

# Presentation 7



Technology, Tools & Media:  
Learners' Perceptions Towards the  
Potentials of Facebook as a  
Supplementary Virtual Learning  
Platform at Open University  
Malaysia (OUM)

Nurul Hidayah Binti Mohamed Ghozali  
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# Introduction

## Research Background

- Facebook is essentially a successful online Social Network Site (SNS), founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes as way to support the communication at Harvard University.
- Now, Facebook has become one of the most popular SNS in the world, including students in higher educations.
- A Social Networking Site (SNS) is an online site that individuals use to build and reflect social relations in accordance with their interests (Aydin, 2012).
- Mazman et al, (2010) wrote that studies showed that social network tools support educational activities by making interaction, collaboration, active participation, information and resource sharing, and critical thinking possible.
- Moreover, previous research studies indicate that Facebook is preferable than other SNS for higher education learning in view of the fact the students of higher education are already engaged in the Facebook environment (Chiroma et al., 2016).
- Furthermore, Sanchez et al., (2014) commented that Facebook's educational potential is not usually considered as a formal learning tool, but as a means that can potentially support informal learning through communication and interaction.

## Key Definitions

- A Social Networking Site (SNS) is an online site that individuals use to build and reflect social relations in accordance with their interests (Aydin, 2012).
- A virtual learning environment (VLE) in educational technology is a Web-based platform for the digital aspects of courses of study, usually within educational institutions.

# Introduction

## Facebook Trend Worldwide and in Malaysia

- Alhazmi et al., (2013) cited that Facebook is increasingly gaining more popularity and is already recognized as the most dominant SNS used among students in higher education which makes it a widely used tool for communication and exchange of ideas.
- He further added that the level of Facebook usage has steadily increased over time and recently, Facebook has reached 1.15 billion monthly active users.
- In Malaysia alone, 13.3 million or 45.5% of the total population in the country is Facebook active users which put Malaysia on the 8<sup>th</sup> spot in Asia and 21<sup>st</sup> place in the world (Said et al., 2014).

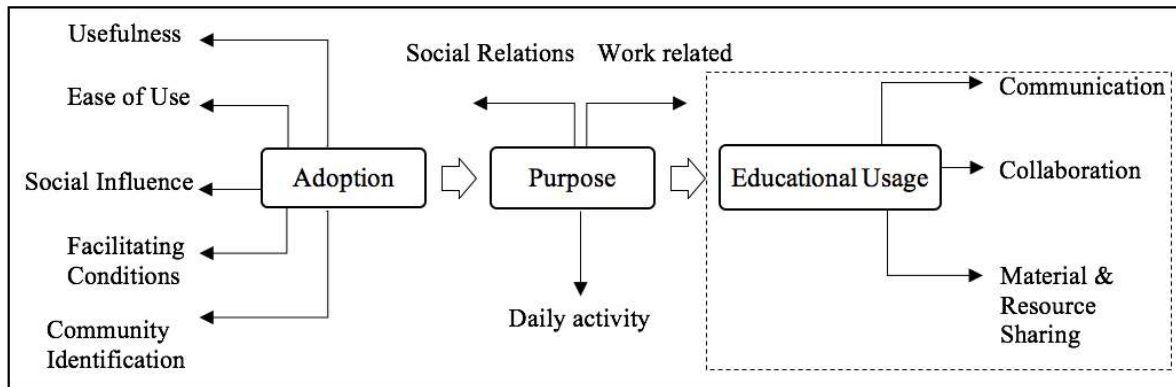
## Facebook and Related Researches in Academic Context

Category	Author
Facebook and academic performance	Gonzalez et al., 2016; Michikyan et al., 2015; Moghavvemi et al., 2017; Thuseethan et al.; 2015
Learners' perceptions on Facebook usage in educational settings	Roblyer et al., 2010; Sanchez et al., 2014; Low et al., 2016; Alhazmi et al., 2013
Using Facebook as an educational environment/ tool	Wang et al; 2012; Stanciu et al.,2012; Aydin, 2012; Cerda et al., 2011; Yoke et al., 2016; Kramer et al., 2015; Manca et al., 2014; Tiryakioglu et al., 2011; Prescott et al., 2013; Mazman et al., 2010; Gurcan, 2015; Pollara et al., 2011; Coklar, 2012; Nguyen, 2017
Using Facebook for teaching and learning	Bosch, 2009; Chiroma et al., 2016; Van-Doorn et al.,2013; Perez et al., 2013; Manca et al., 2013; Said et al., 2014; O'Neil et al., 2016; Yunus et al., 2012; Ventura et al., 2013; Espinosa, 2015; Ractham et al., 2011

# Introduction

## Facebook Features for Educational Use

Mazman et al., (2010) has designed a structural model explaining how users could use Facebook for educational purposes.



Source: Modeling Educational Usage of Facebook (Mazman et al., 2010).

### Communication

Enabling communication among students and their instructors, facilitating class discussions, following announcements about classes and courses, departments or schools, delivery of homework and assignments by teachers, informing about resources and links related to courses.

### Collaboration

Activities such as people's joining to academic groups related to their schools, departments or classes and carrying on group works by sharing homework, projects, ideas, and etc.

### Material & Resource Sharing

Activities such as exchanging multimedia resources, videos, audio materials, animated videos, resources and documents.

# Introduction

## Facebook Features for Educational Use

Facebook's existing features that can be made to use for educational purposes can be summarized as per following [Cerde et al., (2011); Ractham et al., (2011); Kramer et al., (2015); Tiryakiogly et al., (2011); Liu (2018)]:

- Facebook groups,
- Easy access and sharing multimedia resources,
- Facebook poll,
- Facebook wall, chat, comment and direct message function,
- Integration of Facebook with other applications,
- Facebook user-friendly interface,
- Readily powerful support for mobile applications across all operating systems,
- Facebook live function,
- Facebook events tool to send reminders on activities, classes and etc., and
- Facebook real-time notifications allow learners to receive updated news.

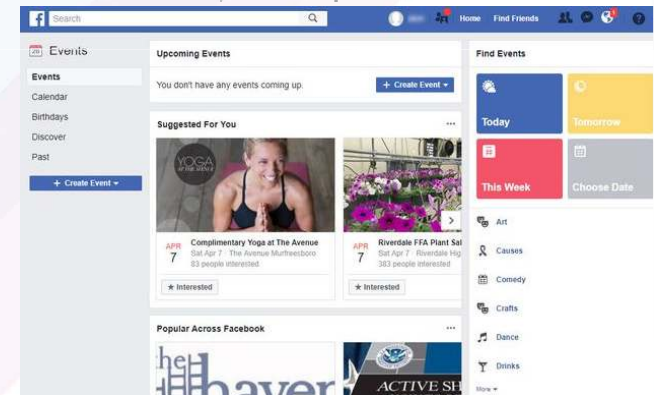
 **Damon Petite** created a poll.  
Just now · 22

Which super power would you rather have?



Flight  Strength

This poll ends in 1 day.



# Introduction

## OUM's Existing Virtual Learning Environment/Platform

OUM Learning Management System (myINSPIRE)

It is a user-friendly learning system that allows learners to interact with their peers, tutors and facilitators as well as gives access to course materials and the digital library. Aside from that, learners can also receive announcements and access personal details (academic records, transcripts, timetable, billing information).

Official Mobile Application (myOUM)

Learners receive instant notifications about the latest announcements (results, assignment deadlines, convocation status, timetables, exam dates, financial details etc.) Other features include integration with Google calendar, online registration and online payment options (Open University Malaysia, 2018).

## Study Purpose and Research Questions

Due to the various interactive and collaborative features that Facebook provides, it is important that the university seek to maximize the educational potentials of Facebook and to take advantage of the educational aspects that Facebook has to offer. The purpose of this study is to investigate learners' perception towards the potentials of Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform at OUM.

What are the learners' perceptions towards existing Facebook features that can potentially be used as a supplementary virtual learning platform?

What are the learners' perceptions towards the potential advantages of using Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform?

What are the learner's perceptions about the suggestions on how to make Facebook an effective supplementary virtual learning platform?

# Methodology

## Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

- This is a descriptive and quantitative cross sectional online study using a structured online questionnaire that is created online using Typeform (<https://www.typeform.com>).
- The data collected for this research will be primary data collected from postgraduate students from the Masters' of Occupational Safety & Health Risk Management (MOSHRM) Program at OUM.
- A purposive sampling method is used for this study with the basis that all respondents are known to have a Facebook account. According to Etikan et al., (2016), this method is typically used in qualitative research to identify and select the information-rich cases for the most proper utilization of available resources which involves identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest.
- The sample size for this study is 38 and the respondents (learners) are selected based on voluntary basis and all responses are anonymous. The data is sufficient for this study since sample size larger than 30 and less than 500 is appropriate for most research (Roscoe, 1975).
- The link for the online questionnaire hosted by Typeform was distributed via Whatsapp application whereby learners can complete the questionnaire using their smartphones or desktop.
- The questionnaire is in English language and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and the respondents were given seven-day period to perform the questionnaire.

# Methodology

## Instrumentations

Questionnaire Title: My Perceptions Toward the Potentials of Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform at Open University Malaysia (OUM)

Four Sections (23 questions altogether):

Section A	Personal Information (6 questions)
Section B	Facebook Features as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform (7 questions)
Section C	Potential Advantages of Using Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform (7 questions)
Section D	Suggestions on How to Make Facebook an Effective Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform (3 questions)

Response Evaluation:

Section A	Categorical and Subjective Response Evaluation
Section B, C, D	5-Point Likert scale is used (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)

- ✓ A face validity test was performed on the questionnaire to test for reliability whereby pre-test questionnaires were performed on 10% of the sample size before actual data collection to ensure the understanding of the questions to help improve the quality of data.
- ✓ Based on their feedback, a few amendments were made on the questionnaires before the link was distributed.

# Methodology

## Online Questionnaire

**facebook** My Perceptions Toward the Potentials of Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform at Open University Malaysia (OUM)

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on learners' perceptions of Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform at Open University Malaysia (OUM). This survey has FOUR (4) sections and should take less than 10 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please contact Nurul Hidayah at nurulhidayah711@oum.edu.my Thank you for completing this survey!

**Start** press ENTER

### Section A: Personal Information

**Continue** press ENTER

1. How old are you? \*

Type your answer here...

2. Gender:

Type or select an option

- Male
- Female

3. Which semester are you currently in? \*

Type your answer here...

4. How often do you use Facebook in general? \*

Type or select an option

- Daily/Almost daily
- Weekly/Almost weekly
- Few times a month
- Few times a year

5. In my opinion, I would like to use Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform at Open University Malaysia (OUM). \*

Type or select an option

- Yes
- No (Please state reason below)
- I don't care

If you answered 'No' to the question above, please state reason below.

Type your answer here...

Section B: Facebook Features as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform Please choose the level that best suits your perception. (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)

**Continue** press ENTER

1. Facebook Group function can make it easier for learners to find each other to communicate and collaborate more effectively.



2. Lecturers/tutors can use the Facebook Wall function, Direct Messaging and Chat function to communicate and collaborate (class rescheduling, quiz/test reminders, updates on chapters covered in previous classes, teasers on upcoming chapters to pre-study before class, assignment submission deadlines, perform brainstorming/discussion, make announcements) more effectively.



3. Facebook makes accessing and sharing multimedia resources easily (lecture notes via sharing of links, related documents via Google document links, group presentation videos etc.)



4. Facebook Event Tool can also be used to schedule and remind group participants of events/classes/quizzes/tests/final exams.



5. Facebook Poll can be used to decide on class rescheduling matter/group assignments etc.



6. Facebook Live can be used as an effective platform to discuss assignment questions outside of class hours, making it more convenient for both lecturers/tutors and learners since a multiple two-way communication can be performed at the same time.



7. Facebook Mobile Application makes information sharing real-time and more effective as information and knowledge can be accessed anywhere at any time more easily.



# Methodology

## Online Questionnaire

“ Section C: Potential Advantages of Using Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform Please choose the level that best suits your perception. (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)

Continue press ENTER

14\* 1. Facebook provides peer to peer support, especially in assisting each other to solve assignment questions, sharing of related information and knowledge and even to provide motivation to complete the program.



15\* 2. Simplicity and familiarity of the Facebook interface and friendly features makes it comfortable and easier for participants to adapt to Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform.



16\* 3. Facebook makes participants feel a part of a learning community and allow themselves to express better academically.



17\* 4. Increased activity and collaboration in Facebook groups can make learners become more interested with the subject.



18\* 5. Facebook can provide effective direct communication with lecturers/tutors if learners face any difficulties to come to class/ask questions in class.



19\* 6. Facebook provides an effective platform to exchange and share knowledge and information.



20\* 7. Making ad-hoc class related announcements via Facebook may increase attendance.



“ Section D: Suggestions on How to Make Facebook an Effective Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform Please choose the level that best suits your perception. (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)

Continue press ENTER

21\* 1. University to come up with a strict guideline and policies on privacy protection, cyber-bullying and responsible sharing of information.



22\* 2. To have a reporting system readily available and to formulate a Consequence Guidelines for abusive behavior on Facebook.



23\* 3. Participants are to make a separate account from their social/personal Facebook accounts and will only be accepted into university's closed group once their account has been appropriately vetted by a committee.



# Results & Discussion

## Section A: Demographic Data of Respondents

- All data obtained and collected from the online questionnaire was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 23.0.
- A 100% response rate was obtained, all 38 respondents completed the questionnaire.

Age Group	Gender	Semester	Frequency of Facebook Usage
<24 years' old (5.26%) 25 to 34 years' old (47.36%) 35 to 44 years' old (31.57%) >45 years' old (15.79%)	Male (55.26%) Female (44.74%)	Semester 1-3 (28.94%) Semester 4-6 (42.11%) Semester 7 and above (28.94%)	Daily/Almost daily (78.95%) Weekly/Almost weekly (15.79%) Few times a month (5.26%) Few times a year (0%)

- The largest age group of respondents are from the 25 to 34 years' old group (47.36%) followed by 35 to 44 years' old group (31.57%) which are groups of age that are typical for part-time learners who are also mostly full-time working learners.
- Male respondents are higher (55.26%) than female respondents (44.74%) which is common for MOSHRM program whereby there are typically more male than female learners in the program, or even in the working field itself.
- 42.11% respondents are from 4th to 6th semester of their studies followed by respondents from 1st to 3rd semester and 7th semester above with both 28.94% respectively.
- 78.95% respondents use Facebook daily or almost daily followed by 15.79% respondents who uses Facebook weekly or almost weekly. Not surprisingly, there are no respondents who uses Facebook only few times per year.

# Results & Discussion

## Section A: Demographic Data of Respondents

- A relationship between demographic variables and an learners' opinion on a given general statement was investigated using the Chi square test.
- For all the variables tested; age group, gender, semester and frequency of Facebook usage, all the p-value is lower than the significance level, thus the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, all the tested variables are associated with learners' opinion on using Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform.

Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)	I don't care (%)
In my opinion, I would like to use Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform at Open University Malaysia (OUM)'	76.32	10.53 •Privacy concerns •Facebook is for social only •It is not appropriate •Satisfied with existing platforms.	13.16

Note:

To test the validity of hypothesis, a significant level of 0.05 is used where a smaller value of  $p$  is considered as significant. Throughout this data analysis, the same assumption will be applied, which is, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is that [variable 1] is not associated with [variable 2] and the alternative hypothesis is that [variable 1] is associated with [variable 2]. Therefore, the null hypothesis is that there is no association between the variables and the opinion statement. The chosen significance level is 0.05.

# Results & Discussion

## Section B: Facebook Features as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

Statements	5-Point Likert Scale (%)					Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
1.Facebook Group function can make it easier for learners to find each other to communicate and collaborate more effectively.	0	5.26	10.53	13.16	71.05	4.5
2.Lecturers/tutors can use the Facebook Wall function, Direct Messaging and Chat function to communicate and collaborate (class rescheduling, quiz/test reminders, updates on chapters covered in previous classes, teasers on upcoming chapters to pre-study before class, assignment submission deadlines, perform brainstorming/discussion, make announcements) more effectively.	0	0	2.63	13.16	78.95	4.8
3.Facebook makes accessing and sharing of multimedia resources easily (lecture notes via sharing of links, related documents via Google document links, group presentation videos etc.)	2.63	5.26	7.89	68.42	15.79	3.9
4.Facebook Event Tool can also be used to schedule and remind group participants of events/classes/quizzes/tests/final exams.	13.16	13.16	52.63	18.42	2.63	2.8
5.Facebook Poll can be used to decide on class rescheduling matter/group assignments etc.	5.26	2.63	13.16	15.79	63.16	4.3
6.Facebook Live can be used as an effective platform to discuss assignment questions outside of class hours, making it more convenient for both lecturers/tutors and learners since a multiple two-way communication can be performed at the same time.	23.68	7.89	28.94	31.58	7.89	2.9
7.Facebook Mobile Application makes information sharing real-time and more effective as information and knowledge can be accessed anywhere at any time more easily.	0	2.63	2.63	84.21	10.53	4.0

5-Point Likert Scale									
1	Strongly Disagree	2	Disagree	3	Neutral	4	Agree	5	Strongly Agree

Legend:

■ Highest Mean

■ Lowest Mean

# Results & Discussion

## Section B: Facebook Features as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

- Learners recorded a highest perception with a mean of 4.8 for the Facebook Wall function, Direct Messaging and Chat function whereby most learners strongly agree (78.95%) that it can help them communicate and collaborate (class rescheduling, quiz/test reminders, updates on chapters covered in previous classes, teasers on upcoming chapters to pre-study before class, assignment submission deadlines, perform brainstorming/discussion, make announcements) more effectively.
- This is followed by a perception mean of 4.5 whereby learners seem to resonate well (71.05% strongly agree) with the Facebook Group function which can make it easier for learners to find each other to communicate and collaborate more effectively.
- Facebook Poll receives the third highest perception mean of 4.3 (63.16% strongly agree) that it can be used to decide on class rescheduling matters/group assignments etc.
- The Facebook live function recorded the lowest perception mean of 2.9 whereby 31.58% agrees and 28.94% feels neutral, which is probably because this is a rather new function and not many Facebook users are well accustomed to the function.
- Also, this is probably due to the fact that the Facebook Live function requires a steady and high speed Internet in order to be effective.

# Results & Discussion

## Section C: Potential Advantages of Using Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

Statements	5-Point Likert Scale (%)					Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Facebook provides peer to peer support, especially in assisting each other to solve assignment questions, sharing of related information and knowledge and even to provide motivation to complete the program.	0	2.63	13.16	71.05	13.16	3.9
2. Simplicity and familiarity of the Facebook interface and friendly features makes it comfortable and easier for participants to adapt to Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform.	5.26	10.53	7.89	65.79	10.53	3.9
3. Facebook makes participants feel a part of a learning community and allow themselves to express better academically.	13.16	15.79	31.58	34.21	5.26	3.0
4. Increased activity and collaboration in Facebook groups can make learners become more interested with the subject.	0	10.53	26.32	57.89	5.26	3.6
5. Facebook can provide effective direct communication with lecturers/tutors if learners face any difficulties to come to class/ask questions in class.	0	0	7.89	7.89	84.21	4.7
6. Facebook provides an effective platform to exchange and share knowledge and information.	2.63	2.63	2.63	78.95	13.16	3.9
7. Making ad-hoc class related announcements via Facebook may increase attendance.	13.16	21.05	7.89	55.26	2.63	3.1

5-Point Likert Scale									
1	Strongly Disagree	2	Disagree	3	Neutral	4	Agree	5	Strongly Agree

Legend:

■ Highest Mean

■ Lowest Mean

# Results & Discussion

## Section C: Potential Advantages of Using Facebook as a Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

- /// The highest recorded perception mean is 4.7 whereby learners seem to respond positively (84.21% strongly agree) to the ability of Facebook to provide effective direct communication with lecturers/tutors should learners face any difficulties to come to class/ask questions in class.
- /// This is particularly true as some lecturers/tutors rarely use/access the university's existing virtual learning platforms, making them difficult to reach at certain times.
- /// The second highest perception mean is 3.9 whereby learners respond positively with 78.96% agreeing to the ability of Facebook to provide peer to peer support, the advantage of the simplicity and familiarity of the Facebook interface and friendly features and the provision of platform to exchange/ share knowledge and information.
- /// The lowest perception mean is 3.0 whereby learners do not seem to recognize that Facebook can make participants feel like they are a part of a learning community which in turn allow themselves to express better academically (34.21% agree and 31.58% feels neutral).

# Results & Discussion

## Section D: Suggestions on How to Make Facebook an Effective Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

Statements	5-Point Likert Scale (%)					Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
1.University to come up with a strict guideline and policies on professionalism, privacy protection, cyber-bullying and responsible sharing of information.	5.26	13.16	15.79	47.37	18.42	3.6
2.To have a reporting system readily available and to formulate a Consequence Guidelines for abusive behavior on Facebook.	5.26	13.16	23.67	57.89	0	3.3
3.Participants are to make a separate account from their social/personal Facebook accounts and will only be accepted into university's closed group once their account has been appropriately vetted by a special handling committee.	0	7.89	18.42	71.05	2.63	3.7

5-Point Likert Scale									
1	Strongly Disagree	2	Disagree	3	Neutral	4	Agree	5	Strongly Agree

Legend:

 Highest Mean

 Lowest Mean

# Results & Discussion

## Section D: Suggestions on How to Make Facebook an Effective Supplementary Virtual Learning Platform

- Learners recorded highest perception mean of 3.7 with 71.05% agreeing on the suggestion to enforce learners and lecturers/tutors to make a separate account from their social/personal Facebook accounts which is probably because many learners feel that their social lives should be separated from academic settings and that they fear of privacy encroachment.
- This is followed closely with a 3.6 perception mean whereby 47.37% learners agree that the university is to come up with strict guidelines and policies on professionalism, privacy protection, cyber-bullying and responsible sharing of information.
- The lowest recorded perception mean is 3.3 whereby 57.89% learners agree and 23.67% feels neutral about having reporting system readily available and to formulate a Consequence Guidelines for abusive behavior on Facebook.

# Conclusion

## Conclusion

In conclusion, learners involved in this study recorded a positive perception towards the potentials of Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform at OUM with:

Learners have positive perceptions towards Facebook features (Facebook wall, chat, direct messaging, group and poll functions).

Learners have positive perceptions towards Facebook advantages of using Facebook as a supplementary virtual learning platform (direct communication with lecturers/tutors, ability of Facebook to provide peer to peer support, simplicity and familiarity of the Facebook interface and friendly features and the platform Facebook provides to exchange and share knowledge and information).

Learners have positive perceptions towards the suggestion to have a separate Facebook account from their social ones for education purposes.

## Study Limitations and Future Research

- Questionnaire to be extended to learners from other postgraduate programs, undergraduate learners and even the faculty members.
- Study to be extended to include other learning institutions in Malaysia to obtain a more wholesome perception.
- To compare students' perception from different countries to determine whether differences in sociocultural contexts have an impact on Facebook adoption and use (Sanchez et al., 2014).
- Facebook also presents certain limitations as it does not support other format files to be uploaded directly, and the discussion on the wall is not organized in a threaded structure (Wang et al., 2012).
- Other issues include privacy concerns, doubt for the accuracy of shared information and distractions from the entertainment involved (Wang et al., 2012).



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