Perspective IV: Facebook Group and Student Engagement

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INTRODUCTION

The intensive use of FB among students can be utilised as educational tool in higher education [1]. Currently, Indonesia is the fourth largest Facebook user in the world [2] and ranked third of Facebook application on mobile phone [3]. This phenomenon can be used by the lecturer to make Facebook as a media for students learning. The features in FB group allows students and lecturer to discuss, share course materials, upload and download files that are useful during the learning process. The notification which appears each time group member post in the group makes it easy to always have the latest information. With this FB group, the interaction between lecturer and students and between the students themselves can be implemented. Thus this study aimed to analyse the impact of using Facebook group as a supporting media to enhance students' engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Facebook in Education

Previous studies argued that social network sites (SSNs) like Facebook should not be used for the learning process because it can interfere and impede student's achievement [4] though sometimes Facebook is used informally for learning purposes, but it should be used for social reasons and not for formal teaching purposes [5]. Meanwhile, studies that agree on the use of Facebook argued that Facebook can increase student's motivation for learning, engagement, and collaboration among students [6, 7].

Student Engagement

Student engagement indicates readiness, needs, and wants of the students to actively participate in daily school activities [8]. Student engagement

also represents the time and energy devoted by students to interact with others through activities related to the educational practices and the work done by institution to implement effective practices in education [9]. To increase student's engagement in learning, Ref. [10] proposed as follows: (1) interaction (relationship and interaction of both personal and virtual [11] with the teacher, other students, and the community [12], (2) exploration (the opportunity to explore and find a solution), (3) relevance (relevant to the issue that is going on, not theoretical), (4) multimedia and technology (access and interact globally), (5) instruction (constructive instruction that allows students to feel capable and comfortable to have discussion with the lecturer as part of the learning process [11]), and (6) authentic assessment (co-creation with the lecturer to guide the assessment of student learning [13]).

METHODOLOGY

Respondents

Target respondents were Accounting major students enrolled in Management Information Systems course, Narotama University, academic year 2015-2016. This class consists of 77 students. From 77 target of respondents, we obtained 57 responses with a composition of 87.7% female and 12.3% male with mean age of 22 years.

Data Collection and Analysis

Online questionnaires using a combination of question types, including single answer (yes or no), checklists, frequency-scaled questions, Likert scale and open-ended question were given to students at the end of the course. Questionnaires were used to obtain demographic information on respondents, interaction and participation, opinions on the use of FB group as a learning tool and its impact on engagement.

Facebook Group

A "Closed" Facebook Group was created at the beginning of the lecture (in closed group only member who can see the posts), and students who do not have an account were assisted to create one. Of all respondents,

only three students did not have a FB account. Activities in this group included putting up announcements, sharing course materials, submitting assignments, and discussion.

RESULT

Frequency of Accessing Facebook

Respondents were asked how often do they access their FB account in one month (every day, several days, several weeks, and never). 25 respondents (43.9%) said they accessed the FB group several days in a week, 16 respondents (28.1%) said they accessed the FB every day, nine (15.8%) said they accessed the FB a few weeks, and the rest (12.3%) had never accessed FB.

Use of FB Group

The next question was related to how respondents use of MIS's FB group. Students were asked if they participated (post and read) in the group. The results showed that all members participated in this group although rarely (see Table 1). In terms of doing a post on the group (comments, assignment, or questions) only six respondents (10.5%), which stated they often conducted this activity, 36 (63.2%) reported occasionally, and 15 respondents (26.3%) reported never. Meanwhile 29 respondents (50.9%) reported they often read the information in the group, not much different from the number of rarely done it (49.1%).

Table 1 Students' Participation in Facebook Activities

Activities	Often		Occasionally		Never	
	Respondent	%	Respondent	%	Respondent	%
Post in FB Group	6	10.5%	36	63.2%	15	26.3%
Checking information on FB Group	29	50.9%	28	49.1%	0	0%

Students' Interaction

We used a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). As presented in Table 2, FB group can be used to interact both with the lecturer and among students. On the issue of interaction with lecturer (item 3 and 4), 73% said it helped to communicate with lecturer, and 75.4% stated that they could get feedback from lecturer. In terms of interacting with friends (item 2), 77.2% said that FB group could assist to interact with their classmates.

Students' Perspective on the Use of FB Group for Education Purposes

The last questions on respondents' opinion of the use of FB group, the results showed that the majority agrees with the use of FB group (see Table 2).

Open-Ended Questions

To determine the benefits, difficulties, and suggestions related to the use of FB group, we used open-ended questions. Although almost 74% of the respondents found it difficult to use FB group in the learning process (related to low internet connectivity), most of them (87.7%) found the FB was nice, interesting, and beneficial. 20 respondents (35.1%) suggested that the students do not use FB group to only upload assignment, but on a more active discussion and sharing of information related to the topic being discussed, "More discussion and updating information on the lecture" as stated by one of the respondents. Another added, "In the future, maybe we can make a chat group to discuss the subject that we don't understand, not just uploading assignments". The surprising result that three respondents said FB group should not be used in the learning process, and it would be better if using other applications like WhatsApp messenger or BBM group.

Table 2 The use of FB group

No	Question	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Provide proper information about the lecture	16	28.1%	36	63.2%	5	8.80%	-	-
2	As a media to interact with friends	8	14.0%	44	77.2%	5	8.8%	-	-
3	Helps me to communicate with the lecturer	13	22.8%	42	73.7%	2	3.5%	-	-
4	Helps us in getting feedbacks from the lecturer	10	17.5%	43	75.4%	4	7.0%	-	-
5	A perfect media for studying	14	24.6%	38	66.7%	5	8.8%	-	-
6	Applicable for the other lectures	12	21.1%	37	64.9%	8	14.0%	-	-

DISCUSSION

This study provides insight for educators on the use of social networks (FB group) in learning. Most students only read the information that exist in the FB group but did not post. This is because the assignment given was a group assignment. Therefore, only representatives of the group who did posted. They are who rarely read or check the info posted in the group. They obtained information from classmates through other apps like BBM group and WhatsApp messenger. Members of this group should be more active for discussion and sharing of information related to the topic being discussed. Lecturer role is important in creating conditions that can encourage students to do so. Although the participation of students to engage in group is still low, but most of them found FB group can help them interact with classmates and lecturer. Facebook has also been felt by students as a useful teaching aid.

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