Post Graduate Students' Attitude towards Adopting Facebook as an E-Learning Platform

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Abstract

The use of social networking services like Facebook, orkut etc in education has been shown to benefit education a number of ways by supporting social learning, constructivist teaching practices, authentic instruction, student centered learning, and on demand access to learning. The main aim of the study is "Attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the post graduate students". The investigator used a survey method for doing this research. The investigator used the self prepared questionnaire for collecting the data. The investigator has collected 250 samples in Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu using random sampling technique. The investigator has used percentage analysis, t-test and chi-square test for analyzing the data. The findings of the study were there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their Gender, Course of Study and Year of studying. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their staying location.

Key words*: e-learning, Attitude, Facebook, Post graduate students etc.*

Introduction

Social networking has become one of the most important communication tools among people nowadays. However, social networks exist on the Internet websites where millions of people share interests on certain disciplines, and make available to members of these networks various shared files and photos and videos, create blogs and send messages, and conduct real-time conversations (Bassoppo-Moyo, Temba 2006). These networks are described as social, because they allow communication with friends and colleagues study and strengthen the ties between members of these networks in the space of the Internet. The most famous in the world of social networks are Facebook (Facebook.com); Twitter (Twitter.com); MySpace (myspace.com) and others.

E-learning is a very important tool to assist and facilitate teaching and learning process. It provides the tools for learners to be in contact with peers and teachers outside the classroom (Littlejohn, Allison., *et al*. 2009). It also empowers learners to manage their own learning and in the most appropriate way for each learner. Learners learn in different ways which are reading, watching, exploring, researching, interacting, communicating, collaborating, discussing, and sharing knowledge and experiences (Keegan and Desmond 2002). Through e-Learning, learners can have access to a wide range of learning resources

and learning can occur anywhere, anytime, and there are no longer any geographical constraints to learning. So the investigator proposed to study "Post Graduate Students' Attitude towards adopting Social Networking as an e-learning Platform"

Operational Definition of Key Terms

Attitude

Attitude presents individual feeling or against something. In other words the degree of feeling of favourableness or unfavourableness towards some objects, person, groups, and ideas is called attitude.

Facebook

Facebook sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.

E-learning Platform

A learning platform is an integrated set of interactive online services that provide teachers, learners, parents and others involved in education with information, tools and resources to support and enhance educational delivery and management.

Post Graduate Students

Those who are studying post graduate course in Arts and Science College in Tirunelveli Educational District.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the sample size in terms of the profile on any of the social networking; reasons for neglecting social network profile; and frequency of activities on social network sites.
- To discover the level of PG students' attitude towards adopting social network as an e-learning platform.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their gender, course of study and year of study.
- To find out whether there is any significant association between Fathers' education and their children's attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the present study a formulated as follows:

- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their Gender.

- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their course of study.
- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their year of studying.
- There is no significant association between Fathers' education and their children's attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform.

Method Adopted in the Present Study

In the present study, the investigator has employed the 'survey method'. Survey method is a method for collecting and analyzing data, obtained from large number of respondents representing a specific population collected through highly structured and detailed questionnaire or other techniques (Best, J.W., 1983).

Population and Sample of the Study

In this study, all the students studying in Post Graduate at various colleges irrespective of the nature of management and other criteria but located in Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu have been taken as the population for the study. A good sample must be representative of the entire population for this study, 250 samples has been collected using random sampling technique in Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu.

Instrument

As there is no suitable tool available for the present study, the investigator has constructed and validated a scale to measure Attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform of post graduate students'. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the investigators used a self-prepared questionnaire in the name of adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform Attitude Questionnaire (ASNEAQ). The investigator referred various books and journals to have clarity of concept and in addition to their information's he consulted some subject experts about the content for the development of the tool.

Reliability and Validity of the Tool

To find out the reliability of the tool, *test and retest method* was used. The reliability of the test was calculated by using person's product-moment correlation coefficient formula. The value obtained was 0.88. The tool was given to one expert in the field of education (Dr.R.Arumugarajan, Associate Professor, Dr.Sivanthi Aditanar College of Education, Tiruchendur) and one expert in the field of educational technology

(Dr.I.Muthuchamy, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University, Trichy). From the responses, suggestions and guidance, some of the items were modified. Thus content validity was established by experts' opinion.

Data Collection

In Tirunelveli District, two hundred and fifty post graduate students' attitudes were analysed through the prepared questionnaire about the adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform. Students' responses to the questionnaire were statistically analyzed according to gender, course of study and locality of the institution.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical techniques helps to classify, organize, summarize, the numerical facts and draw conclusions (Aggarwal, Y.R, 1986). In this study, quantitative research methods like's frequencies; t-test and chi-square test were used in order to investigate the research problem.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

Objective Testing

The first question of the survey was "Analysis of the sample in terms of the profile on any of the social networking".

Table 1 Analysis of the Sample in terms of the Profile on Any of the Social networking

Social networking Profile	No. of P.G. Students	%
Yes	170	68.0
No	80	32.0

The above table (Table 1) presents the analysis of sample in terms of the profile on any of the social networks. As seen from the above table, 170 Students (68.0%) are having a profile on social networking, 80 Students (32.0%) do not have a profile on social networking sites.

Table 2 Analysis of the Sample in terms of Reason for neglecting social network profile

Reason	No. of P.G. Students	%
I have not enough time for using social networking sites	11	4.4
I don't like to share my personal details published online	37	14.8
I don't like to be an online presence	9	3.6
I consider that social networking sites to be a waste of time	5	2.0
I am afraid that my personal details will be stolen (Phished)	5	2.0
I don't know about social networking	13	5.2

The above table (Table 2) presents the analysis of sample in terms of the reasons for neglecting social networks profile. Out of 250 samples only 170 samples are having a profile on social network. Remaining 80 samples do not have a profile on social network. Those 80 samples are neglecting the social networking sites for the following frequency of reasons. As seen from the above table, 11 Students (4.4%) have not enough time for using social networking sites; 37 Students (14.8%) don't like to share their personal details published online; 9 Students (3.6%) don't like to be an online presence; only 5 Students (2.0%) consider that social networking sites to be a waste of time; 5 Students (2.0%) afraid that their personal details will be stolen and only 13 Students (5.2%) don't know about social networking.

Out of 250 samples only 170 samples have a profile on social network. Remaining 80 samples do not have a profile on social network. Therefore the investigator decided to do a further analysis to take only for those samples that are having a profile on social network.

Table 3 Analysis of the Sample in terms of Frequency of profiles on social networking sites

Profile of Social Networking	No. of P.G. Students	%
Face book	111	65.29
linkedIn	10	5.88
Twitter	25	14.70
YouTube	6	3.52
Orkut	12	7.05
Flickr	5	2.94
Google+	97	57.05
Other (Specify)	4	2.35

The above table (Table 3) presents the analysis of sample in terms of the frequency of social networking sites profile. As seen from the above table, 111 Students (65.29%) have a profile on Facebook; 10 Students (5.88%) have a profile on LinkedIn; 25 Students (14.7%) are having a profile on Twitter; only 6 Students (3.52%) are have a profile on Youtube; 12 Students (7.05%) are have a profile on Orkut; 5 Students (2.94%) are having a profile on Flickr; 97 Students (57.05%) have a profile on Google+; and only 4 Students (2.35%) possess a profile on other social networking sites.

Table 4 Analysis of the Sample in terms of Length of Experience with Social Networking Sites

Length of Experience	No. of P.G. Students	%
Below 1 year	58	34.1
1-2 years	70	41.2
2-3 years	24	14.1
3-4 years	7	4.1
5 years & above	11	6.5

The above table (Table 4) gives another dimension of length of the use of social networking sites by the P.G students in terms of their length of experience. As revealed by the table, 58 Students (34.1%) have less than 1year experience; 70 Students (41.2%) have an experience with social networking sites between 1 to 2 years; 24 Students (14.1%) have an experience with social networking sites between 2 to 3 years; 7 Students (4.1%) have an experience with social networking sites between 3 to 4 years and 11 Students (6.5%). have an experience with social networking sites 5 years & above.

Table 5 Analysis of the Sample in terms of Frequency of main reasons for joining a social networking site

Reasons	No. of P.G. Students	%
My Friends are Members	36	21.2
Chatting (Text / Audio / Video)	10	5.9
Keep in touch with my friends	74	43.5
Share Photos, music or video	33	19.4
Find people with similar interest as me	4	2.4
Others	13	7.6

The above table (Table 5) presents the analysis of sample in reasons for joining a social networking site. As seen from the above table, 36 Students (21.2%) friends' are members in social networking sites; 10 Students (5.9%) are interest to chat with others through Social networking sites; 74 Students (43.5%) are like keep in touch with their friends; 33 Students (19.4%) are likes to share photos, music or video; only 4 Students (2.4%) like to find people through any one of the SNS and 13 Students (7.6%) have other reasons to use social networking sites.

Table 6 Level of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students

Variable	Low		Medium		High	
	f	%	f	%	F	%
Adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform	25	14.7	110	64.7	35	20.6

The above table (Table 6) presents level of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students. As seen from the above table, 25 Students (14.7%) come under low level; 110 Students (64.7%) are at moderate level; 35 Students (20.6%) are at high level of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students

Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis - 1

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their Gender.

Table 7 Difference between the mean scores of PG Students in their attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform with respect to gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Male	62	38.95	7.88	168	1.57	NS
Female	108	40.86	7.41			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

The above table shows that the computed 't' value 1.57 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be said that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adapting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their Gender.

Null Hypothesis - 2

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their course of study.

Table 8 Difference between the mean scores of PG Students in their attitude toward adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform with respect to course of study

Course of study	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Arts	118	40.17	7.31	168	0.01	NS
Science	52	40.15	8.36			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

The above table shows that the computed 't' value 0.01 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted. And it can be said that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their course of study.

Null Hypothesis – 3

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their year of studying.

Table 9 Difference between the mean scores of PG Students in their attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform with respect to year of studying

Year of Study	N	Mean	Std	df	't' value	Remarks at 5% level
First year	89	39.42	8.04	168	1.34	NS
Second year	81	40.99	7.08			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.97)

The above table shows that the computed 't' value 1.34 is less than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is to be accepted.

Null Hypothesis – 4

There is no significant association between Fathers' education and their children's attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform.

Table 10 Chi-square value of attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform of PG students in terms of fathers' Education

Fathers Education	Low		Average		High		df	χ^2 value	Result
	Ob	Ex	Ob	Ex	Ob	Ex			
Illiterate	4	3	13	15	4	3	4	6.28	NS
School	11	16	86	82	19	18			
College	8	5	22	23	3	5			

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of χ^2 is 9.49)

The above table shows that the computed "χ^2 "value 6.28 is less than the table value of 9.49 at 0.05 levels and hence it is not significant. Hence it is inferred that there is

no significant association between Fathers' education and their children's attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform.

Interpretations

According to the 't' test Results

Gender

The 't' test result shows that, there is no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform among the postgraduate students with respect to their Gender. This may be due their curiosity to know the innovative and new things and their environments and also their keen watch about the update & day-to-day information of new fashion of all the male and female post graduate students.

Course of study

The 't' test result shows that, there is no significant difference between arts and science post graduate students in their attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform. This may be due the fact that, basically technology is neither a science nor arts. Both arts and science students gain some work on experience in using computer in their school life. Both arts and Science students would have the opportunity to get the awareness of technological instruments. They have ample opportunity to interact with the society through technology. This develops in them reliable and systematic that looks in their life.

Year of studying

The 't' test result shows that, there is no significant difference between first and second year post graduate students in their attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform. This may be due the fact, that both the year students have some opportunity to learn technological instrument with their syllabus. Now a day's youth having an attitude like "they love facebook, and they hate to face the book". So they can communicate with their friends and guides through Facebook sites.

According to 'χ^2' test results

Father's Education Qualification

There is no significant association between Fathers' education and their children's attitude towards adopting Facebook as an e-learning platform. This may be due to fact that mostly fathers are engaged in various household and office works. Even though they are educated they could not spend much time with their wards. And this may be due to the fact that usually father takes less care about the students' progress in studies. Also it is a fact that fathers find it difficult to spend sufficient time with their children. This may be due to fact that a few fathers buy computer and give it to their children for learning purpose. And

children spend more time in home with computer and internet. So they get some awareness of social network.

Educational Implications of the Study

In summary, the current research addresses significant issues regarding the integration of Facebook sites in educational practice and provides an example of how Facebook is transformed to educational networking as well as how it facilitates and enhances teaching and learning. It can be suggested that students are positive towards the use of Facebook sites for educational purposes as well as the development of special Interest groups for educational purposes. Facebook sites increase the interaction for both teacher-student and student-student communication. Lecturers are continuously connected to their students. They can: inform and update them about assignments, and upcoming events; provide useful links, and samples of work outside of the classroom; share educational material, and even provide some general information. In addition, Facebook sites can help students stay in touch with their classmates; they can help each other with their class assignments or examinations, address any questions and concerns as well as collaborate on assignments and group projects. The frequent use of Facebook sites by students and the sites' unique collaborative features (Web 2.0 tools) allows for the development of beneficial educational contexts and is pedagogically promising to both educators and students. The Facebook environment engages students in a new and innovative way.

Social networks can enhance communication, collaboration and sharing; it can enhance student motivation, effective learning, and the classroom climate by offering students opportunities to come "virtually closer" to their educators and classmates. The current study begins to fill the gap that exists in the literature on whether Facebook sites can promote, enhance and support the teaching and learning process. The study demonstrated the educational benefits of Facebook sites by using them for either educational purposes and/or creating special educational interest groups.

The implications of these findings should encourage students and college faculty to adopt the use of Facebook services as part of the teaching and learning process with a specific focus on building learning communities and increasing student engagement. At the same time, faculty should continue their use of traditional learning management systems using Facebook services simply as a means of augmenting instruction.

Conclusion

Facebook services are increasingly being used by educators as teaching and learning tools that supplement traditional classroom environments as they provide new opportunities for enriching existing curriculum through creative, authentic and/or flexible non linear learning experiences (Dunaway, Michelle. 2011). From chat rooms, discussion forums, blogs and wikis, services like Facebook, and/or virtual world's like Second Life, Facebook tools are being meaningfully added to curriculum (Rachna Rathore. 2009). The use of Facebook services in education has been shown to benefit education a number of ways by supporting social learning, constructivist teaching practices, authentic instruction, student centered learning, and on demand access to learning (Morice, Jenny. 2002). More research needs to be conducted into the use of Facebook services and other communicative Web 2.0 technologies in teaching and learning.

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