
RESEARCH

The Impact of Online Social Networking on Students' Study (VNU University of Economics and Business)

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Abstract: The online social networking site, especially Facebook, has been tremendously developing in all aspects of life and impacting students' life. Students are using Facebook to communicate and connect with each other because of its conveniences and popularity, and students at University of Economics and Business, Vietnam National University-Hanoi, are no exception. That is why, this study will investigate the impact of the connection with the online social networking of an individual from the viewpoint of students. The result of the analysis from the survey has proved the direct impacts of UEB students' connection with Facebook on the process and result of their social study. For that reason, the online social networking site (Facebook) not only makes tremendous influence on the result of UEB students' study, but also helps them adapt to the culture of the University and have close relations with their friends in the University. Both of these things play an important role in bettering their study results at the University. Besides, this study suggests some activities which may help urge both UEB lecturers and students to use Facebook as an effective learning tool.

Keywords: Social networking, study, Facebook, social acceptance, cultural acceptance.

1. Introduction

In the sharp development of Web 2.0 technology, the quantity of social networking websites has increased quickly with more and more convenient functions for users. Facebook is the most popular one with 80 million browsers over 55,000 regions in 2004 (Lewis et

al.2008). In Vietnam, Facebook also has attracted approximately 5.5 million Vietnamese users joining in 2012. In which, student Facebookers (from 16 to 24 year olds) cover 22% as whole. Thus, Facebook can affect continuously and strongly to Vietnamese student's daily activities.

Besides, the impact of the Internet, typically social networking websites, on education is an interesting and controversial issue. In which,

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there are some studies focused on the relationship between social networking and pedagogy. Although they mentioned about the influences of social networking sites on learning, seldom researches base on student's perspective as well as focus directly on this topic in Vietnam. Almost studies concentrated on the impacts of social network on the young life, but do not focus on student learning outcomes. Hence, this study will provide evidence, ideas for educators to improve the quality of pedagogical orientation and practices. Based on that, university educators can generate new method to satisfy their student better and improve quality of pedagogy.

With this purpose, this paper will be conducted in narrow scope - impacts of online social networking on University of Economics and Business (UEB) student's learning outcomes - by answering two main research questions:

- The relationship intensity between Facebook and UEB students learning outcomes?
- How social networking sites (Facebook) influence on UEB students' learning outcomes from point of view of UEB students

Hence, education practices include UEB lecturers, faculties and students can base on study's results to improve the quality of teaching and learning through taking advantages of technology and social networks as an effective learning tool. To achieve these objectives, this paper firstly presents its academic foundations in Literature Review and Methodology. Then, results from survey will be analyzed before further discussion. Finally, some implications for academics and practitioners, and suggestion for further study will be generated.

2. Literature review

2.1. Learning Theories

2.1.1. Learning Environment Theories

Environmental learning theory defines that environment shapes a child's learning and behavior. However, student has filter and critical thinking to decide what they learn in their minds; so, students actively determine their development in university environment.

2.1.2. Integration Theory

Student integration theory (Tinto 1975, 1987) shows the process how student integrate academic and social learning with academic and social integration.

Academic learning (Astin, 1993) is defined as those knowledge (theories, concepts, methodologies which are from textbooks, courses, lectures) and skills (necessary skills that student need to lean and succeed in academic tasks at university) that students need to achieve at university.

Social learning theory has three elements (individual learners, peers or models, and situations) which potentially affect individuals' learning outcomes, and the mutual interaction among them makes social learning can be viewed as learning process (Bandura 1977). In addition, individuals' learning, even self-initiated, often relies on the social context. Therefore, to achieve desirable learning outcomes individuals need social support from others and their clear understanding of situations. Moreover, the obtained learning outcomes will reinforce individuals' engagement in certain actions.

Academic integration occurs when student become attached to the intellectual life of the university reflecting by interaction with faculty, lecturers and their own academic achievements. Whereas, social integration is shaped when student informally interact or formally interact

with their peers and models reflecting by relationship and connection outside classroom.

These two concepts, though analytically distinct, interact with and enhance one another. Hence, Tinto (1987) strongly emphasizes that student's interactional experiences with their faculty, courses, lecturers, peers and university

will influence on their goal commitment to life and their institutional commitment to their university.

2.1.3. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes is divided into three domains: Cognitive, Affective and Skill-based.

Table 1: Learning outcomes classification

Learning outcomes	Academic	Social
Cognitive is associated with intellectual learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Application • Comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self esteem • Self confidence
Affective refers to emotional learning and ability to deal with situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes • Satisfaction • Appreciation of learning experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with university life • Appreciation with peers
Skill-based focuses on sequences of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking • Technical skills • Problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Corporation • Networking

Source: Tian S.W et al (2011)

Under Integration Theory, this paper would concentrate on online social networking impacts on social learning and its further interaction with academic learning across learning outcomes domains. Thus, this paper would use self-esteem, satisfaction with life at the university, and performance proficiency (students' ability to perform tasks and solve problems) to reflect the cognitive, affective, and skill-based domains of learning outcomes, respectively.

2.2. Online social networking development

Mark Zuckerberg created Facebook in 2003 with the Hot or Not edition which was experimented at Harvard University. After the success at Harvard University, Facebook was spread dramatically to almost universities and colleges in United States then to the world. In

October 2012, Facebook reached 1 billion users to rank the first social network site all around the world. The average of using Facebook is 23 year olds (2012) comparing with 26 year olds in previous four years (2008). It is proved that Facebook has strongly impacts on the young behavior.

Facebook entered in Vietnam in 2008 and the rise of Vietnamese users is top of the world as nearly 2 times over 1 year, from 1.8 million users in 2009 to 20.9 million in 2010. In the spread of social networks, relations have become closer and wider than in the past, and social sites have turned into an inseparable part of our lives with its positive and negative impacts. Therefore, if we can know how Facebook affects to student learning, then we can take advantages of Facebook as an effective learning tool.

2.3. Conceptual framework

2.3.1. Social - Academic integration framework

Tinto presents student integration theory which helps to explain the learning outcomes of students from both academic integration and social integration.

The figure illustrates that interference creates social-academic integration which enhances one other to help students improve their learning outcomes. Tinto posits that students are more likely to remain enrolled in an institution if they become connected to the social and academic life of that institution. Especially, students must be integrated into the institution in both social and academic dimension unequally to increase their likelihood of persistence.

In order to avoid the lack of Tinto's social-academic integration (impact of virtual environment - social networking - on students' learning process and learning outcomes), it is necessary to build up a framework that implement for lacking of Tinto's framework.

2.3.2. Conceptual model

It might be conceivable to draw a distinction between social and academic integration (Beekhoven et al. 2002). However, these two systems are likely to be integrated (labeled as social-academic integration) when educational institutions implement appropriate practices. Hence, combining with Astin's student involvement theory, Angela Yan Yu (2010) suggests a model that indicates the relationship among learning environment, integration process and learning outcomes as figure below.

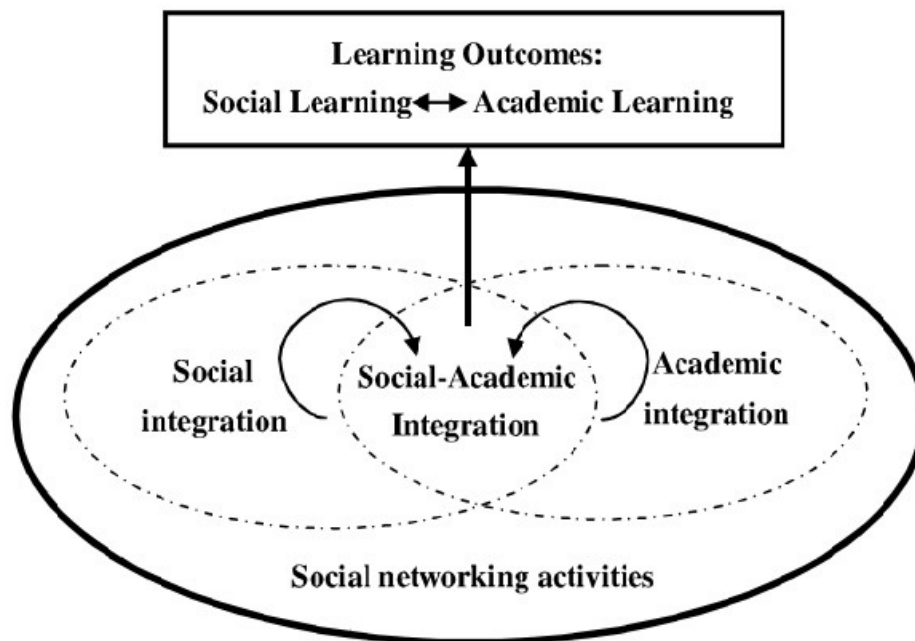


Fig. 1: Social-Academic integration Framework.
Source: Tinto (1987)

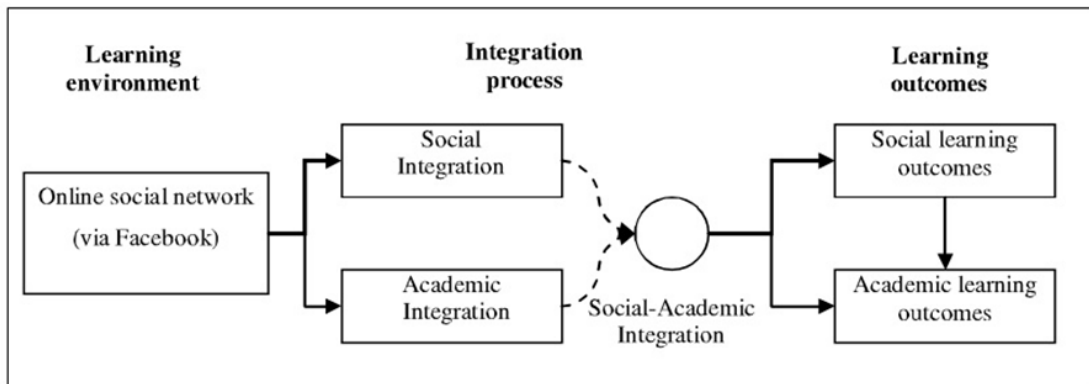


Fig. 2: The process of learning.
 Source: Angela Yan Yu (2010)

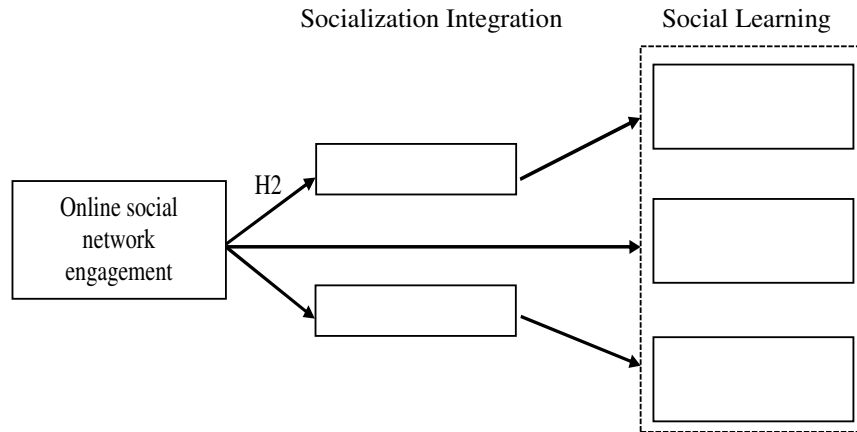


Fig. 3: Conceptual Framework: Conceptual Framework.
 Source: Angela Yan Yu (2010)

According to Bandura’s social learning theory (1977), individuals’ self-directed active engagement functions as an initial motive for achieving desirable learning outcomes. For instance, individuals can present themselves in an online viewable profile, establish and maintain extensive relationships with peers by selectively developing further interactions, and/or learn more about the university environment by joining a university network and thus finding the information that discloses real life in the university. All those activities required the engagement of individuals. Hence,

online social networking engagement can represent for learning environment.

Secondly, to achieve learning outcomes individual need to participate in integration process which helps individuals transform from learning environment to learning outcomes. Normally, individuals interact with peers and the situated environment, and these interactions have been characterized as social acceptance and acculturation in the socialization literature (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Morrison, 1997, 2002). Therefore to propose the direct effect of online social

networking engagement on learning outcomes, social acceptance and acculturation are viewed as transformation of individual online social networking behavior into learning outcomes.

Consequence, Angela Yan Yu proposed a model in following figure to explain directly how individual's online social networking, such as Facebook, influences on their social learning outcomes as the same with this study's objectives. Thus, the following model would be applied as study's conceptual framework.

3. Methodology

In order to fulfill this paper mission "Exploring impact of online social networking sites on UEB learning outcomes", both qualitative research and quantitative research method would be applied:

- **Qualitative method:** collecting and analyzing theoretical backgrounds and some facts from previous studies, books and other online resources; then, establishing hypotheses base on theories.

- **Quantitative method:** using questionnaires to conduct online survey with over 130 UEB's students as participants to collect quantitative data from UEB student. The questionnaire includes three parts (intensity of using Facebook, Social acceptance and Acculturation, Learning outcomes, Opinion of using Facebook as a learning support tool). All these constructs consist of several indicators that are measured by ordinal scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. Then, all data has been analyzed by statistic software such as Microsoft Excel and SPSS 16 to evaluate hypotheses.

According to this paper's conceptual framework, there are 5 hypotheses which

illustrate relationships among all main components of this framework.

In order to test these hypotheses above, regression analysis would be conducted to check whether variables are positive relationship or not. Moreover, these regressions would base on factors which are explored by following factors after factor analysis. Additionally, both predicting variables (Facebook engagement and socialization) and criterion variables (learning outcomes) are in scale from 1 to 5.

Besides, this paper consider study level (from year 1 to year 4) and gender (male =1; female =0) as control variables, because the personal characters could affect students' learning outcomes. For example, knowledge level about life and culture of university is different from newcomers to senior students. The way they participate in university's activities is also different. Especially, there are differences between female and male in their cognition, respond for each activity or event. All data received in survey would be analyzed in a process of 2 stages as described in following figure:

- **Stage 1:** Assessing to measurement model
 - ◊ Descriptive analysis to test validity of data
 - ◊ Factor analysis to explore factors/ new factors
- **Stage 2:** Measuring model
 - ◊ Regression to test relationship among factors and to evaluate hypothesis

4. Analysis and results

After 3 weeks (1st - 21st April, 2013) conducting an online survey via email and Facebook to UEB students, we collected a total 134 valid individual responses with a response

rate of using Facebook is 100%. Some general information would be gathered in the next table.

Table 2: List of variables

Factors	Variables	Question	References
Intensity of Facebook usage	FBE1, FBE2, FBE3, FBE4, FBE5	11	Ellison (2007) and Steinfield (2008)
Social acceptance	SOAC1, SOAC2, SOAC3, SOAC4, SOAC5	12	Morrison (2002) and Pascarella & Terenzini (1983)
Acculturation	ACCU1, ACCU2, ACCU3	13	Morrison (1997)
Self-esteem	SELF1, SELF2, SELF3, SELF4, SELF5	14	Rosenberg (1989), and Steinfield (2008)
Satisfaction with university life	SATI1, SATI2, SATI3, SATI4	15	Rode (2005)
Performance proficiency	PERF1, PERF2, PERF3, PERF4	16	Chao (1994)

Source: Authors

Table 3: Summary of general information

Categories	Factors	Number	Percentage	
Age	Under 18	0	0%	
	From 18 to 23	133	99%	
	Above 23	1	1%	
Gender	Female	27	20%	
	Male	107	80%	
Level in university	1 st year student	32	24%	
	2 nd year student	15	11%	
	3 rd year student	39	29%	
	4 th year student	48	36%	
Frequency accessing Facebook	Not everyday	15	11%	
	1 time per day	3	2%	
	2-3 times per day	34	25%	
	4-6 times per day	34	25%	
	6-10 times per day	17	13%	
	Frequently that cannot count	27	20%	
Average time spent on Facebook per day	Always on Facebook	4	3%	
	Less than 30 minutes	28	21%	
	From 0.5 to 3 hours	83	62%	
	From 4 to 6 hours	15	11%	
	More than 6 hours	8	6%	
Categories	Factors	Mean	Std.	Min - Max
Facebook connection	Total Facebook Friend	472.0	27.1	50 - 1600
	Interactive Facebook friend	191.1	16.8	5 - 1100
Distribution of friends	University friends	131.9	9.6	5 - 600
	University - classmates friends	73.7	5.2	5 - 332

Source: Authors

Survey result also reveals that UEB students use Facebook not only for maintaining

relationships and entertaining but also for learning purpose. They mostly communicate

with their friends via chatting (include comments and private messages) or via playing interactive games on Facebook. Along with it, more than 80 respondents said that they often use Facebook to discuss with their friends about lessons, assignments, tasks or other learning purposes. Hence, these potential evidences illustrate UEB students' study can be affected much from peers as the social learning theory of Bandura (1977).

In the first stage - "Assessing the measuring model", all data is valid and adequate for exploratory factors analysis (EFA), since the Cronbach's alphas of reliability statistic is all above 0.7 while KMO values measuring the sampling adequacy are also greater than 0.7 with Sig. is .000 ($p < 0.01$). These numbers confirm the strong validity of data for EFA.

Table 4: Summary of EFA result

Factors	KMO	Significance	Cronbach's Alpha
Facebook engagement	.760	.000	.719
Social Acceptance	.774	.000	.827
Acculturation	.745	.000	.816
Learning outcomes	.859	.000	.898

Source: Authors

Although new factor is not extracted after doing EFA, variable ACCU1 was eliminated from Acculturation factor and variable SELF5 was moved from Self-esteem factor to Satisfaction factor. Moreover, EFA results affirm that the conceptual model of Angela Yan Yu (2010) is appropriate to conduct research in environment of UEB. All components of conceptual model are unchanged except a little disorder among items which measure main factors. Therefore, all hypotheses are valid to be tested by regression in the next stage of this study.

In the second stage - "Measuring model", mean scores of criterion variables (Self-Esteem, Satisfaction with University life and Performance proficiency) and predicting variables (Facebook engagement, Social acceptance, Acculturation and Integration) for 134 respondents are calculated. Additionally, Gender and Study level are used as control variables. In regression analysis with

standardized upper limit of significant is 0.05; it confirms relationships among factors as below:

As it showed, there is no relationship between Facebook engagement & Acculturation, Self-esteem & Social acceptance, and Performance proficiency & Acculturation as it rejects Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 4a, and Hypothesis 5c.

5. Findings and discussions

This research has examined the impacts of social networking sites (Facebook) on UEB students' learning outcomes. The general findings from a survey can be summarized as:

- Facebook helps UEB students maintain their social relationship easily and gain the social acceptance from their peer at UEB easier
- The integration process (Socialization) plays important role on bridging between

Facebook and UEB students' social learning outcomes.

- Facebook Engagement has strong impact on social learning outcomes of UEB students. In which Facebook influences most on UEB students' satisfaction with university life and their performance.

- UEB students are using Facebook as a vehicle that support for their learning not only at University but also through Facebook friends and communities.

- Facebook help UEB students can express themselves without the problem of "fear of embarrassment" in face-to-face interaction.

- Facebook promotes their learning via peers and universities, and thus be beneficial for their self-esteem development, nurturing satisfaction with the university life, and their performance proficiency

The results of EFA discovered Integration component is one new factor in socialization processes. Thus, the original conceptual model should add this factor to investigate appropriately

with UEB environment. The regression analysis results demonstrate direct and strong influences of Facebook to social learning outcomes of UEB students. Moreover, these results explore important role of integration processes not only in improving learning outcomes of UEB students but also in adapting to learning environment and university life.

These results indicate evidence that lecturers can use Facebook as an effective tool to transmit their knowledge and experience to their students. On the other hands, UEB students could base on these results to use Facebook in right way to improve their learning outcomes through social learning. This research also indicates that the impacts of Facebook on UEB students' learning performance depends on the study level through quite high β value (0.208) in the analytical model. Therefore, lectures can use online teaching method via Facebook intensively with senior students that lead to gain their good performance rather than junior students.

Table 5: Summary of regression analysis

Dependent variable	Independent variable(s)	Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
					Tolerance	VIF
Social acceptance	Facebook engagement	.239	2.824	.005	1.000	1.000
Acculturation	Facebook engagement	.093	1.075	.254	1.000	1.000
	Social acceptance	.016	.186	.085	.962	1.040
Self – esteem	Acculturation	.131	1.509	.014	.985	1.015
	Gender	-.295	-1.352	.179	.962	1.039
	Level of education	.070	.951	.343	.984	1.016
	Social acceptance	.553	7.604	.000	.962	1.040
Satisfaction with university life	Acculturation	.206	2.871	.005	.985	1.015
	Gender	-.100	-.556	.579	.962	1.039
	Level of education	-.016	-.255	.799	.984	1.016
Performance proficiency	Social acceptance	.111	1.288	.020	.962	1.040
	Acculturation	-.019	-.218	.828	.985	1.015

Dependent variable	Independent variable(s)	Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
					Tolerance	VIF
Self - esteem	Gender	-.047	-.219	.827	.962	1.039
	Level of education	.208	2.870	.005	.984	1.016
	Facebook engagement	.123	1.423	.015	1.000	1.000
Satisfaction with university life	Facebook engagement	.271	3.234	.002	1.000	1.000
Performance proficiency	Facebook engagement	.142	1.645	.012	1.000	1.000

Source: Authors

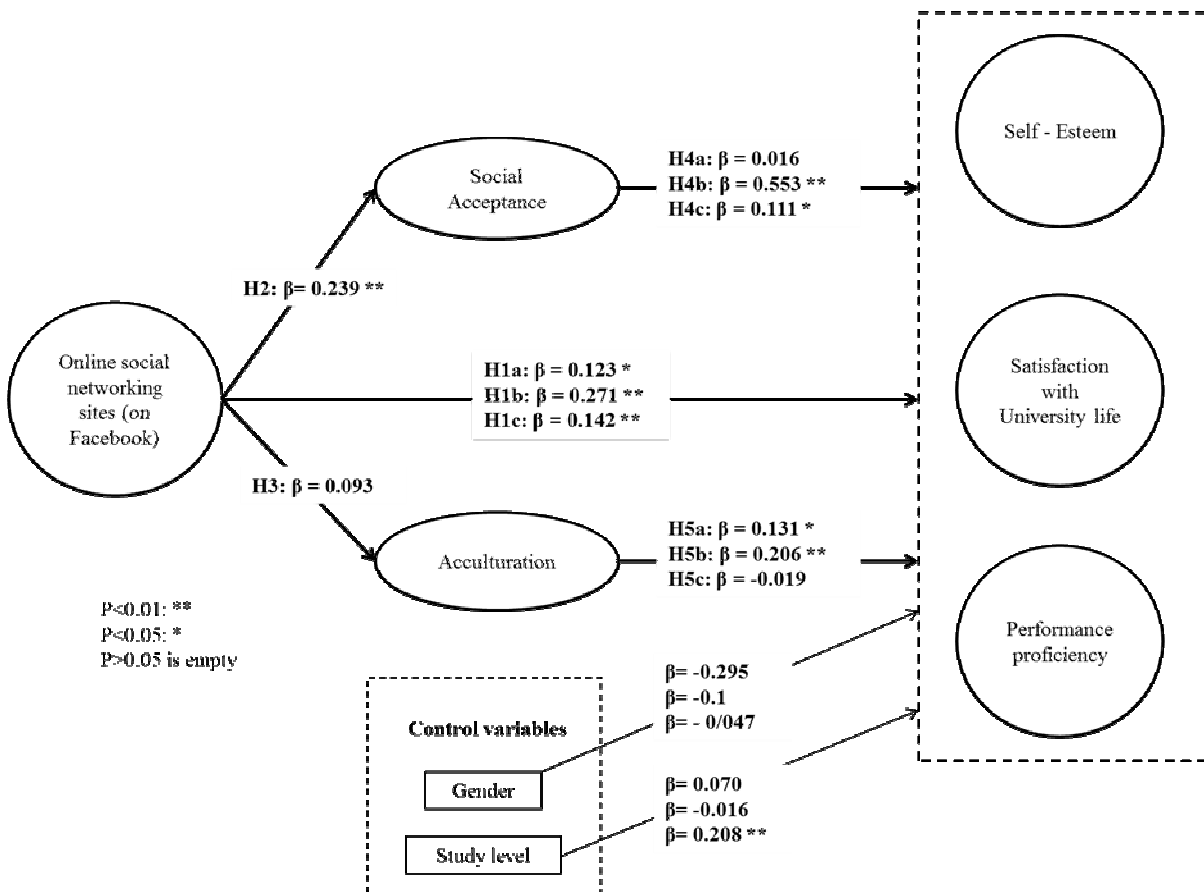


Fig. 4: Result of analytical framework.

Source: Authors

6. Conclusion

6.1. Implication of Study

This study results present several implications for academic researchers, education practices, and future research.

For academic researchers, this study recognized that the conceptual framework which presented by Angela Yan Yu and his colleagues (2010) about impacts of social networking sites on student's learning is strongly appropriate with Vietnamese university' campuses environment, specifically

VNU- University of Economics and Business. It is a value evidence to affirm the validity of Angela Yan Yu's conceptual model which contributes to the literature of social networking and social learning. Thereby, this could strongly support for the related studies in the future.

Our results demonstrate that online social networking (Facebook) leads UEB students develop themselves with better performance and improved skills and support for their self-learning. These positive results provide strongly evidence that UEB lecturers and students can take advantages of high technology and popularity of Facebook to improve quality teaching as well as learning. Facebook is not only vehicle that help users expand large-scale networking capacity but also enable them to maintain close relationships with a group of friends, with university friends, with lecturers. Hence, UEB lecturers and students can connect and interact with each other better.

This study also could give good suggestion for the policy makers of UEB includes faculties. These results reveal that Facebook leads to increase satisfaction with university life of UEB students. It means that UEB can use Facebook as a tool to raise the prize students about UEB. Thereby, UEB students could invisibly promote about image of University of Economics and Business. Furthermore, policy makers could issue policies that encourage UEB student learn and interact with faculties via Facebook to take advantages as well as benefits of social networking sites (Facebook).

The survey results also reveal that Facebook help UEB students can express themselves without the problem of "fear of embarrassment" in face-to-face interaction. 63 over 134 respondents admit that online social networking allows them to feel more comfortable in expressing and discussing ideas, and interacting with peers and professors. Thus,

Facebook help UEB students enrich both social network and social learning and extend their capacity to adapt to web-based education.

This study's findings can open suggestion for matching gap between networking purposes for leisure and networking for learning. Indeed, this research find that though UEB students may originally use Facebook for fun (over 50% respondents play games, share their interest links, videos, photos and chat with their friends, etc), it can promote their learning via peers and universities, and thus be beneficial for their self-esteem development, nurturing satisfaction with the university life, and their performance proficiency. However, these good results do not mean that UEB students should spend too much time on Facebook. As one coin has two sides, Facebook have some negative impacts on students. In the UEB students' point of views, using Facebook for learning purpose will be easily distracted by other interesting activities. That is why they may feel hard to focus on their study. Thus, to achieve desirable leaning outcomes UEB students should use Facebook in the appropriate way. Following survey results, UEB students also give some comments for both lecturers and themselves to use Facebook effectively on learning. For examples, UEB students should use FB to chat and exchange ideas to work on a common topic; to meet groups to collaborate online; to stay connected with their classmates and share ideas, etc. Such suggestions relate closely to learning from their peers that basing on it lecturers can take advantages of Facebook to develop peer-learning of UEB students.

To conclude, this study offers a new approach for educational institutions to acknowledge peer influence and it also provides a supportive infrastructure for UEB in which social networking activities need to develop to increase interactions among students. Thereby, educational practitioners (lecturers and faculty) can design appropriately lesson or other practices on the

social networking sites, (Facebook), for instance, the university orientation practices which allow new students to learn more about University of Economics and Business and promote their commitment and gain satisfaction with university life at UEB.

6.2. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has several limitations which can open opportunities for the future research in Vietnam. First of all, this research only focuses on relationship between online social networking sites and UEB students' learning outcomes. Thus, this study does not mention clearly and exactly about Facebook influences on UEB students in which ways.

Secondly, this research only tap directly impacts of Facebook on social learning outcomes of UEB students that still not illustrate the impacts of Facebook on their academic learning. Therefore, probably academic learning is negative linking with Facebook engagement of UEB students. Hence, it should be beneficial if future research can test relationship between Facebook engagement and both social learning outcomes and academic learning outcomes.

Thirdly, this study only use socialization processes as mediation role to transfer Facebook engagement to students' learning outcomes. Meanwhile, there are many factors include both tangible and intangible factors that intervene linking between online networking sites and learning outcomes of students. Therefore, future research could continue to explore and investigate other potential intervention factors.

Finally, the scope of study concentrates on UEB students. Hence, such study results could only test the valid of Angela Yan Yu's framework on UEB case. Subjectively, this

study's results are only benefits for UEB to improve quality of education at UEB. Hence, it is necessary to expand the scope of study to universities in Hanoi or all over Vietnam to implement this conceptual framework as well as the results about impacts of social networking sites on students' learning.

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Tác động của mạng xã hội trực tuyến đến việc học tập của sinh viên Trường Đại học Kinh tế, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội

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Tóm tắt: Trang mạng xã hội trực tuyến đang phát triển mạnh và ảnh hưởng đến mọi lĩnh vực của cuộc sống, đặc biệt là Facebook và tác động của nó tới đời sống sinh viên. Sinh viên đang sử dụng Facebook để giao tiếp và kết nối với nhau do sự thuận tiện và phổ biến của nó, trong đó sinh viên Trường Đại học Kinh tế (ĐHK)T, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội không phải ngoại lệ. Vì vậy, nghiên cứu này sẽ điều tra tác động của việc gắn kết với mạng lưới xã hội trực tuyến của cá nhân (Facebook) từ quan điểm sinh viên học tập. Kết quả phân tích từ khảo sát đã chứng minh tác động trực tiếp của việc gắn kết với Facebook của sinh viên ĐHK)T đối với quá trình và kết quả học tập xã hội của họ. Chính vì thế, trang mạng xã hội trực tuyến (Facebook) không chỉ ảnh hưởng mạnh tới kết quả học tập của sinh viên ĐHK)T mà chúng còn giúp họ thích nghi với văn hóa của Trường và có được những mối quan hệ thân thiết với bạn bè trong Trường. Cả hai điều này đều đóng vai trò quan trọng trong việc nâng cao kết quả học tập của họ tại ĐHK)T. Bên cạnh đó, nghiên cứu này đề xuất một số hoạt động có thể giúp thúc đẩy cả giảng viên và sinh viên Trường Đại học Kinh tế sử dụng Facebook như một công cụ học tập hiệu quả.

Từ khóa: Mạng xã hội, học tập, Facebook, chấp nhận xã hội, sự tiếp nhận văn hóa.
