

Facebook, a new digital learning environment?
Inspiration session 'Students for students'
European First-Year Experience Conference, Helsinki, 2013

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Introducing...

- Study investigating the study related Facebook use of higher education students
- Research team
 - Wies Allemeersch
 - Sofie Hiels
 - Anne-Sophie Seghers
 - Herman Van de Mosselaer
- Plantijn University College, Antwerp, Belgium
 (merging into AP University College)

16/05/2013

Overview presentation

- Motive & scope of the study
- Focus
- Facebook – background
- Facebook – previous research
- Research questions
- Method
- Results
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

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Motive of the study

> Students organise themselves on Facebook to discuss school related issues

> Without any institutional interference

How?
 What for?
 Why?
 When?

Value?
 Expectations?

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scope of the study

- > Exploratory research
- > 1 year 'mini'- study (Oct 2012 – June 2013)

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Focus

- School related use of Facebook



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Facebook – background

- Developed in 2004
- Originally only for students @ Harvard campus (Zeevi, 2013)
- +/- 1 billion active users world wide (SocialBakers, 2013)



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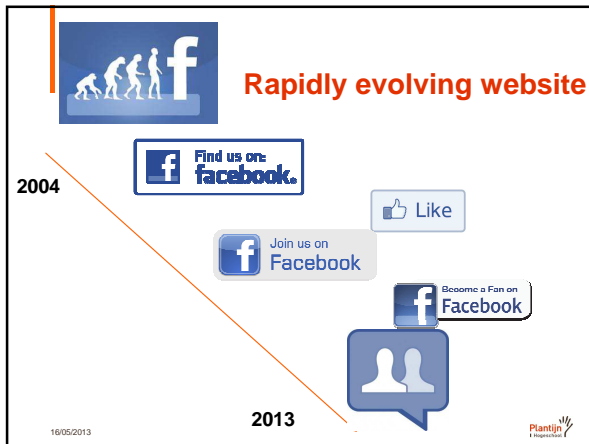
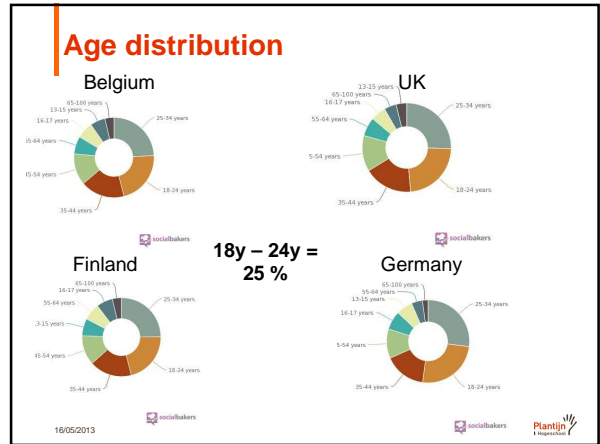


Statistics

Country	# of Facebook users	% of total population
Belgium	5.010.280	48.06 %
United Kingdom	31.164.500	49.98 %
Finland	2.282.000	43.52 %
Germany	24.958.460	30.51 %
France	11.167.000	17,68%
Netherlands	6.556.000	39,06%

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Facebook – previous research



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Facebook – previous research

1. Usage

Up to 90 % of HE students are on FB

Educause, 2007

Students spend o.a. 27 minutes on Facebook daily.

Pempek et al., 2009

Students use Facebook on a daily basis, no matter how busy they are on a given day.

Pempek et al., 2009

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Facebook – previous research

2. Influence on academic results

Facebook use has a **negative** impact on students academic results

Kirscher & Karpinski, 2010; Van den Boogaert, 2006

Negative effect is bigger for students with extrovert personalities

Al Haq & Chand, 2012

Negative effect bigger for male than female students

Rouis, Limayen & Salehi-Sangari, 2011

Facebook use has **no significant** impact on academic results

Moon, 2011
Saunders, 2008

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Facebook – previous research

3. Influence on socio-emotional wellbeing

Facebook use has **positive effect** on the social, emotional and academic integration of HE students

Selwyn, 2009;

Jennes, 2011

Facebook facilitates in the identity creation process

Selwyn, 2009;

Facebook **enhances** the institutional attachment

Kalpidou, Costin & Morris, 2011

Facebook **enhances** a sense of belonging

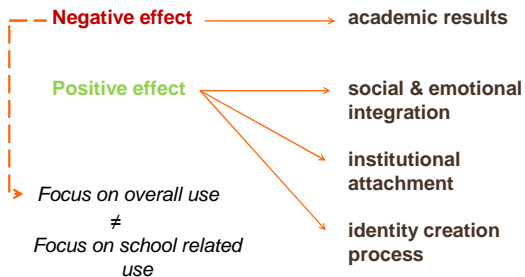
Read, 2004

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Facebook – previous research

Recap



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Research questions

Originated from different observations

1. Sporadic organisation of students on Facebook for school related issues
2. Lack of studies with focus on school related Facebook use
3. Lack of research studying the recent developments of Facebook and their effect on the study related use.

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Research questions

- How do students use Facebook for school related issues?
- For which study-related activities do students use Facebook?
- How much time do students spend on Facebook (study related)?
- What value do students ascribe to Facebook in a school related context?
- Do students have expectations towards their institution in this matter?

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Method



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Method

- mix between qualitative and quantitative research methods

focus groups → online questionnaire
build upon

triangulate data

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Method

- data collection @ Plantijn University college
 - Antwerp, Belgium
 - offers PBA training programs
 - science
 - business administration
 - communication
 - health care
 - engineering
 - education
 - +/- 3818 students
 - multicultural student audience

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Method

- qualitative
 - > 3 focus groups (N = 22)
- qualitative data analysis
 - > transcribed & analysed

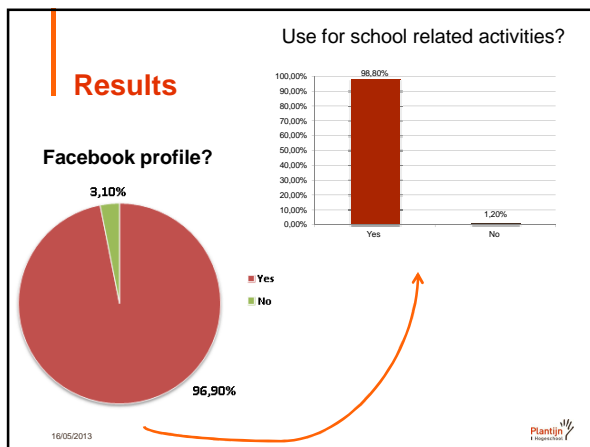
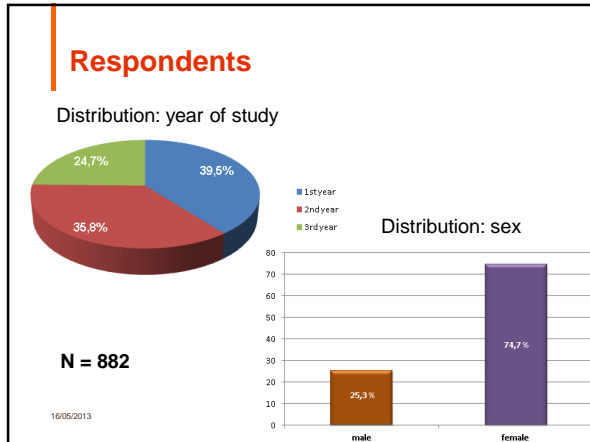
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Method

- quantitative data collection
 - > online questionnaire (self report)
 - questions based on results focus groups
 - approached via e-mail
 - N = 882
 - response rate = 24%
- quantitative data analysis
 - > Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

frequencies → **Chi² test & Cramer's V test**


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- ## Results
- Q1: How do students use Facebook for school related issues?
- ### Facebook group
- no requirements for joining other than membership of the group in real life
 - few (implicit) rules:
 - don't post too often
 - only post relevant information
 - passive students are not excluded
- 16/05/2013

Q1: How do students use Facebook for school related issues?


Results

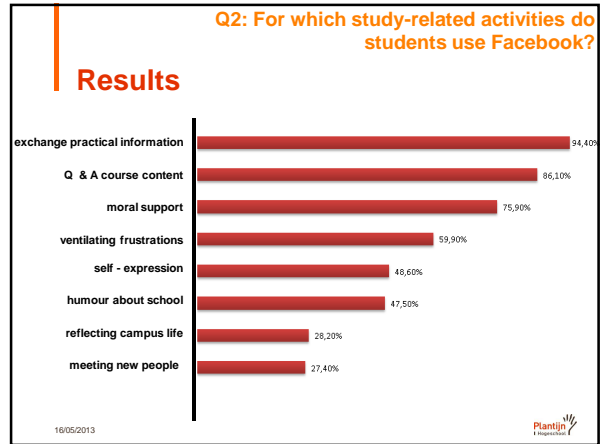


Facebook group

- size of groups varies

Group assignment ← → training program

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Q2: For which study-related activities do students use Facebook?

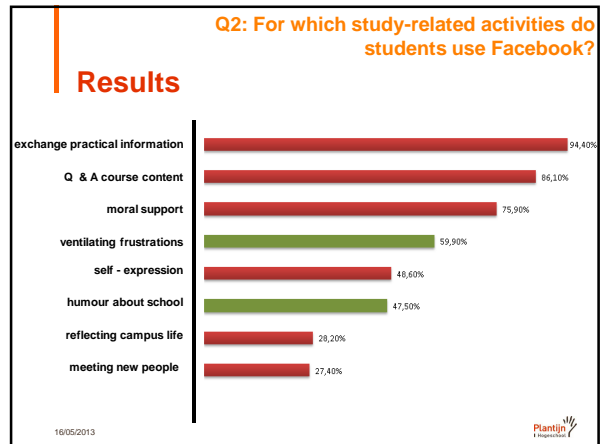
Results

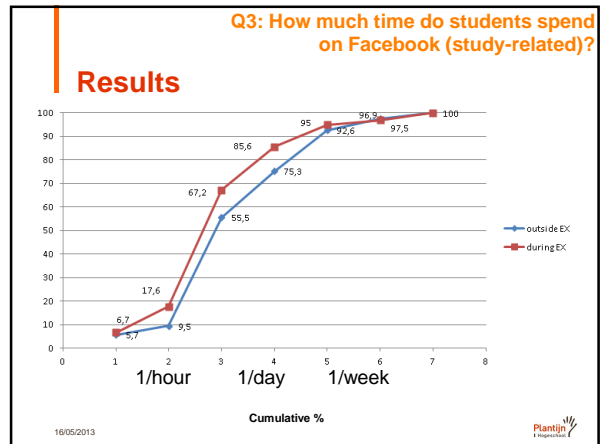
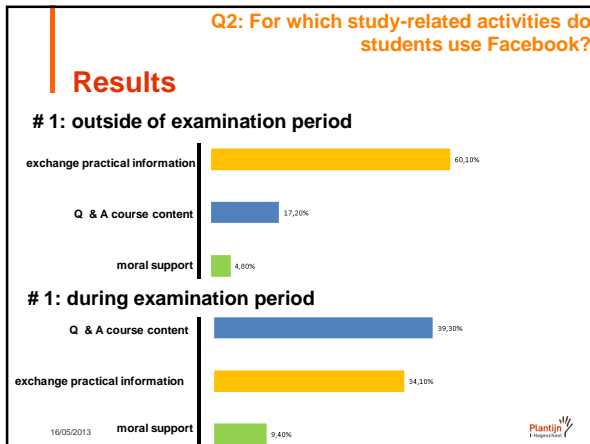
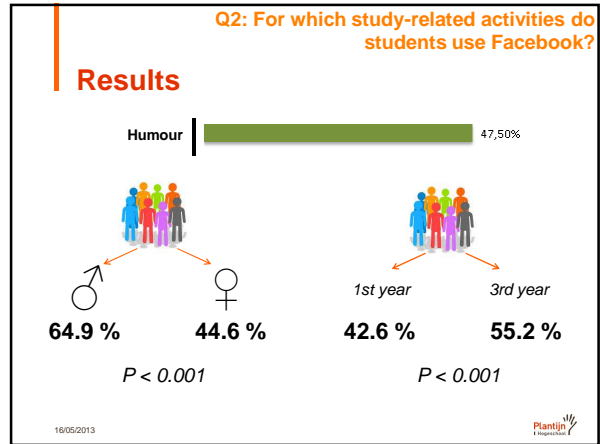
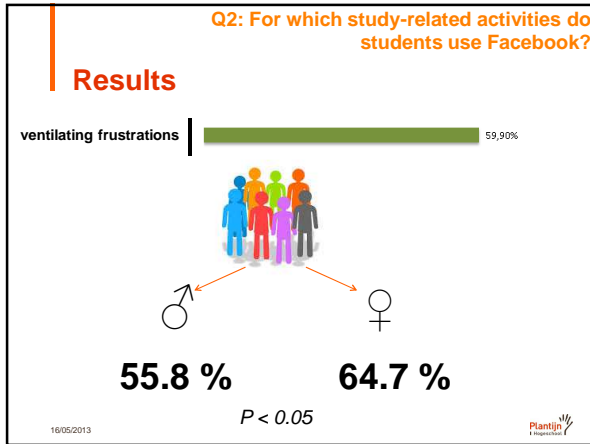
Differences between groups ?

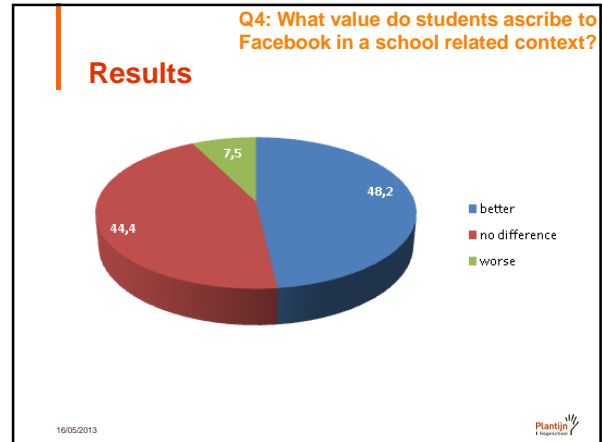
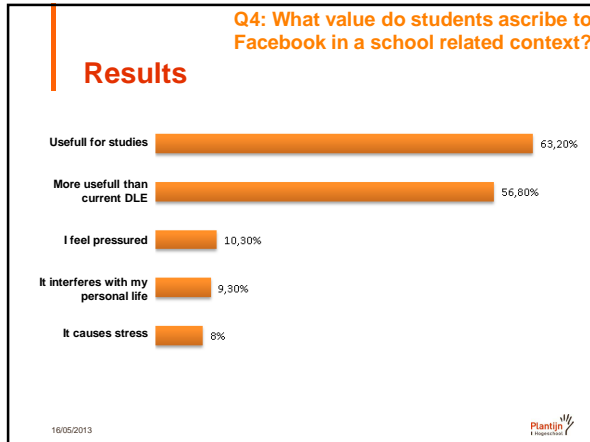
2 variables

- Sex
- Year of study

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Q5: Do students have expectations towards their institution in this matter?

Results

41.9 % of students experience Facebook as 'their' territory. They feel that their school should not interfere.

68.6 % of the students feels the need for a facebook page on which the school shares practical information

The vast majority of students (94%) feels as like teachers cannot be part of their groups!

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Conclusions

- Study related facebook use is mostly done through 'facebook groups'
 - Size of groups = depends on learning purpose
 - No explicit rules, few implicit rules
- Exchange of practical information, Q & A about course content & supporting each other are most practiced activities
 - Shift during exam period!
- Facebook is often used. Use peaks during exams

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Conclusions

- Students don't want teachers to interfere
- Facebook page with practical information could be usefull

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Recommendations

- Facebook page through which students can be notified of changing class schedules, absent lecturers,..
- Consider Facebook as an additive feature to your current DLE!
- Creating discussion groups as a teacher can prove to be beneficiary... but:
 - » Opinion of the students!
 - » Rules & guidelines
- **Develop a social media policy for your institute**

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Lid van de Associatie Universiteit & Hogescholen Antwerpen

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