

## Using Facebook and the Students' Engagement in Learning History

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**Abstract:** Notwithstanding the rising value of Facebook in the lives of college students, the researchers hardly extend their venture to investigate the potential role of this virtual communication tool in the academic sphere. The present study used experiment in a compulsory course at a post-graduate college under the National University of Bangladesh to know students' perceptions toward FB and the learning associated with this tool. The pre-test indicates that a few students used FB as a learning tool; the post-test, on the other hand, reveals significant changes in their outlook regarding the value and functionality of FB, especially the FB discussion forum. Students enjoyed the familiarity and navigability of this tool and reported that they became better acquainted with classmates, felt like valued participants in the course, and learned more course materials. This study suggests that FB may help to enhance college student engagement in learning by developing a community inspired by the academic discourse.

**Keywords:** Facebook; History Student; Student's Perception; Learning Engagement.

### 1. Introduction

Traditionally, learning means the transmission of knowledge from teacher to learner. But in a modern sense, learning is an active knowledge construction process in which a teacher provides support and guidance in students' learning (Rasku-Puttonen, Eteläpelto, Häkkinen & Arvaja, 2002). Without having active participation of the learner, this process could not be effective. Though many reasons are involved in choosing an institute for higher study, success and growth depend on learners' participation. What work they do within the time of their learning is the fundamental question or issue that affects their success. Students' engagement is a 'potentially malleable proximal impact' that ensures shaping students' academic withholding, success, and tractability (Skinner, Kindermann & Furrer, 2009).

Educators are persistently penetrating strategies to enhance students' engagement and ensure taking part inside and outside the classroom (Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). They make it an agenda of the meeting and consider themes to implement. Certainly, now students' engagement, in terms of the learners' experience and research-based teaching, is a cutting-edge issue (Trowler, 2010).

Higher education institutions in Bangladesh are trying persistently to develop the quality of instructions to satisfy their students and make them successful and prolific citizens. But their aims are remaining unachieved. Some challenges like declining resources and swelling class sizes make them bound to follow the traditional approaches. But incredible progress in technology achieved within a decade makes us ambitious. Implausible innovations in this field offer a wider scope for creativity in learning that endures unlocking countless potentials and bringing out the learning from the obsolete one-way teaching system (Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012; Yancey, 2018). Facebook (FB) is one of the important tools being considered today as a promising facilitator to enhance interaction between teacher and student. It provides an opportunity for the student to be engaged in learning inside and beyond the classroom.

FB is very popular for its easy using facility and economical in terms of time and effort invested. Availability of modern gazettes and extensive spread of internet facility reach its using in incredible progress. Educators are intended to utilize this tool as a positive means of learning. Accordingly, it takes place in the education field and promptly becomes a universal tool of learning (Bosch, 2009).

Modern electronic devices, like mobile phones and personal computers, change the fundamentals of human behavior and social communication systems. As a member of modern technology-based society, we avail the facility of browsing the Internet, corresponding e-mail, and communicating on FB, WhatsApp, and Twitter (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Students in higher education also have the experience of availing of these facilities. The higher education institutes also insist them, indirectly, to be habituated with the culture of digital learning, to where they contribute as much as they desire (Wenger, White & Smith, 2009; Rennie & Morrison, 2013; Said, Tahir & Ali, 2014). In most cases, the environment of the higher education institutes is technology enriched which encourages the students to be highly connected with social network sites (Said, Forret & Eames, 2013). It is already stated that FB has some special features that draw the attention of the student, consequently, it performs a significant role in ensuring students' engagement in the learning process (Friesen & Lowe, 2012).

Bangladesh, a country is being digitized fast and the number of smartphone users is increasing rapidly therein. Huge people of this country (about 163 million people; 18.3% of the total population) actively penetrate the internet and practice social networks (House, 2017). The young people, 18 to 24 years old, amounted to about 30% of the total population, are far ahead in using technology than the old. They are very interested in opening a FB account and spend more time on its usage (Hassan, 2014). This group of people represents worldwide the student community enrolled in colleges or universities for higher education, most of whom are in the undergraduate program (Irwin, Ball, Desbrow & Leveritt, 2012; Hassan, 2014).

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The system of education followed in Bangladesh is teacher-centered learning (TCL). The teacher delivers lectures, and students listen to them passively. In this system, students are the inactive audience and hardly engage in the learning process. They have no scope to express views on the topic to be taught and enjoy hardly any chance to exchange ideas with their teachers. The system eventually makes the learning boring, becomes the students reluctant to the lesson, and hardly produces any good output. Students remain under-skilled and the target of realizing worthy education appears to be unsuccessful. However, it meets the immediate demand of an overpopulated and inadequate infra-structured country where the class size is inappreciably large, and the teacher-student ratio is extensively high (Ara & Hossain, 2016; Rahmatuzzman, 2018).

The schooling time, in addition, is not sufficient. Usually, students get 10 to 15 classes for a course they take. National University, the controlling authority, gets an examination a year after eight months from the commencement of the class. There are 137 holidays in a year (52 weekends, 85 holidays). Our classrooms, in most cases, are used for conducting various examinations that hamper the class. In addition, the time allocation for getting classes is very short (usually 45 minutes) within which a teacher delivers a lecture before a big audience. Under this situation, students can hardly comprehend the subject matter (Ara & Hossain, 2016; Rahmatuzzman, 2018).

The teacher is extremely busy with the burden of some clerical jobs like enrollment of the new student and filling up the form of the examinee along with his scheduled duties. S/he usually leaves students after the class, even though they require some clarifications and eventually, are deprived of learning (Ali, 2011).

To meet the challenges, an in-depth study is necessary for testing the usefulness of FB for learning purposes. FB provides the scope of having students in touch and helps to enhance students' engagement in the learning process. It increases teacher-student interaction time and gives students the chance to meet frequently with the teacher when they desire. The tool eventually makes learning easy. This study examines the effectiveness of FB usage in enhancing students' engagement in learning historical concepts. It seeks to find out the answer to how history students use FB, how it affects their engagement in learning, and how we can positively ensure its usage.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

This study focuses on the impacts of History students' Facebook usage for engagement in learning. It seeks to examine how using FB impacts learning and enhances the engagement of the students in comprehending historical concepts. The study has the following objectives.

1. To explore how Facebook is being used by students of history.
2. To identify the relationship between using Facebook and students' engagement in learning.

3. To determine the way through which using Facebook can be optimal to enhance students' engagement in learning.

### 1.3 Significance of the Study

Focusing on the contribution of FB to education, this study tries to explore student engagement in learning, and how it enhances students' academic results. In Bangladesh, though considered a crucial issue, and an essential requirement for higher education, student engagement (behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagements) cannot be ensured for many reasons. The extremely large class size, non-logical student-teacher ratio, and lack of logistic support primarily make it difficult (Ara & Hossain, 2016).

In Bangladesh, the knowledge of using FB for educational purposes in practice is limited. Scholars hardly extend their effort to examine the feasibility of FB as a learning tool, especially in college-level studies. However, some works are conducted in this field but are confined solely to science subjects, particularly within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). A few literature exists in Arts, and the study of history is almost nil. This study, on the contrary, investigates and explores the effects of FB on learning historical concepts and demonstrates how FB impacts history students' engagement in learning.

### 1.4 Operational Definitions

The following sections denote the terminology used in this study that requires explanations.

**a) Student Engagement:** Engagement means in this study is students' attention, curiosity, and interest to learn. Their devotion and passion for the learning process during the learning time, and their motivation and progress in learning (Alexson & Flick, 2011).

**b) Student Performance:** Student performance denotes what a student achieves in their short or long-term learning outcomes along with their academic activities (Steinmayr, Ricarda Meißner, Anja, Weidinger Anne F., Wirthwein Linda, 2014).

## 2. Literature Review

Nevertheless the universal impacts, most of the research on FB is confined solely to the North American context (Bosch, 2009). But in recent times a few number of researchers from other parts of the world start research on this subject that can be split into four groups. These are social networking and social capital, construction of identity, privacy concerns, and prospective use for the academic sphere (Bosch, 2009). The present study deals with learning matters so that we will be limited within the academic sphere.

### 2.1 Student Engagement in Learning

Engagement is a crucial issue that draws attention of the educators and policymakers. They give emphasis on this issue to enhance learning in higher education. Time and effort allocated for and spent on the learning activities is the

single best indicator of students' learning and growth (Pace, 1980; McGarity & Butts, 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini 1991; Astin, 1984, 1993; Sandholtz, Ringstaff & Dwyer, 1994; Kuh, 2009). Simultaneously, it draws attention of the scholars, and a lots of studies have been directed on the subject (Astin, 1984; McGarity & Butts, 1984; Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 1994; Pike, Kuh, & Massa-McKinley, 2008; Spires, Lee, Turner, & Johnson, 2008; Kuh, 2009; Minocha, 2009; Strydom, Mentz, & Kuh, 2010; Gachago, & Ivala, 2012; Chambers, Chiang, 2012; Ivala & Gachago, 2012; Junco, 2012; Kioko & Ivala, 2013; Ivala & Kioko, 2013; Mutwarasibo, 2014; Ngah, Vadeveloo, Aziz & Mohammed, 2018).

Alexander Astin, a leading education theorist, defines engagement as the volume of physical and emotional effort devoted by the students to their learning experience (Astin, 1984). He develops a theory of student engagement containing the following creeds. Firstly, student engagement denotes the speculation of physical and emotional energy. Secondly, it occurs along with a variety. Thirdly, it has both quantitative and qualitative features. Fourthly, the amount of learning and development of the learner related to the scholastic program is directly connected to the quality and quantity of his engagement. And lastly, effective learning exercise is directly linked to the ability to improve student engagement.

Students' curiosity, attentiveness, optimism, and learning desire, indicate their level of motivation, estimate the learning progress, and are considered the student engagement in learning (Alexson & Flick, 2011). Apart from the widespread confusion, most scholars divide it into three major categories- behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagements (Fredericks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004).

**a) Behavioural Engagement:** Behavioural engagement includes participation in the learning- taking part in societal or co-curricular activities and are measured in performance. It emphasizes attaining optimal outcomes (results) and tends to prevent dropouts of the learners from the learning sphere, positive conduct of the learner demarcated by some researchers (Finn, 1989; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Finn, Pannoza & Voelkl, 1995; Finn & Rock, 1997; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004). Obeying rules of the institution, running through the classroom norms, and not articulating disruptive conduct are considered the Behavioural engagement in learning.

**b) Emotional Engagement:** Emotional engagement includes the interest and value of the student and emphasizes the response (positive and negative) to the tutors, peers, teachers, or institution. The sense of being significant to the institute, and thankfulness for success in institute-related outcomes, are considered the measuring parameter (Finn, 1989; Voelkl, 1997).

**c) Cognitive Engagement:** A student's level of investment in learning is defined as the cognitive engagement in learning. It includes being thoughtful, strategic, and enthusiastic to give the effort required to comprehend intricate ideas or achieve expertise in difficult skills (Meece, Blumenfeld & Hoyle, 1988; Fredricks & McColskey, 2012).

What is meant by student engagement in use? Conflict is being prevailed among the theorists. Some of them mean it as a responsible measure that gives a universal index of student participation, while others consider it as a variable in education research that is intended to know, explain, and foretell learners' behaviour in learning settings (Axelson & Flick, 2011). The formerly mentioned concept cannot be considered fit for the study purpose. Many types of engagement and their connections with education and learning settings make it complicated to define and measure explicit examples of engagement which impede the study of the issues (Axelson & Flick, 2011). Thus, a more contracted definition of the term is necessary would be confined to learners' level of participation in the learning process. Even though, we should be more specific in asking questions on this issue (student engagement). We could sharpen up the questions by including specific learning objectives, settings of learning, types of learners, and the processes of learning (Axelson & Flick, 2011). As Axelson and Flick instruct, "we might ask, how do we engage (cognitively, behaviourally, and/or emotionally) type X students most effectively in type Y learning processes/contexts so that they will attain knowledge, skill, or disposition Z" (p. 41).

## **2.2 Facebook as a Learning Tool**

In 2004, Mark Zuckerberg, a Harvard student created Facebook using for the students of that institute only. During that time, prospective students can attach brief written files and pictures to their profiles. Now it is an open and worldwide used tool that deals primarily with six components: profiles, status, networks, groups, applications, and fan pages (Reuben, 2008). It provides prompt messaging, opening email accounts, dealing with newsfeeds, organizing events, and playing games. A user can be connected with his friends by messaging notes, adding images or comments, and importing messages on FB (Roeder, 2008). Open Platform of FB, in addition, offers the third party to participate directly and his posts will be shown also in the directory (Arrington, 2008).

Notwithstanding educators' recognition of the possibility of using FB as a learning tool, the literature on this subject is not growing rapidly (Bosch, 2009). Some researchers examine students' feelings about instruction through FB (Hewitt & Forte, 2006), measure the effects of student-teacher relations on FB in learning (Mazer, Murphy & Simonds, 2007), and the danger of using FB to destroy both- the instructional tools and the classroom (Bugeja, 2006).

Following the above-mentioned scholars, a researcher considers FB usage in the education sphere as an opportunity (Matthews, 2006), while others mention it as an online version of the Blackboard (O'Neill, 2007; Bosch, 2009). Nowadays, FB is considered distinct from other social sites for its strong roots in the educational field.

## **2.3 Facebook and Students' Engagement**

Although FB is primarily a networking platform for social connectivity, now it is being used and recognized as an effective teaching-learning tool (Bosch, 2009). Unlike other institutes that provide traditional websites (e.g., Moodle and other

tools), students are choosing FB and are engaging their-selves with its using (Irwin, Desbrow & Leveritt, 2012, 2012). The FB-supported learning environment provides students to form an individual learning sphere within and beyond the existing educational settings (Barron, 2006; Ivala & Gachago, 2012). It can extend on-campus learning outside the institutes. Availability of cell phone usage in developing countries, and this being the main means of penetrating the internet, mobile technology should be used to enhance students' interaction and engagement in learning (Ivala & Gachago, 2012).

There are a few studies on the role of social media on student engagement in learning (Barron, 2006; Junco, 2011; Ivala & Gachago, 2012). They find out the relationship between time spent online and student engagement with the practical world (Astin, 1984). Another two major works were conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (2007), and Heiberger and Harper (2008). The former studies include all social websites, while the latter concentrates on FB use only (Junco, 2011).

Some scholars advocate for incorporating FB into the learning sphere (Bosch, 2009; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). They are in favor of utilizing the potential of this tool for learning and getting benefits connected with augmented communication among the students.

## **2.4 Knowledge Gap**

Researches on FB using in educational purposes show the advantages and disadvantages of its usage as a teaching-learning tool. A few of them extend venture to examine what extent using FB draws students' attention to use it for educational purpose. Even though, they hardly observe how FB affects students' engagement in learning. The context they get to examine and the perceptions they tend to explore are different. Usually, they take science students, more specifically, the students within STEM as the population. In most cases, the range of these studies is confined to a secondary level, though, some of them are conducted at the undergraduate level. So far as the researcher knows, no study on History students' perception of using FB has been conducted yet, at least in Bangladesh.

The study, of course, has immense importance for showing paths to which student engagement could be enhanced, and eventually, the quality of teaching-learning could be improved. In the absence of adequate research, this study ushers to fill the gap and contributes to developing the instruction system of Bangladesh.

## **3. Research Methodology**

A mixed method approach is applied to address the objectives of the study. Both primary and secondary data were used to draw the conclusion. To collect the quantitative data, a cross-sectional survey was adopted in this research. There are total 246 students in first year honors at the history department in the Rajshahi College. Therefore, the population size of this study is 246, and as the sample of the research, 60 students were chosen from them through random sampling. They were

the respondents of this research. In addition, in-depth interviews are conducted with six participants for knowing respondents' deeper understanding on subject. Moreover, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is conducted for qualitative analysis.

### **3.1 Ethical Consideration**

At the time of data collection, permission was sought from the participants. Initially, a briefing mentioning the pros and cons of participation was delivered. The assurance was given to them that their name and address would not be used in the research, and their answer and views would be preserved and used confidentially.

A general information sheet and a consent sheet were given to every participant. They carefully read the sheets and gave their consent. Accordingly, they participate and provide data to the researcher.

### **3.2 Quasi Experiments**

60 participants who were chosen randomly from the students of first-year honors history class, divided purposively into two groups, the 'experimental' and the 'control', with equal quantity (30 in each group). The 'experimental group' is converted into a FB group and is provided virtual learning along with the classroom settings. On the other hand, the 'control group' had not had such a chance. They were retained in the traditional learning settings. The feedback from both groups was taken into consideration, and the following experiments were conducted.

#### **a) Experiment 1: Pre-test**

A pre-test was conducted with the Likert-scale questionnaire developed by Lari (2014) containing ten statements based on five levels stretching from 1 to 5 (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree) format. The questionnaire was distributed among 60 participants (in both groups) and collected after having a response. These reflect the perception of the participants toward using FB and eventually showed the answer of the objective 1 (how Facebook is being used by the students of History?).

#### **b) Experiment 2: Post-test**

For three weeks, the researcher provided intervention purposively by two different means. Firstly, the lecture-based traditional learning method was applied to the controlled group. A tutor (the researcher) provided two one-hour classes a week with PowerPoint slides but in a conventional manner. On the other hand, by adding FB as a learning tool and making an FB group from the learner of the 'experimental group', the researcher offered all communication facilities to them.

A survey through a questionnaire to explore participants' perception towards the FB was conducted, and like the pre-test, a Likert scale of 5 levels stretched was applied therein. This test included the 'experimental group' only. The intention is to know how FB effectively dis-engaged or engaged the participants in learning.



### **c) Experiment 3: Assessment**

To assess the motivation progress of the learner an in-course test was conducted. Questions of the test were developed by the Department of History, Rajshahi College, Rajshahi under National University, Bangladesh. 20 multiple choice questions on the instructed topic (History of the Emergence of Independent Bangladesh; Chapter 1: Description of the country and its people) were selected for the test. The total mark allocated for the test was 20. Each question yielded 1 mark.

The test included both groups to compare the performance of the 'experiment group' with the 'controlled group' so that the impact of FB use in the learning process could be determined.

### **3.3 Procedure**

Five students (female 2, and male 3) from the participants, knowledgeable in the subject, were chosen and seated for an interview with a semi-structured questionnaire. The result of the initiative was impressive and helpful for clarifying the overall assessment.

It is already mentioned that a pre-test and a post-test were carried out to know participants perceptions toward FB use in learning and to show its changing trend. The former, conducted with all participants at the initial stage of the study, was concerned solely with finding out how History students were using FB; the latter applied to the experimental group aiming the question- to what extent using FB affects student engagement in learning? It also tried to observe how FB changed students' perception of its usage in the learning sphere.

To assess the progress of participants' learning, all participants, both experimental and controlled groups, were seated at a short exam. The researcher compared the results of two groups to decide the impact of FB use on the learning progress.

Finally, the researcher arranged an FGD with the participants and the summary of the responses presented before them to rectify the data that helped clarify the conceptions and ensure the reliability and validity of the data.

### **3.4 Methodological Limitations**

There are some limitations to this study. Self-report questionnaires and interviews of the students are used widely for data collection for their practical utility and easy administering in classroom settings. If the participants are biased, then their answer does not reflect the facts regarding students' engagement in learning (Appleton, Christenson, Kim & Reschly, 2006; Hartini, Yaakub, Abdul-Talib, & Saud, 2017). Secondly, a limitation coming out from the context of the study is the sampling method. About 1500 students, studying in the Department of History, could participate in the study. But only a portion of the first-year honors students was considered in the study. The reason is simply time constraint that affects the data collection methods. Researcher applied the cross-sectional method for data collection to ensure more consistent technique, whereas the longitudinal

method also effected the result (Hartini, et. al., 2017). Finally, to determine the trend of participants' responses, IBM SPSS version 20 was used. But no tool (software) was used to assess student engagement levels in FB usage.

#### **4. Findings**

At the initial stage of the study, the researcher took a pre-test to know students' reception regarding FB usage in the learning process and the time they spent on it for the learning purpose. How were they enthusiastic in their learning and punctual in doing their assigned task? The students, it is observed, were not likely to be interested in using FB for educational purposes. The means of the responses to the questions regarding this issue and their standard deviations indicate the inconsistency of the participants' perceptions of using FB for educational purposes (table 1 in the appendix). The statement of an interviewee, "I always thought that FB using would waste the time I could read or prepare for the class, reflects the results. But in the post-test, we see a tremendous change in it." Here the participants are consistently in favor of FB use for learning purposes. The new experience in the FB group, opened by the tutor, testing learning facilities on FB brought a change in perception.

In terms of students' engagement in learning, three questions were chosen from the National Survey for Students' Engagement (NSSE) and set accordingly in the instruments (see table 3 in the appendix). They, although, were asked before the interviewee, included in the questionnaire, and measured by the Likert scale (1 to 5). The pre and post-test results were different.

In the pre-test, three questions were asked intentionally to the participants to understand the fact; how much the participants were regularly taking part in the class and class tasks (behavioral engagement)? Secondly, how much they are attentive in those tasks (emotional engagement). Finally, did they do the work with care and punctuality (cognitive engagement)? The means of these three factors are 1.93, 2.63, and 2.43, respectively (see table 3 in the appendix). These results do not exhibit any consistency for their high standard deviations (0.828, 1.033, and 0.971).

The results in the post-test are changed significantly. The means of the responses increased dramatically from the pre-test. Simultaneously, the standard deviations decreased except in Q1, representing progress in value. Using a familiar tool (FB) for learning purposes inspired students to participate in the learning process, eventually increasing students' engagement. An interviewee observes, "Learning in others' support makes my study easy. You never are fatigued because of having joys in learning with FB that encourage me to be involved." The participants who were present in the FGD expressed similar views.

Student engagement links with student performance reflected in academic achievements (Skinner, Kindermann & Furrer, 2009). The result of the experimental group in the examination was satisfactory compared to the controlled group (see Table 5 in the appendix). There was a correlation between

FB usage and academic performance. Using FB in this respect enhanced the student engagement reflected positively in the result.

Though there was a positive co-relation in FB use for academic purposes, the participants mentioned some limitations. These are as follows: (1) though most students have smartphones, some even use no phones or the backdated gazettes that do not support FB; (1) Internet connection is not available and speedy enough to use FB and communicate smoothly with tutors and peers; (2) unexpected adds disturb often injure attention and engagement in learning; (3) it could affect the social position of the user by reducing communication with others. To improve using FB to enhance engagement in learning, participants provide several suggestions which are shown in the recommendations section.

## **5. Discussion**

Online forum discourse is one of the imperative pedagogical tools that can enhance students' engagement in learning and stimulate academic discourse (Zhu, 2007; Palmer, Holt, & Bray, 2008; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). But taking part in an online forum could be threatened for many reasons. The lack of students' familiarity with online discourse and slow progress in conversation discourage students from online discussion. Shifting the mode of Internet discourse, FB, as a fast-developing technology tool, can explicitly address these issues (Goodwin, Kennedy & Vetere, 2010; Yang, Wang, Woo & Quek, 2011). Then a vital question is remained to be raised. Would students receive FB as a learning technology tool? Recommendation from the findings is enthusiastically positive.

This study showed some significant arguments about the prospective importance of FB in education. Firstly, FB presents an incomparable comfort and accessibility that attracts many students (Bosch, 2009; Smith & Caruso, 2010). In the post-test, in terms of using technology, this study supports the result of other studies that students in higher education use FB extensively (Christofides, Muise & Desmarais, 2009; Bosch, 2009; Juceviciene & Valineviciene, 2010; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012).

Usually, the learners are unwilling to raise questions in the classes because of their shyness. They are hesitant to stand for face-to-face askings before their classmates and the teacher. But on FB, they feel it easy. An interviewee observes, "if you ask a question to 100 students in a class, nobody will raise their hand, but they will reply boldly on Facebook." FB provides students with a hesitation-free environment in raising queries and reduces fear of the tutor by increasing interaction with teachers and peers. These draw learners to the education sphere and engage them in learning.

Senior learners customarily do not be mixed themselves with the juniors, which deprives the latter of having to learn from the senior. FB makes them virtual friends,

provides scope to share their knowledge, and enthusiastically increases learners' interest (Bosch, 2009). Consequently, it enhances their engagement in learning.

To ensure student engagement in class sessions, FB proves an effective tool. Most of the problems were solved by participating in FB conversations. In this situation, students are confident, and the tutor is conscious of the class task that makes the class interactive, ensures effective student engagement, and consequently strengthens the previous research (Maloney, 2007; Bosch, 2009).

FB creates appeal in the students for its using facility that helps to minimize many common obstacles in participating the online discourse. Many students, who were upset initially, became spontaneous in online conversation and excitedly favored FB. The reasons are the familiarity of FB, its frequent use, and its navigation facility that also reveals earlier researches (Dwyer, Hiltz & Passerini, 2007; Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009; Smith & Caruso, 2010; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). In addition, participants mentioned that- (1). FB helps to feel more connected to fellow learners. (2) It influences to exchange information. Advantages of knowing fellow learners, learning subject matters, determining the way of thinking about the subject, and feeling as worthy members of the course results FB more positive scores by the participants. FB also develops a learning community. It helps to share ideas and get to know each other in a helpful setting, which may be considered one of the significant strengths of FB that also support prior evidence (Bosch, 2009; Mazman & Usluel, 2010; Grosbeck, Bran & Tiru, 2011; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). How these explicit features enhance the community building? Future research might intend to investigate the issue.

In terms of students' engagement in learning, the result is enthusiastic. It is shown that learning with FB is more systematic and logical which helps students to comprehend effectively the subject posted and discussed. The students go to the internet in a relaxed mood, see posts, share ideas and seek clarification that allows them to understand the subject clearly. FB draws students' attention and eventually enhances their engagement in learning, makes learning easy, and follows the result of the previous study (Maloney, 2007; Bosch, 2009). Teachers can post their lesson by creating a group, introducing sources to read (books, journals, blogs etc.) and call the students to solve or discuss an assigned subject. These enhance relation and interaction between teachers and students. It also develops the relationships of fellow students. How does FB support these positive results? It might help to reflect on the successes in the courses where online group discussion (OGD) on FB happened. The member of FBG showed considerably higher scores in the post-test in all variables.

The ability and strategy of the researcher could impact OGD. He posted links to literature related to the class instructions and blogs to clarify them. In addition, he shares five to ten discussion issues of the course a week. Students participate in OGDs that motivate them to be engaged (Al-Shalchi, 2009). Which encouraged them to be more engaged? It is because of the variety in his posting, e. g. links to

literature, PDF files, PPT from reputed institutions, raising questions for discussion, etc. Moreover, as it is an explanatory discussion of our national history, the course content encourages them to be engaged emotionally.

The department of History used D-Alert software to provide information to the student, bearing no facility for the students to communicate with the tutor when they needed. They could use e-mail to communicate with the tutor and post their materials, that were a complicated process. On the other hand, FB offered them an easy way to meet this demand. Students mentioned that it was easier to communicate and post material on FB than on other means. It encouraged students to contribute more frequently to the learning process, and insisted the learners to shape a solid sense of learning community (Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). The interview data also support the decision. A participant stated, "OGD on FB gave us scope to know the potentials of our friends which insists us to respect each other, reduces our distance, and makes our relationship more firm-footed."

However, used as a prolific learning tool, FB has some limitations. Firstly, it may engage students outside the learning elements that make them trackless from the study assigned by the institute. A few participants showed this sentiment that also supports the results of the previous researches (Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley, 2009; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012).

Some participants thought that learning is a work and using FB is a recreation and should not be used for the both purpose, makes students reluctant to use FB as a learning tool (Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley, 2009; Goodwin, Kennedy & Vetere, 2010; Grosseck, Bran & Tiru, 2011; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012). Jurisdiction of personal matters and relationships on the internet was another concern. Some participants, though a few, argued that using FB in the learning sphere could threaten the privacy and virtual safety issues is a vital concern. (Lewis, Kaufman & Christakis, 2008; Madge, Meek, Wellens & Hooley, 2009; Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn & Hughes, 2009; Young & Quan-Haase, 2009; Bair & Bair, 2011; Hurt, Moss, Bradley, Larson, Lovelace, Prevost, Riley, Domizi & Camus, 2012).

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The researcher draws conclusion based on the data that FB could be an effective tool for academic enhancement. The findings indicate, FB is optimal in enhancing students' engagement and effective in comprehending historical concepts. Accordingly, many participants are in favor of the opinion that FB is more beneficial as a learning tool. In addition, the respondents suggest that the concerned department should take some measures to facilitate learners. Consequently, their most significant recommendations are as follows: (1) free high speed Wi-Fi facility could be provided to the student so that they can access

the internet easily; (2) department of History can give loans to poor students for purchasing smartphones; (3) the department should provide ICT training to the students and teachers to improve their technological knowledge.

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