

# **The Influence of Facebook on Interpersonal Communication**

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Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

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## ABSTRACT

Today, with the development of communication technologies, social network sites become common and popular. People prefer to communicate with each other via social network sites. In particular, Facebook is used by almost everyone and today it has about 901 million users from all around the world.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the influence of Facebook on interpersonal communication among 200 students who study at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies at the Eastern Mediterranean University in the academic year 2012-2013, spring semester.

For the completion of the present study, data has been collected through a questionnaire which consists of 66 questions. 37 of these questions are demographic and related to user habits. 29 of them are designed according to a 5 point Likert scale and sought to measure the students' attitudes towards the use of Facebook, and the effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication.

The findings of the study indicate that participants do not feel the need to engage in face to face communication when they use Facebook. Although this is the case, the results of the current study also suggest that face to face communication habits are still not vanished.

**Keywords:** Facebook, Interpersonal Communication, Socialization and Loneliness

## ÖZ

Bugün iletişim teknolojilerinin gelişmesiyle birlikte sosyal paylaşım sitelerinin kullanımı yaygınlaşmış ve popüler hale gelmiştir. İnsanlar iletişim kurma ihtiyaçlarını mevcut paylaşım ağları üzerinden gerçekleştirmeyi tercih etmektedir. Özellikle bir sosyal paylaşım ağı olan Facebook hemen hemen herkes tarafından kullanılmaktadır. Dünya geneline bakıldığında, Facebook yaklaşık olarak 901 milyon kullanıcıya sahiptir.

Bu nedenle, mevcut çalışma 2012-2013 bahar dönemi Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi öğrencilerinin Facebook kullanımlarının kişilerarası iletişimlerine etkisini ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Mevcut araştırmada, veriler toplamda 66 sorudan oluşan anket aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Bu ankette 37 soru kişilerin demografik özellikleri ve kullanım alışkanlıkları ile ilgili olup, 29 soru 5 dereceli Likert ölçeğine göre hazırlanmış ve Facebook kullanımı ve Facebook'un kişilerarası iletişime etkisini ölçme amaçlı sorulmuştur.

Araştırmanın bulgularına göre, kişilerin Facebook'u kullanırken yüz yüze iletişim kurmaya ihtiyaç duymadıkları, fakat yine de yüz yüze iletişim kurma alışkanlıklarından vazgeçemedikleri sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Kelimeler:** Facebook, Kişilerarası İletişim, Sosyalleşme ve Yalnızlaşma

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mother and father and all the people who  
feel lonely.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

With the development of new communication technologies, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Facebook became one of the most popular social network sites all around the world. Today, it has approximately 901 million users. Facebook has been widely used by people of different ages and genders. Facebook is used by its members to fulfil many needs. Socialization is just one of these needs. University students use Facebook for their communication needs. Facebook has become an inevitable part of university students' lives.

This study examines the effects of Facebook on the socialization process of university students. It focuses on exploring the impact of Facebook on the interpersonal communication skills of university students. Moreover, it also examines the importance and the usage of Facebook for university students' daily lives.

### **1.1 Layout of the Study**

This thesis consists of five different chapters which are namely; the introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis and conclusion.

In the introductory part, firstly, the main title of the study is mentioned briefly. This is followed by the aim and objective of the study, research questions, limitations of the study and the significance of the study.

In the literature review section, firstly communication is defined as a need and a social capital (a person's friends). Then, interpersonal communication (face-to-face), social media, Facebook and the relationship of these three in the discipline of communication is dealt with. In the literature review section of this study, public sphere, identity production, culture and society, roles and performance of new communication technologies and social capital in communication are also discussed.

In the methodology section, research methodology and design, data collection instrument, population and sample of the study, validity and reliability of data collection instrument and data analysis procedures are discussed.

In the analysis section, the primary information obtained with the questionnaire is presented and the findings that are analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) are explained.

In the conclusion section, the results of the research questions are discussed in line with the literature review. The uses and gratification theory is also discussed in this section.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

Background of the Study section comprises the following sub-sections: Communication, Inter-personal Communication, Social Network Sites, and Facebook.

### **1.2.1 Communication**

Communication, which has an inter-disciplinary importance, is a fundamental concept in peoples' lives.



Communication is one those human activities that everyone recognizes but few can define satisfactorily. Communication is talking to one another, it is television, it is spreading information, it is our hair style, and it is literary criticism: it is endless (Fiske, 1990, p.1)

### **1.2.2 Inter-personal Communication**

Interpersonal communication takes place between two or more people who know each other or are willing to communicate with each other. People, who have benefits from each other, can communicate via telephone, internet, and face to face. In fact, the most important one is interpersonal communication which takes place among people. According to Güngör (2011) for interpersonal communication to take place, a minimum number of two and a maximum number of five people must participate. This is a prerequisite for interpersonal communication.

According to Hartley, *interpersonal communication* is examined under the discipline of communication. Inter-personal communication;

- “requires a high degree of confidence,
  - prepares each person to discuss openly about their feelings and personal history,
  - creates a genuine and mutual liking and interest between participants.”
- (Trans.: Sevük. T., Hartley; 2010, p.42).

### **1.2.3 Social Network Sites**

SNS are web-based services and permit people to build their profiles. Profiles can be built as public or semi-public within the reserved system. Also, SNS announce other users' lists, which join in a mutual connection. Also, users can catch and reach their

own connections' lists that were built by others who are within the system. This process can be different from site to site (boyd & Ellison 2007).

#### **1.2.4 Facebook**

Facebook was founded in 2004 under the name of *The Facebook* by Mark Zuckerberg and his friends, Andrew McCollum and Eduardo Saver from Harvard University. In a very short time, more than half of the students studying at Harvard University became members of Facebook. A total number of four hundred and fifty people and approximately twenty two thousand photographs and visuals were uploaded. The aim here was to introduce Facebook and its functions to the students at Harvard University. Two months following its establishment, Facebook was used by the schools around Boston and all Ivy League schools ([tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook)). Within two years, all schools in the United States began to use Facebook. "With increasing usage of Facebook among schools, Facebook reached one million users by December 2004" (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p.37).

### **1.3 The Aims and Objectives of This Study**

The present study investigates the effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication, the importance and the daily usage of Facebook for university students and the socializing role of Facebook which stands as a new trend and a method of communication between social network sites. To socialize, users tend to prefer Facebook, the virtual space, instead of the physical world.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Since its establishment, Facebook aims to provide a platform for people to socialize. The research questions are as follows;

- 1) What is the impact of Facebook on inter-personal communication?
- 2) Does Facebook contribute to the socialization process of university students?
- 3) What is the importance and the daily usage of Facebook for the university students?

### **1.5 The Limitations of the Study**

This study focuses on students who study at the Eastern Mediterranean University, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies in Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, during the Spring Semester of academic year 2012-2013. The participants are from Turkey, North Cyprus, Iran, Nigeria and other countries, such as Palestine and Syria.

In this study, quantitative research method has been used. A total number of 200 questionnaires, which consists of 66 questions, were distributed to 200 students who study at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies of EMU.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Inter-personal communication with Facebook is preferred greatly nowadays around the world. It is also common among university students. University students prefer new technological devices more when compared with the older generations. Especially, Facebook is preferred mostly by the new generation. Determinative role of new generations is important for the communication habits of the future generations. Therefore, communication choice of university students as new generation will indicate communication devices and communication channels of the future. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the effects of Facebook on university students are of significant and worth researching. This study focuses on the effects of

Facebook on university students' inter-personal communication. The aim of this study is to determine whether the use of Facebook has negative or positive effects on the university students' inter-personal communication.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter begins with a brief description of communication. Then, it defines Communication as a Necessity and Social Capital. This is followed by the definitions of Interpersonal Communication, Technology, New Communication Technologies and Information, Internet, Social Network Sites, Facebook, Culture & Society, Public Sphere and Identity Production. Finally, the Roles & Performance and Social Capital are defined.

#### **2.1 Communication**

Communication, which has an inter-disciplinary importance, is a fundamental concept in peoples' lives. Communication plays a major role in indicating the people's boundaries in the society. Social boundaries indicate people's movement areas in societies. Within these movement areas, people engage in social production. Social production takes place between people, or between people and the nature. This production allows people to carry on with their lives. Each people have a role in this said production phase. People cooperate with each other to survive and the main source of connection is communication.

A meaningful message is needed in order to create a link between the sender and the receiver. The Sender must convey the message to the receiver, in order to fulfil communication in the sender's mind. "Senders must express themselves by speech, writing, appearance, gesture, and mimic...etc one way or another, at that rate;

*message* is an essential element in communication” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör, 2011, p.52).

The sender, who has a meaningful message in his/her mind, needs some signs to be able to send the message. Letters, words and symbols are referred to as *codes* and they fulfil the requirements of these signs. “Sender can send meaningful messages to receiver by converting it to some codes. This process is called *codification*” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör, 2011, p.52). The receiver needs to understand these codes to get the meaning of these messages. This is referred to as *code expansion*.

The sender needs channels to send messages. These channels are words, writing, dress code, accessories, mimics, gestures, decoration and colour. These are preferred channels that are often used in daily life. Also, codes are conveyed to the receiver through radio waves, satellites and antennas. They transfer images and voices to audiences. These are referred to as *channels*. The channel is one of the communication elements.

Especially, mass communication gained importance with the help of today’s developed technology. Mass communication needs some devices. These devices are mainly televisions, radios, newspapers, magazines, and computers. The said devices are essential to reach the masses in communication, which ingenerates through these technological channels. “For broadcast, radio station; for satellite, telecast and antenna, TV station and receiver devices; and in order to take voice from telephone cables, telephone device are required, so, *medium* is an element of communication” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör, 2011, p.52).

Communication takes place in an environment. These environments are namely social environments, psychological environments and cultural environments. “Intention which creates the base of communication, qualification between sender and receiver, and relationship of sender and receiver with channel and medium and production of meaning of communication...etc and the similar are closely related with the environment of communication. Consequently, *environment* is an important element of communication” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör; 2011, p.52).

In today’s world, “Computer-mediated communication” can be discussed. This is related with the development of communication. This communication, which makes a difference in the terms of time and space, according to traditional communication tools; is the most popular medium of communication today. In this new communication style, messages, which can be sent to individuals or groups, are received by people, even if a lot of time passes. For this reason, internet networks and computers are preferred as a medium of communication by many. In this communication, people can send messages easily by using a computer within a virtual environment. Individuals can enter this environment with only a click. Communication is a necessity and users seem to be able to fulfil their communication needs through computers. This satiation has lead computers to take an important part in people’s lives. Here, communication area is no longer ‘virtual’.

According to Güngör, there are four major kinds of communication. These are namely (i) intra-personal communication, (ii) inter-personal communication, (iii) group communication and (iv) mass communication. Intra-personal Communication can be defined as a type of inner communication which takes place when a person communicates with himself/herself to become aware of his/her own behaviours,

abilities, beliefs, attitudes and needs. On the other hand, Inter-personal Communication stands as one of the most well known types of communication. In this type, the number of participants is important. For inter-personal communication to take place, a minimum number of two participants and a maximum number of five participants are required. In this type of communication, people communicate with each other but not with themselves as in intra-personal communication. Inter-personal communication is defined as the first step to be taken to socialize. In comparison, there should be at least three people for a group communication to take place. These people can be the members of the family, friends or similar that may create any kind of social environment. Mass communication differs from other types of communication as it requires some kinds of tools to take place such as television, radio, book, magazine, movies and music. Politicians and similar public authorities send their messages via mass communication channels. These channels intend to carry messages to masses (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör; 2011, p.47-49).

### **2.1.1 Communication as a Necessity and Social Capital**

Everyone has basic needs that need to be satisfied in order to survive. These needs are mainly nutrition, shelter, outfit, production and communication. It can be claimed that communication is more crucial when compared with the rest of the needs, as people need a place in the society. People, who have a place in the society, use their status to satisfy others' needs by using communication. Within every society, people have to act together by communicating. Communication among people is crucial as it satisfies the needs mentioned. It should also be noted that people do not communicate only to survive. People engage in communication due the existence of their inner judgments, too. According to Maslow (1968), reasons for people to communicate are; “physical needs for survival (air, food, and sex), safety and



protection need (shelter), belonging needs (inclusion, fun), and self-esteem needs (respect) and self-actualization needs” (Quoted from Maslow by Wood, 2007, p.10-11).



Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (19 June 2013)  
([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow's\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow's_hierarchy_of_needs))

According to William Schutz's Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) theory (1966), "we have three reasons to communicate. These are affection; the desire to give and receive love and liking, inclusion; the desire to be social and to be included in groups. Third one is for control; which is a desire to influence the people and events in our lives" (Quoted from Schutz by Wood, 2007, p.10). Communication is crucial for human beings. Human beings, who exist with communication, cannot avoid communication throughout their lives, from birth till death, even if they want to. When and how people's needs would emerge is not crystal clear. Therefore, people have to join a group, and people have to satisfy the needs of this group. Let us consider businesses as a segment of a group. Such a segment would give service to fulfil people's needs. For instance; if a person wants

to eat an apple and does not grow apples him/herself, then he/she can buy an apple from a greengrocer. If people have some materials to exchange (money and others materials for exchange), communication is essential for this exchange to take place. Root of communication is *communico* in Latin. The meaning of *communico* is communication, sharing and collectivization. If a person is alone, he/she can perform an *intra-personal communication*. This type of communication can also be defined as an internal preparation phase, which would ideally lead to socialization in the society. According to Lyon; “People are social heartfelt way and because of this, communication is vital” (Lyon, 2006, p. 255). Communication is not realized by only one person socializing, therefore people shape their personalities, relations, positions and bonds in compliance with their society, and people owe it all to communication.

People, who communicate with each other, prepare their social environment to be involved in human communities by showing their communication performance. This social environment exists among partners, friends, colleagues and relatives. These relations grow like a ring. Once people get to know others and have common interests with these people, and they share things, then they have wide a *social capital* (Field, 2006, p.1). According to Pierre Bourdieu, social capital represents real and potential owned communication networks’ resources in the long term. Bourdieu goes on to explain that the “value of the individual bonds (the size of social capital) is confirmed with the number of connections that allow action and capital size that is owned each link (cultural, social and economic)” (Quoted from Bourdieu by Field, 2006, p. 23). People get to know a variety of people they are concerned with or interested in, and the frequency and the depth of communication reveal the size of the social capital (Trans. Sevük, T., Toprak, Yıldırım, Aygül, Binark, Börekçi, & Çomu, 2009, p. 31). Consequently, it can be claimed that social capital is an

inevitable part of people's lives. Every person has an environment, and links that are related to this environment. People shape themselves with these links and, benefit from the social capital in their societies. In addition to communication, networks are also important for socialization. Communication networks are important in terms of getting information and keeping the social capital's relations alive. Communication networks are links between people and their social capital. These networks (channels and links) are windows opened to the world. "For social capital, it is very important that these links are permanent. If they are not permanent, then the social capital would decrease and melt down. The most important role of the communication tools are their potential to pose links continuously for the advantage of the social capital" (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak, Yıldırım, Aygül, Binark, Börekçi, & Çomu, 2009, p.115). In addition, tools, which convey messages to other people, are important for communication. Within the last twenty years, computer technology has taken its place as one of the communication tools that allows people to express themselves via visuals, written and auditory materials. "This era is perceived as a communication revolution; mobile phones, personal computers (PCs) and the internet has enabled people to share and be involved in a global communication" (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güçdemir; 2010, p.5). Those who build their social relationships and accordingly their personality would not be satisfied with the development of computers. Technology arrives at this point. The most important example is the social media. Social media is a relatively new computer-mediated communication platform. Some expect that it has a potential to strengthen relations.

### **2.1.2 Interpersonal Communication**

Bachman explains that "building relationships has always been a major aspect of human social life. Positive interpersonal communication skills aid in building strong

relationships. The definition of interpersonal communication seems to remain under constant scrutiny and discussion” (Bachman, 2009, p. 10).

Wood states that there are three models of interpersonal communication. These are;

1) *Linear Models*: This model was developed by Lasswell in 1948. This model depicted communication as a linear, or one-way. In this model, there are five questions. These are;

- Who?
- Says what?
- In what channel?
- To whom?
- With what effect? (Quoted from Lasswell, by Wood, 2007, p.18)

The visual representations of the questions are presented in figure 2 below.

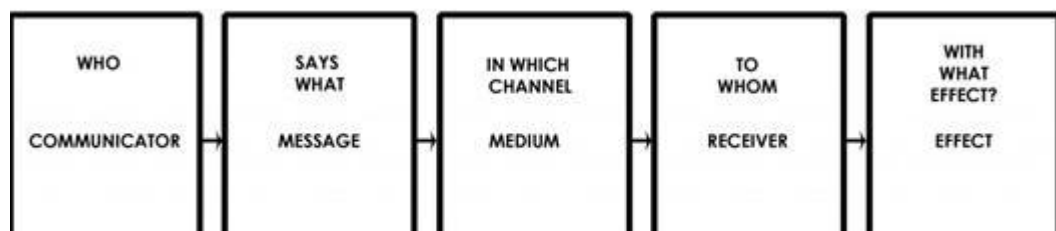


Figure 2. Lasswell's Linear Model of Communication  
(<http://communicationtheory.org/lasswells-model/>)

Then, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver in 1949 offered a revised model. A visual representation of this model is shown in figure 3 below.

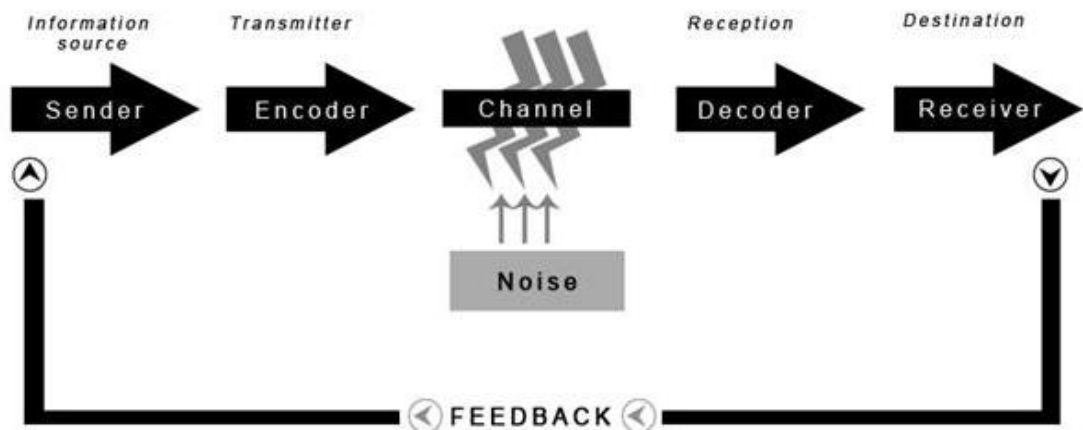


Figure 3. Shannon and Weaver Model of Communication  
 (<http://communicationtheory.org/shannon-and-weaver-model-of-communication/>)

“These early linear models had serious shortcomings. They portrayed communication as following in only one direction, from a sender to a passive receiver. This implies that listeners never send messages and that they absorb only passively what speakers say” (Wood, 2007, p.18). Listeners can nod their heads, frown, look bored and smile after senders’ message. However this model avoids listeners’ feedbacks.

2) *Interactive Models*: In this model, listeners give feedback, which is response to a message. Communicators create and comment messages within personal fields of experience (Wood, 2007, p.19). Figure 4 below is presented to explain this further.

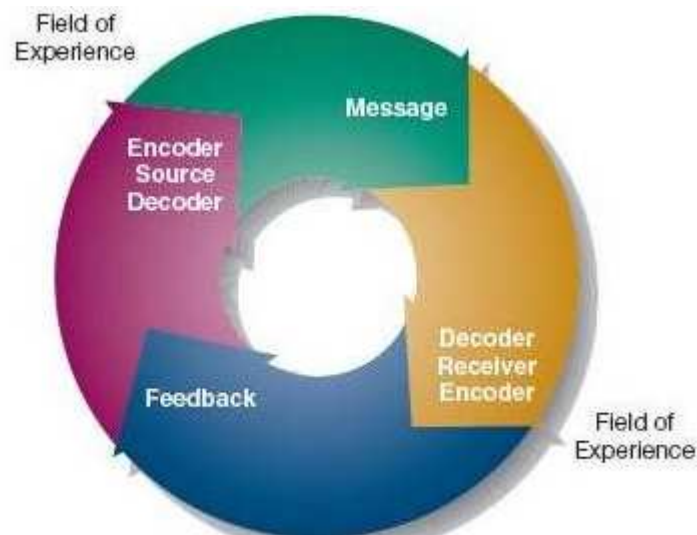


Figure 4. Interactive Model of Communication (Wood, 2007)  
 ([http://ebookey.org/Interpersonal-Communication-Everyday-Encounters-6-edition\\_1394085.html](http://ebookey.org/Interpersonal-Communication-Everyday-Encounters-6-edition_1394085.html))

“Although the interactive model is an improvement over the linear model, it still portrays communication as a sequential process in which one person is a sender and another is a receiver. In reality, everyone who is involved in communication both sends and receives messages. Interactive models also fail to capture the dynamic nature of interpersonal communication and the ways it changes over time. More openly after months of exchanging e-mail messages than they did the first time they met in a chat room” (Wood, 2007, p. 18-19).

- 3) *Transactional Models*: This model assumes dynamism of interpersonal communication and multiple roles people assume during the process. According to Wood, noise is present throughout interpersonal communication. In addition, this model claims that each communicator’s field of experiences and the shared fields of experience between communicators change over time (Wood, 2007, p. 18-19). A visual representation is presented in figure 5 below.

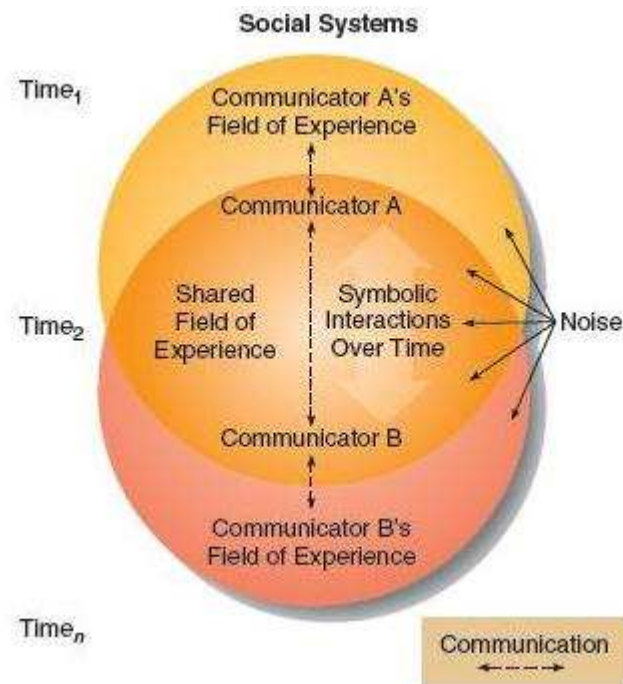


Figure 5. Transactional Model of Communication (Wood, 2007)  
 ([http://ebookey.org/Interpersonal-Communication-Everyday-Encounters-6-edition\\_1394085.html](http://ebookey.org/Interpersonal-Communication-Everyday-Encounters-6-edition_1394085.html))

According to Wood, “communication occurs within systems that affect what and how people communicate and what meanings are created” (Wood, 2007, p.19). These systems or contexts are related with the shared systems of both communicators (shared campus, workplace, social groups and culture) and each person’s personal systems (family friends, religious association) (Wood, 2007, p.19).

“We should emphasize that the transactional model doesn’t label one person a sender and the other a receiver. Instead, both people are defined as communicators who participate equally and often simultaneously in the communication process. This means that, at a given moment in communication, you may be sending a message (speaking or nodding your head), receiving a message, or doing both at the same time (interpreting what someone says while nodding to show you are interested). Because communicators affect each other” (Wood, 2007, p.20).

According to Hartley, *interpersonal communication* is examined under the discipline of communication. Inter-personal communication;

- “requires a high degree of confidence,
  - prepares each person to discuss openly about their feelings and personal history,
  - creates a genuine and mutual liking and interest between participants.”
- (Trans.: Sevük. T., Hartley; 2010, p.42).

According to Dökmen; in interpersonal communication;

- Participants should be in face to face relationship within certain proximity.
- There is not only one way communication between participants, two-way communication is required when messages are to be exchanged.
- These messages should be either verbal or non-verbal. (Trans.: Sevük, T., Dökmen; 2003, p.24).

According to Güngör (2011) for interpersonal communication to take place, a minimum number of two and a maximum number of five people must participate. This is a prerequisite for interpersonal communication. In addition, if the number of people involved in communication is more than five, then this type of communication would be referred to as a group communication. Therefore, in interpersonal communication the number of people is an indicator (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör, 2011, p.48).

Furthermore, according to Bıçakçı (2003), interpersonal communications are transmissions of emotions and ideas between a source and a receiver as written, verbal or non-verbal, and this transmission is a mutual process (Trans.: Sevük, T., Bıçakçı, 2003, p.71).



Basically, interpersonal communication actualizes in three different types of communication; these are namely (i) verbal (ii) non-verbal and (iii) written communication.

According to Wood,

“Interpersonal communication is central to our lives. We count on others to care about what is happening in our lives and to help us sort through problems and concerns. We want them to share our worries and our joys. In addition, we need others to encourage our personal and professional growth. Friends and romantic partners who believe in us often enable us to overcome self-defeating patterns and help us become the people we want to be” (Wood, 2007, p: 10).

Interpersonal communication helps us socialize and become a part of the community.

### **2.1.3 Verbal Communication**

“Verbal communication is divided into two sub-categories. These are language and beyond language” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Dökmen, 2003, p.27). The mutual conversations among people can be considered as a language. In verbal communication, people shape their social production and share information by conveying messages to each other (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güçdemir, 2010, p. 41).

For a good verbal communication to take place, the sender (speaker) must choose the right signs (words) to express their emotion and thought more effectively and must convey this to the receiver using the appropriate channel (medium). The receiver understands these signs, and hence the sender’s thoughts and emotions (Trans.: Sevük, T., Sever, 1998, p. 54).

#### **2.1.4 Non-Verbal Communication**

When a person is in face to face contact with others, miscommunication is not possible. Maintaining an eye contact, avoiding eye contact, using gestures or mimics, and even keeping silent are inevitable while communicating; they are the elements of communication. While communicating, people receive the message and understand other people's thoughts and feelings and can act according to the state of the sender or receiver (Trans.: Sevük, T., Ertürk, 2006, p. 110).

People communicate with each other when they come together, intentionally or unintentionally, and this communication occurs through signs. These signs do not necessarily have to be words. These signs can sometimes be the manner of speaking, the dress code, mimics and gestures or selection of location. When these signs are accompanied by words, the expressions and hence the messages may have positive or negative connotations.

#### **2.1.5 Face to Face Communication**

In face to face communication, the sender sends a message to the receiver(s). This message can be either in verbal or non-verbal form. From the point of the sender; the communication demands are ideas and emotions. Sometimes this message can be a gesture, a mimic, silence, a dress code or a picture. According to Ilin and Segal; message received by the speaker is processed and this phase is influenced by the receiver's experience, feelings and thoughts. The receiver decodes the message which may come in different symbol formats and sends feedback to the sender by developing his/her own ideas (Ilin and Segal, 1995, p.23). Then, the number of people and space gains importance. For a face-to-face communication to take place, people must be present at the same location, or they must use mediated communication devices.

When face to face communication takes places using computer technology, this is referred to as a *computer-mediated communication*. In computer-mediated communication, people do not share the same physical space. This kind of communication can have different effects on people when compared with face to face communication. To explain this further, body language can be given as an example. Body language, as a sign, is important in communication, but body language is invisible while people are communicating using a computer or through the telephone. People might be able to see each other while engaged in a computer mediated communication using a web-camera, but in such situations, the speaker and the listener tend to look at the camera or concentrate on the appearance of speakers, and not on each others' eyes. Also, the majority of the social media sites, which provide instant messaging facilities, connect people without providing a platform that would allow physical proximity, just like telephone communication.

According to Fiske;

“Some channels of communication make feedback very difficult. Two ways radios and telephones allow alternating transmission which can perform some of the functions of feedback, but the feedback is clearly of a different order from the simultaneous feedback that occurs during face-to-face communication. This is determined mainly by availability of channels. In face-to-face communication I can transmit with my voice and simultaneously receive with my eyes. Another factor is access to these channels. The mechanical media, particularly the mass media, limit access and therefore limit feedback” (Fiske; 1990: p: 22).

### **2.1.6 Interpersonal Communication (Face to Face Communication)**

Among the kinds of communication, interpersonal communication is the most preferred, because it is interactive (Trans.: Sevük, T., Bıçakçı, 2003, p.71). Interpersonal communication has been the most important kind of communication in throughout history. This communication sheds light on the development of humanity. Groups of people have realized communication as interpersonal communication – face to face- (among family members), and then group communication that is used to socialize. These communication styles are used to fulfil people’s needs and requirements.

People, who exist with communication, intend to get to know themselves and their environments. In this context, people initially get involved with interpersonal communication. When people get to know their environment, they also get to know themselves. People use inner communication –intrapersonal communication- which is the first step towards interpersonal communication. This is also the case when two people communicate. Presence of two people would allow interpersonal communication but this number can increase up to five. According to Hartley, the most common situations for interpersonal communication are;

- Communication between humans
- Face to face communication
- Form and content of communication reflect the characteristics of people as well as their social roles and relations (Trans.: Sevük, T., Hartley, 2010, p.39)

Individuals that come together engage in interpersonal communication providing that all conditions for a communication situation are fulfilled. The first condition is to be

face to face with each other; physical proximity is crucial for interpersonal communication.

For interaction, people have to be aware of some elements. These elements vary depending on the society and culture, but they have the same functions and they are used in interpersonal communication. Peter Hartley outlines them as follows;

1) *Consolidate*: It is a supportive action used to encourage and praise the person in contact.

2) *Asking Question*: Asking questions in the right time and at the right place is important in communication. These questions are mostly open ended questions.

3) *Reflection*: Usually, this element is related with the reflection of the sender's mood, which is observed by the listener. This can be positive and/or negative, and it affects the outcome of speaking.

4) *Opening and Closing*: The good opening and closing of a speech in a given situation is vital for a good interpersonal communication.

5) *Listening*: Listening is important for speaking. Especially, it is important to enhance communication.

6) *Self-expressing*: This is concerned with how the communicators express themselves. It is about how we convey the message to our addressees.

7) *Non-verbal communication*: Some of the elements are namely;

- Face expression
- Glance
- Gesture
- Posture
- Physical contact
- Spatial behaviour
- Dress code and appearance
- Interjection (non-verbal sounds)
- Smell (Trans.: Sevük, T., Hartley, 2010, p.90-95)

Interpersonal communication is the most basic way of communication. All humans' lives are shaped and established with interpersonal communication. Inter-personal communication is basic, because the main instruments are people. In interpersonal communication, the source is the people and the target people are active. These people produce signs and information, and enhance communication.

In interpersonal communication, communication isn't linear. It is interactive. Here, the sender sends a message, and the receiver receives this message. Then the receiver gives a reaction. This reaction can be verbal or/and non-verbal. If the sender wants to respond to the message in verbal and non-verbal form simultaneously, then the sender and the receiver must share the same physical environment. They must be face to face, because interpersonal communication involves both verbal and non-verbal communication. In contrast, computer mediated communication can cause a

delayed reaction, because when the source person writes a message, the target person will read this message and respond again in writing. This can lead to an unnatural communication situation and can decrease the effect of interactional quality.

According to Güz;

1. Participants of interpersonal communication must be in face-to-face contact.
2. Messages must be verbal and non-verbal (body language).
3. Without these two matters there will be no inter-personal communication.

Interpersonal communication is an exchange of information that does not avoid the mood of people (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güz, 2002, p. 26). In interpersonal communication, verbal and non-verbal communication must come together. People have to use them together while communicating. The mood is reflected on the messages with the volume of the voice, mimics, gestures and body language. In comparison, with regards to the computer mediated communication, Ulusavaş states that people who want to send a message quickly are able to reflect their thoughts and emotions clearly within an interpersonal communication situation (Trans.: Sevük, T., Ulusavaş, 2005, p.13).

In interpersonal communication, people that use verbal and non-verbal communication have to have some common values. In verbal communication, there must be a common language; in non-verbal communication this must be a common body language.

## 2.2 Technology

Technology, which develops with people's needs, affects our life styles, social structures, cultures, styles of entertainment and expressions. Some of the leading countries want to have a technological power, because it advances people's lives. This dynamic side of technology can sometimes reach such a point that people cannot even imagine. In the past, people used to communicate with each other with symbols and pictures on the walls. With the development of writing as a medium of communication, people were able to keep a record of the history, and this is referred to as *historiography* which is became a discipline in its own right. Later, the invention of the printing machines allowed the written works of authors reach a global audience. These written works were read by people from different cultures and facilitated the creation of common values and ideas.

With the developments in technology, which affect the economic and social structures directly, manpower was substantially replaced by information power. In time, starting from the beginning of the industry revolution up until today, manpower - the capital of the industry - gave its place to information power. In all computer-supported environments and educational institutions, information gained more and more importance and with the developments in technology, people were able to access information more easily and quickly.

The advantages of technology do not end here; it actually never ends. After all, technology has lead to numerous innovations and developments until today. One of these advantages is its power to eliminate space and time.



Technology has a huge influence on human minds and has a driving force. Güçdemir states that, there are three phases. These are;

- “Agricultural society ties people to their land and leads to a permanent settlement.
- In an industrial society; mass production and consumption are more important than agricultural society.
- Material production which has long been the social and economic base of industrial society, was replaced by information production and information society” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güçdemir, 2010, p.1).

During this era, that is referred to as the era of communication and technology, mobile phones and internet continues to satisfy the need for accessing information in the international trade. Even the developments in transportation are a result of today's advanced technology. When people discuss today's technology, they especially mention the internet and computer technology. When computer technology is in question, the most important concepts to be taken account are time and space. If we examine the evolutions in communication today and compare the past and present in terms of technological resources available, we can claim that today's communication opportunities provided mainly by the internet and computers, allow people to access information much easily, at anytime and anyplace. This is one of the major reasons why people feel the need to use the internet.

### **2.2.1 New Communication Technologies and Information**

There are four reasons for people to use the computer for communication. These are;

1. Interactive communication.

2. Computer mediated communication is highly convenient; and allows instant response.
3. Communication takes place once a network is established. Messages can be in written form, or consist of visuals and sounds.
4. With global communication, communities and people can gain recognition and appreciation. (Trans.: Sevük, T., Çakır & Topçu, 2005, p.76).

The points mentioned above can be considered as the main reasons why people use computers for communicating. Computer-aided communication is attractive and the number of users increases day by day. People can buy computers and can travel with them as they wish. Computers are portable and users can use it everywhere. So users can express themselves no matter where they are. Therefore, self-expression becomes easy for users. Some people say that internet provides them a chance to express themselves. Everyone cannot be given a chance to use mass media to express their ideas. Now, with the opportunities provided by the new media channels, people can easily state their own ideas. This platform is a democratic platform for some people, and they use it to express their opinions. “Democracy isn’t just about voting for our leaders. Democracy is about citizens who have the information and freedom for communication.” ([http://www.edge.org.3rd\\_culture/story/26.html](http://www.edge.org.3rd_culture/story/26.html)).

People initially find a platform where they can express themselves and start sharing their ideas. Within this platform, an information flow would take place. Information technology, which has the potential to replace industrial production, has proven its superiority. New communication technologies grow like a ring and, create new fields (internet, social media, shopping sites, personal sites, etc.). Using these fields, people can produce and spread information, and affect others. A single dynamic of this

social order is information. According to Sezal; an individual, who has, gathers, and converts any data to information, creates new communication networks by spreading this new information. This activity presents a variety of new communication concepts (Trans.: Sevük, T., Sezal, 1998, p.24).

Dan Schiller defines information as a product and commodity. In addition to this, he claims that information is becoming the major source for holistic development of market mechanism. Because of this, information has a leading role for capital accumulation in the global economy (Trans.: Sevük, T., Quoted from Schiller by Törenli, 2004, p.21). This also reflects the role of computers in people's lives. Individuals' lives become easier when they are able to do all their work by sitting in front of a computer and presenting products in a virtual environment.

### **2.2.2 Internet**

Gümüş points out that; internet which came into existence as an ARPANET (Advanced Research Agency Network), initially served the military. ARPANET was created using multiple networks. Back in 1972, the number of networks was thirty seven. When Norway and England joined these networks in 1973, networks became multinational (Gümüş, 2004, p.27). In the meantime, some organizations established their networks (one of them was the National Science Foundation, NSF in the United States of America). In 1982, ARPANET was no longer used for the military, and MILNET (Military Network) was established for military. In 1986, the National Science Foundation joined ARPANET and, got its present name; "the internet" (Gümüş, 2004, p.27).

"At some point during history, information and communication became societies' centre of attention and contributed to their social and political developments. In the

antique and the medieval periods, travelling and communication facilities were limited. Nevertheless, the revolution in the industrial sector has led to revolutions in transportation and communication. With the invention of railways, steam machines, cars and airplanes, travelling became easier and the world developed rapidly with the invention of the telephone, telegraph, radio and television” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Slattery, 2007, p. 339). The invention and development of the internet made our world a smaller place. With the internet, people can reach others located at great distances in only seconds. People can easily meet others and obtain information using the internet. People can instantly and virtually obtain information and send/read messages with the flexibility of time and space (Thompson, 2008, p. 295). Internet allows people to communicate with others using technology and also provides people the opportunity to express themselves and socialize (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güzel, 2007, p.191). Internet provides new ways of obtaining information, and makes it easy to understand and to internalize a message with the help of visuals, graphics, videos, sounds and the like that couldn't be used as effectively by traditional media. According to McLuhan, internet is;

“The most significant effect of communication tools can be seen on our sensory organs and the way of thinking. Some of people's the sensory organs are valued more than the others. For example; television activates vision and hearing, and TV changes the world from a nation into a global village. Here, internet is the final point in presenting a global village, because the internet requires using a lot of sensory organs” (Durmuş & Others, 2010, p. 18).

There are some differences between traditional media and the internet. The most obvious one is that internet is interactive. In traditional media, the person is imposed to one way communication, but the internet requires users participate to get

information. Users can get information, and then they generate and share information again. Internet users are both publishers and audiences.

As McLuhan states, 'medium is the message'. Dress codes, jewellery, rosette, environment, word, home, money, plane, car etc. are human requirements and tools of communication. They have a value of a message (Trans.: Sevük, T., Quoted from McLuhan by Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2002, p. 67). People can give various messages. A computer is also a tool and it has a message. This message is related with people's perspective of information sharing. In fact, a message sent using a computer does not only carry the sender's thoughts and ideas. It also shows the user's preference of using the technology for communicating. Computer and internet represents a technological message. This message is concerned with the users' interest in using technology. When a user sends a message through the internet, this message is a product of information age as it is sent using the internet and computer. Today, we can speak of an information society, instead of an industrial society. Message, which is sent on a computer, represents information society and this message is the product of the information society.

The internet is a platform that provides a connection for individuals and also groups on a limited budget. Internet is preferred; because it is the cheapest communication tool for users. When users have a computer and an internet connection, they can use it as much as they want.

Internet has multi-functional properties and it eliminates the time and the space concept. People connect to the internet using laptops, notebooks, tablets, PCs and mobile phones everywhere at anytime. As Appadurai states, the internet has instant

communication applications such as e-mail, MSN, Yahoo and Google. These applications are free and are a part of users' daily routine. Internet eliminates distances and with all the opportunities it offers, it became part of people lives (Arjun Appadurai; 2008, p. 33). The Internet, which has a high usage rate, is preferred for communicating, as much as face to face communication is preferred in daily life. This gives rise to spending less time with friends and family members outside the virtual world.

According to figure 6, population of the world is approximately seven billion. Today, internet users are about two and a half billion. This user's number shows that internet has an important place in people's lives. It is also related with the fact that internet is a new public sphere.

<b>WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS</b>						
<b>June 30, 2012</b>						
<b>World Regions</b>	<b>Population (2012 Est.)</b>	<b>Internet Users Dec. 31, 2000</b>	<b>Internet Users Latest Data</b>	<b>Penetration (% Population)</b>	<b>Growth 2000-2012</b>	<b>Users % of Table</b>
<a href="#">Africa</a>	1,073,380,925	4,514,400	167,335,676	15.6 %	3,606.7 %	7.0 %
<a href="#">Asia</a>	3,922,066,987	114,304,000	1,076,681,059	27.5 %	841.9 %	44.8 %
<a href="#">Europe</a>	820,918,446	105,096,093	518,512,109	63.2 %	393.4 %	21.5 %
<a href="#">Middle East</a>	223,608,203	3,284,800	90,000,455	40.2 %	2,639.9 %	3.7 %
<a href="#">North America</a>	348,280,154	108,096,800	273,785,413	78.6 %	153.3 %	11.4 %
<a href="#">Latin America / Caribbean</a>	593,688,638	18,068,919	254,915,745	42.9 %	1,310.8 %	10.6 %
<a href="#">Oceania / Australia</a>	35,903,569	7,620,480	24,287,919	67.6 %	218.7 %	1.0 %
<b>WORLD TOTAL</b>	<b>7,017,846,922</b>	<b>360,985,492</b>	<b>2,405,518,376</b>	<b>34.3 %</b>	<b>566.4 %</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>

NOTES: (1) Internet Usage and World Population Statistics are for June 30, 2012. (2) CLICK on each world region name for detailed regional usage information. (3) Demographic (Population) numbers are based on data from the [US Census Bureau](#) and local census agencies. (4) Internet usage information comes from data published by [Nielsen Online](#), by the [International Telecommunications Union](#), by [GfK](#), local ICT Regulators and other reliable sources. (5) For definitions, disclaimers, navigation help and methodology, please refer to the [Site Surfing Guide](#). (6) Information in this site may be cited, giving the due credit to [www.internetworldstats.com](#). Copyright © 2001 - 2012, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide.

Figure 6. World Internet Usage Rates (30-June-2012)  
([www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm](http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm))

### **2.2.3 Social Network Sites (SNS)**

Social Network Sites (SNS) provides a web-based service. These sites have a purpose; to attract people to the virtual environment. Here, users can follow their friends and others who became potential friends. “Users, who communicate through interactive links, create their own little worlds” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Durmuş, 2010, p.20). These people, who create their virtual worlds using the internet, join these sites and communicate under the name of social media. Then, they make an effort to create common areas by giving credits to others and sharing their emotions. With these qualities, “social media is a web-based service which allows creating public or semi-public profiles within a limited system, and social media is a place where users can connect to others and their friends” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Durmuş, 2010 p. 20). With such a strategy, social media has become more and more popular. People can share anything they want including written or spoken messages, pictures and videos. Because of this, people lean towards maintaining their relationships on Facebook. People enjoy sharing things with their friends. People began to lose their interest in face to face communication and traditional media, but the most important point is that social media does not actually replace other communication devices such as; telephone, TV, magazines, books etc. The social media is a new agent. Already, the word ‘social’ separates social media from others, because it is interactive. In today’s world, interactivity is crucial to become social. Facebook offers the same opportunities with other communication devices. Visual, auditory and written materials can be shared on Facebook. The difference lies in its interactivity. Also, users can see, listen and read what other people have shared whenever they like, because everything that is shared on Facebook is kept for a long time, and even for years. Therefore, Facebook is like a source of information.

In this environment, individuals can keep in contact with their friends by commenting on each others' posts, photos, notes, videos and likes. That is, individuals can get good opportunities for expressing themselves. Individuals that express themselves better have begun to use this virtual place more effectively. Because of this, "all SNS became a part of peoples' life style, they became a habit, and part of their daily routines. Users can find their friends in these social network sites and carry their relationships beyond friendship" (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009 p.26).

Social networking sites vary from each other greatly in their terms and conditions, member registration and acceptance procedures, and usage. The number of members in a social network site can change. For instance; one of the most popular network sites is *Facebook*. Facebook has 901 million members. The closest follower is Twitter which has approximately 200 million users.

#### **2.2.4 Social Media**

In history, the term *social network* was used for the first time by Barnes for in 1954. At the time, social network was defined as "a map, which showed relations from random meetings to familial ties," (Trans.: Sevük, T., Durmuş, 2010, p. 17). Today, social network is used to refer to a virtual space. Users create their social networks using their personalized pages. Social network sites can be used to communicate with other users; moreover it can also be used to increase reputation and raise awareness. Danah M. boyd explains that social media provides a platform where users can share their comments with other users and communicate with each other (boyd, 2006, p. 57).



If a person wants to be a member of a social network site, then he/she has to provide his/her own real name, surname, gender, age, address, education level, interest areas and likes, according to the terms and conditions of Facebook. Having provided these data, people can create a profile that can be seen by other users. Especially, this rule is essential for Facebook. With these data, users create a profile in Facebook and begin to communicate with each other. Users' profiles represent themselves on Facebook. Users expect a virtual existence. Their bodies are in the physical world but they strive to create a world in the virtual space. This struggle has a meaning; they can create their environment there. Users bring their physical social network and social capitals to Facebook. Binark states that, this is an inner life in new space and does not involve a real meeting of individuals, new socialization practices prepare necessary base/ground and it involves spiritual sharing at the same time (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 194). Users get together for the same reason and share things about their common interests. This activity enhances their virtual relationships.

Some research suggests that, the bigger proportion of users share their personal information with their profiles (boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 23). Users fill in their information, which is a prerequisite for joining Facebook, and share this information with others. Providing accurate information also creates an atmosphere of mutual trust. People who become members of such social network sites accept to share their personal data with others and hence, they do not feel uncomfortable for having a public profile which can be seen by others. People who engage in such an environment define themselves as social. Their intention is to be followed. Those who are not followed define themselves as unsocial. Accordingly, when they are offline, they think that they are missing a lot. To be a member of Facebook has its

benefits. Nicholas Carr explains that; “we like to communicate with our friends, family members and colleagues. We like to keep in touch to make connections and we don’t like to be disconnected from such an environment” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Carr; 2012: p. 117-118). Some users attempt to transfer their daily live practices from the physical world into the virtual space. Rules and dynamics of virtual world are different when compared to the physical world and the communication structure is also different. According to Durmuş; in the virtual world, communication is extremely weak, customized and used to fulfil basic communication requirements (Trans.: Sevük, T., Durmuş, 2010, p. 62). These networks cross borders with low prices and accelerate mass communication. Individuals establish their social network themselves and so they empower socialization (Castells, 2003, p. 32). This socialization isn’t physical; it is limited with virtual world.

Instead of communicating and meeting new friends physically, users invite their friends and add them to their Facebook friend lists. In this context, communication takes place on Facebook (boyd & Ellison; 2007). Users use social network sites like a communication tool or a social world. Social networks are like a residence where all friends live together. Users feel safe in this residence; because they have the possibility of reaching all their friends. This activity of connecting with and keeping in touch with friends is referred to as ‘being social’ within a virtual environment. It would be impossible to have all friends around in the same environment in the physical world. However, this is possible within a virtual environment, regardless of the geographical location.

### **2.2.5 Facebook**

Facebook was founded in 2004 under the name of *The Facebook* by Mark Zuckenberg and his friends, Andrew McCollum and Eduardo Saver from Harvard

University. In a very short time, more than half of the students studying at Harvard University became members of Facebook. A total number of four hundred and fifty people and approximately twenty two thousand photographs and visuals were uploaded. The aim here was to introduce Facebook and its functions to the students at Harvard University. Two months following its establishment, Facebook was used by the schools around Boston and all Ivy League schools ([tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook)). Within two years, all schools in the United States began to use Facebook. “With increasing usage of Facebook among schools, Facebook reached one million users by December 2004” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p.37). At the beginning, the name of this site was ‘The Facebook’, which was later changed to ‘Facebook.com’ (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p.37). Then, this site became even more widespread in different countries such as Britain and Canada. Also more than twenty-five thousand universities in the US, Canada, Mexico, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland began to use Facebook, and Facebook became universal. In the meantime, high schools and universities joined Facebook by 2006. With the increasing number of members, more and more people from different countries joined Facebook and the site itself became a commercial success. In 2006, Facebook welcomed members who had an e-mail address. This meant that Facebook could be used by everyone over the age of 13, who had an internet line, all over the world. Today, Facebook has become the most popular social networking site and one of the most financially valuable companies in the world.

Each and every member of Facebook creates a personalized profile with their real names. Users can find each other with the help of the search engine by typing in their friends’ names. Every friend added to the list becomes a part of this virtual

environment and more can be invited to join with a friend request. Within this platform, friends can share their messages, photos, videos and comments with each other and create an environment where they can communicate and stay in touch.

## **2.3 General Information about Facebook**

The aim of this section is to give information about Facebook users, Facebook's demographic structure, global reach platform, what happens in every 20 minutes on Facebook, mobile usage of Facebook and Facebook Company statistics.

### **2.3.1 Users on Facebook**

Information regarding Facebook users is obtained from Facebook press information page (which is also shown in figure 7).

- There are 901 million monthly active users in Facebook.
- Users generated an average of 3.2 billion Likes and Comments per day.
- There are 526 million daily active users.
- Facebook acquired Instagram, a photo-sharing service with over 100 million registered users.
- There were more than 125 billion friend connections on Facebook (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

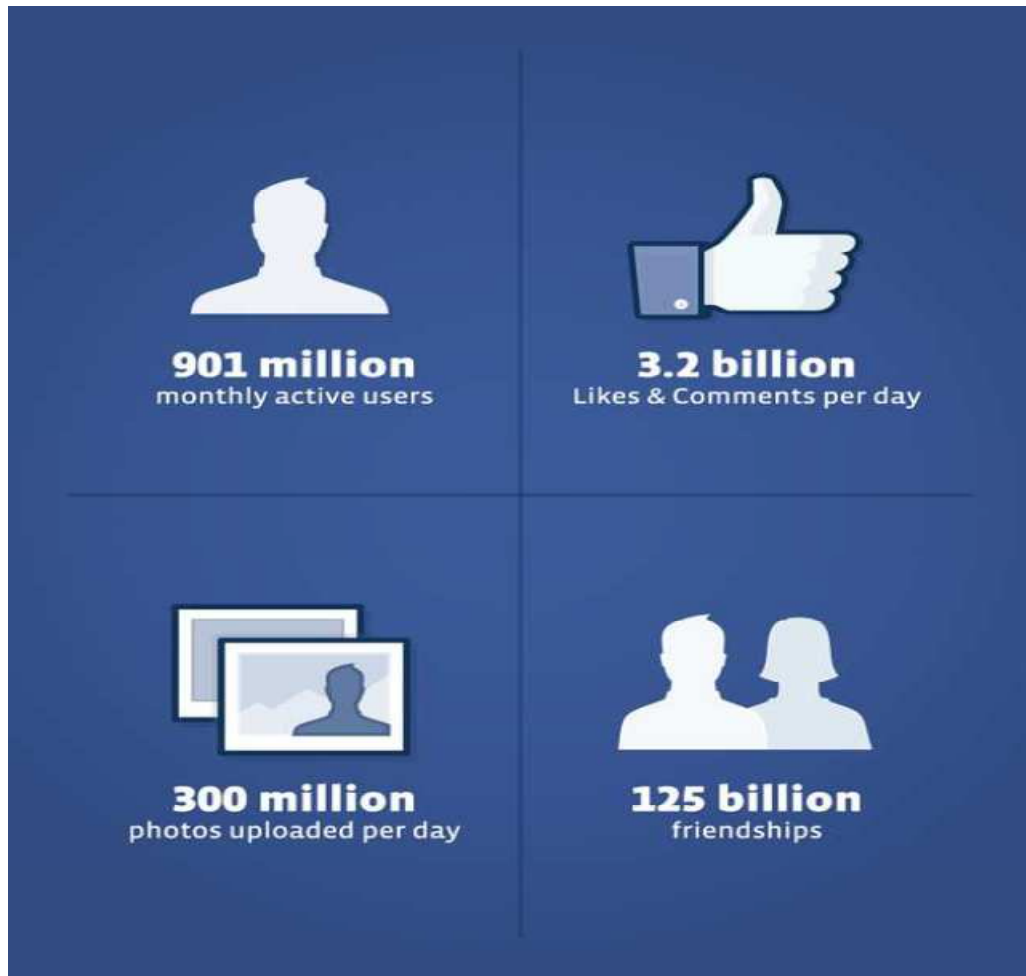


Figure 7. About Facebook (29-August-2013)  
 ([https://newsroom.fb.com/#\\_=\\_](https://newsroom.fb.com/#_=_))

### 2.3.2 Facebook's Demographic Structure

Facebook's demographic structure is as follow as;

- % 48 of 18-34 year olds checks Facebook when they wake up.
- % 28 of 18-34 year olds checks Facebook before they get out of bed.
- Average number of friends per Facebook user is 130.
- Average number of pages, groups, and events a user is connected to is 80.
- Average number of photos uploaded per day is 250.
- Number of fake Facebook profiles is 83.000.000 (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

### **2.3.3 Global Reach Platform**

- Number of languages available on the Facebook site is 70.
- % 75 of Facebook users live outside the United States.
- Average number of applications installed on Facebook each day is 20 million.
- Total number of apps and websites integrated with Facebook is 7 million.
- Number of users who helped translate the written content of Facebook is 300.000 (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

### **2.3.4 Every 20 Minutes on Facebook**

- 1 million links are shared.
- 2 million friend requests are sent.
- 3 million messages are sent (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

### **2.3.5 Mobile Usage of Facebook**

- Facebook released a number of new Facebook apps for iPhone, iPad, and Android devices.
- Total number of mobile Facebook users is 680.000.000 (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

### **2.3.6 Facebook Company Statistics**

- Total number of Facebook employees is 4,619.
- Total 2012 Facebook revenue is \$5.090.000.000 (Facebook Newsroom, 2013).

## **2.4 Representation in Facebook**

According to Binark, there are two common definitions for representation;

- To represent a thing by evoking in memory or to provide an understanding by referring to an image which exist in the people's mind.

- With the simplest form, to symbolize a thing (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 273).

The main aim of Facebook and other social networking sites is to represent a virtual space. Users begin their representation in Facebook by carrying their social environment and social capital to Facebook. They transfer their ideas, friends and admirations to Facebook. This is how representation takes place in Facebook. In addition, users display their profile photographs and pictures and this is also a visual representation.

There are three kinds of representations in media texts. These are “misrepresentation, over-representation and under-representation” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 274).

- *Misrepresentation*: Dominant parties negate and distort distinctive characteristics of other parties. Here, parties with different characteristics continue with their daily routines, but dominant parties define them as deficient and redundant. Also, in the strictest sense, the dominant parties tend to misjudge other parties.
- *Over-representation*: Dominant parties ignore different parties. Dominant parties have their own rules; they create a control zone and do not confer with other parties. Dominant parties are an indication of the existence of boundaries between different parties.
- *Under-representation*: Different parties have different visibility rates and dominant parties are more visible within the society. Dominant parties are aware of the existence of the different parties but they consider them as

discrepancies. Again, boundaries are drawn by the dominant parties. Here, different sides are recognised by dominant parties, but dominant parties define the boundaries of different parties within a society. (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 274).

Especially, in over-representation and under-representation, the dominant parties bear against different kinds of representations who have more determinative representation. In this perspective, there is an unequal relation of power between the representative and the represented (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 275).

Facebook is a virtual environment. Users are active daily on Facebook. Some users fulfil their needs within this environment. This situation creates a perception. According to this perception users satisfy their needs here and they suppose that there are unlimited and unrestricted movement areas in Facebook. But here, actually the dominant party is Facebook. All the terms and conditions, rules, applications and structures are developed by Facebook. When a person becomes a member of Facebook, this person has to accept and agree with the terms and conditions of Facebook. Therefore, Facebook is superior to the users as a representation.

## **2.5 Inter-personal Communication in Facebook**

The Internet, which develops with the help of technology, creates a virtual communication world. This world is not only used to access information; it also shapes social relations.

“Internet does not only allow people to post, receive and share messages, but it also allows individuals to interact with other individuals, individuals interact with groups



and groups interact with individuals” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Timisi; 2003: p. 132). Internet gives people access to social media environments such as Facebook. Other social environments are also available on the internet, but Facebook is relatively different when compared with other social sites due to its financial power and number of active users. Twitter is one of Facebook’s most powerful competitors in term of the number of users. “Twitter has got one hundred and twenty seven million users”(http://ansonalex.com/infographics/social-media-usage-statistics-2012-infographic/).

Facebook allows instant messaging, blogging, photo sharing and other applications. Apart from these, Facebook provides a social environment where users are real people and not anonymous. People cannot login with their nicknames. If they attempt to register with a fake name or a nickname, their accounts would be cancelled by Facebook. People must use their real names in Facebook. So, only people, who use their real names, are accepted to become members. (www.facebook.com/terms.php). This feature distinguishes Facebook from other social networking sites.

Users in Facebook, who use their real identities, reflect their characteristics and information in accordance with their real identities. With their real identity, users share their personal information. Some of the features offered by Facebook are as follows;

- Finding friends
- Advertising
- Sharing videos, pictures, photographs, music and ideas.
- Playing games

- Becoming a member of political and non-political corporations
- Finding partners

Users seem to make the most out of these features and finding friends is used to expand one's social capital. Users who want to carry their lives to Facebook, act as in their daily lives, because, their friends are in Facebook. They continue to share information and connect with their friends. They try to simulate Facebook practices to daily life practices. For example; users send flowers, foods, hearts, beverages and alcohol pictures on special days. These pictures are used as symbols of these gifts. Users even share wedding invitation cards here. Therefore Facebook is sometimes preferred over face to face communication.

According to Hamburger and Ben-Artzi (2000); the usage of computer-mediated communication is related with the user's character. For instance; introverted people – people who have difficulties communicating - prefer to use social networking sites more than the others as they can express themselves more easily using these sites. Similarly, people on a limited budget also prefer to be a part of these networking sites. These people tend to show themselves as wealthier (Amichai-Hamburger & Others, 2002, p. 41). Users have a tendency to introduce themselves different than they actually are in reality, but this cannot be exaggerated, because users have their real environment in Facebook (like family members, friends and relatives). They are known by their social environment in real life; friends and relatives. Also, users often use their real identities on Facebook. Nevertheless, people avoid extremism, but they strive to become the character of their dreams. Facebook has a good structure for this. Users can write, and can share anything they want. With this way, users can reflect themselves differently. For example; users can show themselves as more

political, romantic, extrovert and intellectual, because users want to have such an impression on others. This situation is related with the frequency of time spent on Facebook. According to Ellison & others; if Facebook is a part of people's life, this platform becomes even more important in reflect user's characters. If users are frequently active on Facebook, they can perceive Facebook as a platform where they can express themselves as they wish (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe; 2007, p. 27).

According to Bauman;

“Yet virtual proximity boasts features that in a liquid modern world can be seen, with good reason, as advantageous – but which cannot easily be obtained under conditions of that other, not virtual. No wonder virtual proximity is given preference and practiced with greater zeal and abandon than any other closeness. Loneliness behind the closed door of a private room with mobile telephone within reach may seem much less risky and safer a condition than sharing the household's common ground”(Bauman, 2009, p. 34).

Users, who are only accompanied by devices in a private room, can only express themselves using these devices. As Bauman (2009) states, if users do not feel safe, then they can simply end the communication (Bauman, 2009, p. 34). This situation creates insincere communication. However, this is not the case in face to face communication. Accordingly, it can be claimed that, Facebook can destroy the potential quality of sincerity in communication. Facebook is concerned with performance and roles because; users are not visible on Facebook physically. Users have to perform with representative elements on Facebook. Users have to impress and keep each communicator available to communicate. Sharing is only one of the activities that can be performed on Facebook. Sharing is also a performance. Facebook is like a theatre stage and the users are like players. Users show their

existence by sharing. The things that are shared indicate the existence of users, because they are the only representative elements for users on Facebook. These representative elements are the things that users share, and shares are performances of users. Accordingly, within such an environment, performance is crucial.

## **2.6 Culture & Society**

With the development of the technology, the economic management strategies have also changed in the world. Countries, which use the latest technology, are aware of the importance of information sharing among countries. The yield of labour, land and capital is decreasing while information is becoming more determinant (Drucker, 1993, p. 87). Computer technology is the major invention that allows human beings to access information, change societies and gain a global value with its networks. This global value has changed the world into a global village. Information, which is the capital for ruling classes, became easily accessible via the internet.

During the transition to an information society, one of important factors has been to advance the services in the industrial society. When the service industry began to use computer technology for their promotion, customers were able get service through the use of computers. Thus, within time, industrial society was replaced by information society. Now, people speak of information society.

Some characteristics of the information society are as follow;

1. Industrial: Transition from commodity production to service economy.
2. Vocational: Transition from labour-class to middle-class society.
3. Political: Transition from politicians and businessmen to information class.

4. Cultural: To protect the theory that is major source of policy and development.
5. Ideological: Future management that is interested with the control of technology and the evaluation of technology (Slattery, 2007, p. 35).

Societies may change over time in order to adapt to the conditions of the information society. Every technological change brings innovations and societies accept innovations in time. For instance, audible indicators, which are one of the most important technological advancements to date, allowed hunters and gatherers to contact each other throughout the history. These audible indicators allowed people to act together in groups. Then writing was invented and historiography came into existence. Historiography allowed people to access information about the experiences and stories of their ancient ancestors and discover the historical development. The printing press has increased literacy. As Bell states, in today's world, the radio, television, the written press and the internet are building the infrastructure of the societies. Information is gaining more and more value (Bell, 1998, p. 102).

While defining the information society, McLuhan emphasizes the determinant side of technology and explains that it has the potential to shape how people think and act (Trans.: Sevük, T., Quoted from McLuhan by Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2005, p. 49). Political authorities, who make use of the technology and universal broadcasting, present their cultures and values on websites sites that are globally accessible. The broadcasted information can be viewed by people all around the world. Internet users can simply share this information with others and the broadcasted material can reach the whole globe, 'Gangnam Style' song can be given as an example. This song has

been downloaded and listened to by a great number of listeners. This song is also well known with its unique dance moves. This song is very popular all around the world. The video clip was viewed 1.518.531.162 times on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0>). This is how cultural activities as such reach a global audience. Here, the time spent in front of the computer is an important factor to be taken into consideration. Users, who spend too much time in front of the computer, interact with other users within the virtual environment. While time spent on the internet can be hugely productive, it may also lead to a physical isolation. Time spent offline is the only time people connect to the real world.

As the internet and computers become more and more popular each day, people engage less with the real world. Bargh & McKenna explain that “this changing style of communication decreases social interaction when compared with face-to-face communication. Also, increasing use of internet has negative effects on people’s psychology as it may lead to loneliness and depression. Internet usage damages peoples’ relationships with the neighbourhood and their social ties.” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Quoted from Bargh & McKenna by Güçdemir, 2010, p. 46-47).

Users, who do not have strong relationships with the real social world, tend to express themselves in virtual groups that are available on Facebook. These groups welcome members that are interested in sports, religions, ideologies, music, and health. Users do not necessarily join these groups because of their interests in such areas, but they sometimes aim to find more friends to socialize within the virtual environment. Within these groups, people are allowed to express themselves freely and chat about common interests.

People who communicate with others over the internet tend to change their social communication practises. They build a virtual environment and they live there. They express themselves and reflect their identities there. Providing that a computer and an internet connection are available, people are able to socialize in a virtual world. One of the questions that need to be discussed is whether computers make individuals isolated. This can be considered as more of an issue for the information society.

## **2.7 Public Sphere**

One of the important facts that need to be taken into consideration is that users on Facebook are not anonymous. Users join Facebook with their real names. They share their ideas on Facebook, and represent themselves as a part of the virtual world. The ideas shared can be in the form of videos, pictures, comments and likes. Accordingly, Facebook allows people to communicate in different ways. The ideas that are shared can be about any topic. Users share their ideas about a topic, and come to an agreement. Every idea shared can find someone concerned. This makes Facebook a public sphere. According to Habermas, special people like opinion leaders, engage in reasoning, think rationally, discuss their ideas and reach a consensus, creating a public sphere. This public sphere comes into existence with a process, medium and location (Quoted from Habermas by Slattery; 2007). Today, Facebook is used as a public sphere.

In the old times, theatres, special meeting points, museums and parks were the public spheres. Especially, coffeehouses were among the most preferred public spheres. With the development of capitalism, production methods have also changed. Now, wealthy people advertise their products in public spheres. Today, people, who do not find place to speak and chat to others, prefer Facebook. Facebook provides an

environment where everyone can participate and have the right to express themselves.

- Everyone can relate to every kind of idea that is intended
- Everyone can act on every idea that is intended
- Everyone can have a voice according to their attitude, wants and needs
- Participation rights cannot be forcibly taken from anyone

(Quoted from Diskursethik by Underwood, 2002, p. 132-133).

The points mentioned above describe a virtual environment. Environments which allow people to express themselves are public spheres for ideas. Everyone who holds a view about the subjects in question can join this environment and share their opinions with the others.

For Bauman (2005); “a public sphere is place that makes confession of intimacies and special secrets” (Bauman, 2005, p. 135). The same thing is valid for Facebook.

## **2.8 Identity Production**

“Identity is an indwelling phenomenon. It does not only represent the future, but also the past. Various popular culture stories from the past which shape our identities help establish a common understanding and reflection of our identities” (Trans.: Sevük, T., Toprak & Others, 2009, p. 118). People and societies, who have a style of expression, express themselves with their outfits, accessories, music, dance, speeches, and body languages. These communication styles are a part of a society’s life style. Societies are reflected in people’s identities and cultures together with their communication habits. With these communication habits in the community, identities



become public values, because individuals express their admirations, values and life styles while communicating with others. In this way, individuals' identities become a reflection of their societies. Also, people who live within the same society cannot ignore the values and beliefs of others. They respond either positively or negatively to the others. People as individuals represent their society in one way or the other. Individuals do not establish and express their identities in isolation. All identities meet on a common ground, and this becomes the social identity.

If identity production was to be investigated in the social media and particularly in Facebook, we could claim that Facebook supports identity production. Users reflect their identities on Facebook and users use their identity to create their own virtual world. Sending gifts and invitations, sharing videos, photographs and comments can be given as examples. Also, the number of applications available on Facebook tends to increase day by day.

Because of the chemistry of Facebook, users feel that they are living in this virtual world of Facebook. Users feel as if they can build their reality here. Then they create their little virtual world by communicating with their friends. This world is a new place where users reflect their own identities and express themselves.

People sometimes want to participate in a certain activity or would like an opportunity to express themselves to an audience. Such opportunities are not always available within the physical world, while this can be fairly possible within a virtual environment. Within the virtual environment, paralinguistic features such as body language, gestures, mimics and physical appearance that reflect people's moods are not visible to others. These may well have some advantages and disadvantages in

given situations. Some people are not good public speakers and may not be able to construct and present their speech successfully and may not be able to control their mimics. This kind of people would more likely prefer computer-mediated communication. In this type of communication, users do not have to worry about their physical appearances and such, but the only thing they need to concentrate on would be finding the right words to express themselves. Also, people are able to create attractive user profile pages. User profile pages are important as they can be designed in such a way that would attract the attention of the others. However, it should be taken into consideration that users cannot pretend to be someone else because Facebook users have friends on their lists that actually know the users in real life. These friends are social capitals who already know the real identities of the users. Facebook do not allow people to register as anonymous. Users are known here by their friends, but users can still show themselves differently in terms of character, but this cannot be exaggerated.

In Facebook, users do not express themselves with their social environments only. They also join social groups available on Facebook to express themselves. These groups can be political, social, economic and strategic groups. Users express themselves by becoming a member of these groups. These organized groups are formed for;

- Correspondences,
- Activists and
- Organizations

There are two kinds of organizations. These are; commercial and non-profit organizations; and governmental and non-governmental organizations. Political parties, associations, foundations, public institutions, private commercial companies, political and social movements operate on Facebook. They have Facebook pages. Facebook is an important communication platform for these groups of organizations. People, who are members of these groups, reflect their attitudes via the attitudes of these groups. Also, the members are likely to meet new virtual friends from adherent groups.

Although users have an identity in a virtual world, these identities have temporary effects on people. Identity representation is limited with the time spent online. Although users' identities create attractive effects on other people, people want to see users physically. If this physical meeting is delayed, this may lead to a lack of trust between users and their virtual friends. In brief, even if users succeed in reflecting themselves as different in the virtual world, other members of Facebook might still want to make physical contact. Otherwise, desired identities will be just imaginary and will be forgotten in time. If something can be perceived by five sensory organs, this can be more attractive for people. This is also the case for Facebook users.

## **2.9 Roles and Performance**

The word *person* comes from Latin *persona*. The word *persona*'s first meaning was a *mask*. As the first meaning of the word *person* also implies, every people have their own masks to wear in real life. We can therefore take life as a movie or theatre and people as actors. Everyone has a role in life and we get to know each other with these roles.

According to Goffman; performance is “every activity performed by a participant tends to affect a specific participant in a particular way” (Goffman, 2009, p. 26). During a performance, if activities can be exhibited and carried out in predetermined situations, they can be explained to have a *role* (Goffman, 2009, p. 31). Performance allows people to play their roles. Individuals have a place within the society with their roles and they exhibit roles with their performance. According to Goffman;

“A ‘performance’ may, be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants. Taking a particular participant and his performance as a basic point of reference, we may refer to those who contribute the other performances as the audience, observers, or coparticipants. The pre-established pattern of action which is unfolded during a performance and which may be presented or played through on other occasions may be called a ‘part’ or ‘routine.’ These situational terms can easily be related to conventional structural ones. When an individual or performer plays the same part to the same audience on different occasions, a social relationship is likely to arise. Defining social role as the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status, we can say that a social role will involve one or more parts and that each of these different parts may be presented by the performer on a series of occasions to the same kinds of audience or to an audience of the same persons” (Goffman, 2009, p. 38).

People, who present themselves with their performance, want to be accepted and recognized by the society. Every individual, who has a role, presents a performance and they want to find a place in society. Here to be liked or appreciated by everyone is not possible, because in every society, there are people who have different expectations and ideologies. Accordingly, it can be concluded that a society is formed by people with different roles and ways of thinking.

According to Goffman; roles have three categories:

1. Performance demonstrators (performers)

2. Targeting people with their performance (audiences)
3. People who do not perform their roles and observe others' performances (outsiders) (Goffman, 2009, p. 44).

Because of these roles; users continuously show their admiration in virtual environments. This admiration is important for users in Facebook. Posts that people share are performances and they reflect people's roles. Users know that there are audiences in Facebook who can follow their posts and users begin to share with an intention of reaching their audiences. Also, users know the roles of their audiences, within a virtual environment. As a response, audiences fulfil their duties. In this way, virtual socialization begins. Also, there are outsiders. Unlike others, the outsiders are not participators. They are observers. They follow users and audiences of users. Outsiders do not interfere with them, because outsiders are there to only follow the users and audiences.

Roles and performances are actually for the physical world, but they can be used in Facebook too. People show their roles to their Facebook friends; this is like a daily life activity. In virtual environments, target audiences are social capitals of users. Even if users know that audiences follow them, they do not seem to mind, because, they are also given a chance to follow other when they become members of Facebook. Users become members of Facebook to contact and to present their roles to their friends. The aim is to strengthen their virtual existence. Users also tend not to accept friend requests from people who they do not know.

## **2.10 Social Capital**

According to Bourdieu and Wacquant, social capital is “the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.14).

On Facebook, the users’ aim is to move their social capital to Facebook. This is also Facebook’s aim. Facebook expects users to move their social capital, to their Facebook friends list. After all, in most cases, it is the social capital itself which attracts users to become members of Facebook (Toprak, Yıldırım, Aygül, Binark, Börekçi, & Çomu, 2009, p. 115). Users become members to find new friends and contact with their old friends on Facebook. This is concerned with social relations’ adaptation to the new media. Social relations and social networks have important roles on the usage of new media and Facebook.

People prefer to communicate and to exchange their ideas with the people they already know in real life. Therefore, users prefer Facebook as a new public sphere and they are also attracted by the speed of Facebook. People can communicate with their friends quickly on Facebook. Relations must be permanent for social capital. Otherwise, number of relations established will decrease. Communication tools help people to maintain permanent and up-to-date relationships. With Facebook, users maintain their social capital.

Interactions on computers have positive effects on social interactions, participants and social capital (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004, p. 10).

According to Putnam, there are two social capitals. These are bonding and bridging social capital. “Bonding social capital is found between individuals in tightly-knit, emotionally close relationships such as family and close friends”. (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004, p.3). Putnam states that bonding social capital reflects strong ties with family and close friends, who provide emotional support (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). Facebook is sometimes used to strengthen the social capital as a communication tool. Users can communicate on Facebook easily with their social capital once they become members of Facebook.

Putnam also (2000) distinguishes between bridging and bonding social capital. “The former is linked to what network researchers refer to as ‘weak ties,’ which are loose connections between individuals who may provide useful information or new perspectives for one another but typically not emotional support. Alternatively, bonding social capital is found between individuals in tightly-knit, emotionally close relationship”.

## **2.11 Related Studies on Facebook and SNS (Social Network Sites)**

In this part of the thesis, some related studies on Facebook and SNS are discussed.

Pui- Yee Chiu, Christy M.K. Cheung and Matthew K. O. Lee’s study is about “Online Social Networks: Why Do We Use Facebook?” (2008). In this study, the researchers examined the reasons “Why people use social network sites such as Facebook” (Chiu, Christy, Lee, & Lee, 2008). Users were chosen randomly. When users connect to Social Network Sites, they can act as they wish. Therefore, in this study the researchers have observed that when people connect to Social Network Sites voluntarily, they accept the social events as a volunteer and they deal with each

other explicitly to participate in these social events. The participants of these social events do not actually know each other but they still share a common language in a common ground. Also, these people express themselves in a community and reflect their social personalities within groups. They define themselves and the other members of the group as part of an outside world. As the number of members in these groups increase, users begin to comply with the values of groups and they obey the rules.

Another study on Facebook users was conducted by Lesa A. Stern and Kim Taylor (2007) “Social Networking on Facebook”. The aim of this study was to show that the majority of the users of Facebook are young people, especially university students. For the completion of this study, a questionnaire was prepared and answered by five hundred and thirty two students from four hundred different universities. Three hundred and sixty four students who participated in this study were already members of Facebook. According to the result of this research, despite the opposite claims of the press, students prefer to use Facebook for favourable purposes. Furthermore, the results of the study reveals that students prefer to make their profile visible to everyone because students want to be able to interact with their friends from the university. The majority of the students login to Facebook more than once each day. To sum up, the result of the study show that the majority of Facebook users are young and this may be due to the fact that technology has an important place in young peoples’ lives.

“Tertiary Students’ Attitudes Towards Using SNS” was a study conducted by Bahire Efe Özad. This study is related with the tertiary students’ use of SNS, whether they use SNS to gratify their educational needs and socialization needs. This study was



made in Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, at EMU (2011-2012 Academic Year). %20 of Faculty students' population was selected as sample. Sample was selected randomly. There is a questionnaire which has 58 questions. According to the results of this study, students use SNS more for their social purposes. Also, students are undecided about commenting on educational topics, subscribing to education related sites and reaching information related to education. In addition, students prefer SNS mostly for gratifying their social needs rather than educational needs.

The study entitled 'Benefits of Facebook Friends: Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites' (2007) was conducted by Nicole, Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe in 2007. This study is related with Facebook and creation of social capital. 800 under-graduate students studying at the University of Michigan participated in this study. E-mails that consisted of a questionnaire, was sent to the participants. With these e-mails students were informed that their personal information would be kept confidential. 286 of 800 students filled in this questionnaire online. The questionnaire consisted of demographic questions (age, gender, graduate level, location and nationality). Also, 'how much time do you spend on Facebook', and 'do you use Facebook to meet new people or to maintain your existing friendships' are among the most important questions in this study. Also, this questionnaire aims at measuring personal happiness and three kinds of social capital. These are respectively;

- Bonding social capital
- Bridging social capital and
- Maintained social capital

The questionnaire also sought to analyze the addiction rates. The results of the study suggest that being a member of Facebook has positive effects on maintaining and creating a social capital. Facebook has important effects on social capital. Facebook is particularly related with bridging social capital.

Some other important results of this study are as follows;

94.0% of participants have Facebook accounts. Students spend about 10 to 30 minutes every day on Facebook, and they have between 150 and 200 friends on their Facebook list.

According to the results, participants are able to maintain communication with their current friends on Facebook.

“Social Capital, self-esteem and use of online social network sites: A longitudinal analysis” (2008) was conducted by Charles Steinfield, Nicole B. Ellison and Cliff Lampe from Midwestern University. This study examines the relationship between bridging social capital and uses of Facebook. This study is the advanced version of “The Benefits of Facebook Friends: Social Capital and College Students Use of Online Social Network Sites” study conducted in 2007. This study examines the usage of social network sites by adults. It focuses on the role of self-esteem among users of Facebook and social capital.

For the completion of this study, a questionnaire and an interview was used. Subject consisted of a small group of students studying at the Midwestern University. In this study, there are 277 participants. Among the 277 participants, a total number of 92

students filled in the questionnaire. Their responses are different from the responses revealed by the previous study. When the results of the current study are compared with the results of the previous study, it can be concluded that students now tend to spend even more time on Facebook. In other words, the amount of time spent on Facebook has increased in a time of one year. According to the result, uses of Facebook lead to a more bridging social capital.

The study entitled “Identity Construction on Facebook: Digital Empowerment in Anchored Relationships” (2008) was conducted by Shanyang Zhao, Sherri Grasmuck and Jason Martin. This study focuses on identity construction in Facebook. As it has also been made clear throughout this study, identities are not anonymous on Facebook. This study was conducted at a university and its name is kept confidential. Students with different ethnical backgrounds study at this university. These students are from the Northeastern City of USA. The study is related with ethnic origins (African-Americans, Vietnamese-Americans, Indian-Americans, and Latino-Caribbean), late adolescent friendships and sexuality. Study focuses on Facebook profile, communication information, social networks and self-definition. The present study was based on a sample of 83 students. The findings show that users use different strategies to construct their identities on Facebook. Users of Facebook strive to show themselves as desired persons. They want to create an impact on their followers. Users create desired personalities with the information they state on their profile pages. According to the results, identities are constructed by society. Society is an ideal form of identity. People tend to represent themselves as, for instance, a handsome man, a beautiful woman, rich and extroverted person. Therefore, users tend to reflect different identities on Facebook.

Another study about Facebook usage entitled “Taking Goffman on a Tour of Facebook: College Students and the Presentation of Self in a Mediated Digital Environment” (2008) was conducted by Matthew Gardner Birnbaum. This study was submitted for the Degree of Philosophy Doctorate at the University of Arizona. This thesis examines “how college students present themselves with the posts they share on Facebook”. For the completion of this study, Erwing Goffman’s dramaturgical and impression management framework is used. The data used for this study consists of an observation of participants over the course of 8 months. A total number of 30 photo-elicitation interviews, and a photographic content analysis were studied. As photographs have an instrumental importance, study focuses on photographs that students use on their Facebook profiles.

According to the results of this study, under-graduate students believe that their profiles reach to large masses. According to the students, Facebook profile photos reflect users as;

- Social
- Adventurous/Risk-taker
- Partier
- Part of a larger community
- Funny/Humorous/Silly
- Unique

In addition to the studies mentioned above, the study entitled “A New Era on the Internet: Facebook.Com, To Face the Facebook as a Huge Social Phenomenon” (2009) was conducted by Burçin Ekinil. This study focuses on the effects of

Facebook on its users. In this study, online questionnaire method is used and a total number of 150 participants contributed to this study. Participants were between the ages of 15 and 35. For the completion of the first part of this study, a five-point Likert scale with multiple choice questions were used. In the second part of this study, participants were allowed to give their opinions and perspectives about Facebook. The results of the study indicated that participants believe that interaction is faster on Facebook when compared with face-to-face communication. Also, the results of the study show that Facebook has changed the participants' lives at some point. They declare that they communicate with their friends on Facebook, now, and that they can get more information about their friends and relatives on Facebook. Finally, the results of the study also indicate that Facebook creates an addiction and users want to login to Facebook every day.

Another study entitled "Role of SNS on Tertiary Students' Interpersonal Communication Skills and Attachment Needs" was conducted by Gülen Uygarer in 2011, at the Eastern Mediterranean University, in North Cyprus. This study focuses on 'the role of Social Networks Sites (SNS) on tertiary students' inter-personal communication skills and the ways of fulfilling affiliation needs. The SNS examined in this study are Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. Comparative research design and in-house questionnaire were used for the completion of this study. Participants involve a total number of 540 under-graduate students from all faculties and schools in North Cyprus. Also, an interview was made with 15 master students. The results of the study show that SNS develop interpersonal communication and help maintain affiliation in a positive way. Students from third world countries claim that SNS develop their interpersonal communication skills and fulfill their needs of affiliation.

## **2.12 Uses and Gratification Theory**

In the early stages of the beginning of mass communication, when mass media vehicles were used, the main concern was whether the mass media would give the masses what they desired. Products which are offered for masses are determined by media owners and then these products are presented to the people. In this process, masses are passive.

However, with the development of intelligence and technological structures, media tools centric approach was replaced with the human centred approach (Güngör, 2011). With this approach, people, who used mass media, became selective. They started to solve problems in their social environments through the media. For example, anyone, who spends the majority of his/her time at home, can try to resolve problems, which have limited choices to resolve, through television. Nowadays, with the increase of the media channels and tools, the number of choices increases and users get the opportunity to choose the media channel according to their needs and wants.

People need socio-psychological origins. People who want to satisfy their needs consult different sources and one of these sources are the media channels. People have expectations from the media and other sources to satisfy their needs. According to the Uses and Gratification Theory, the effect of media is limited; the selectivity of audiences creates a barrier for this effect. Individuals decide what they should be thinking about instead of what masses should think of the media. Here, media acts as a virtual bulletin board. In the field of communication, individual is the creator of his/her information. People use media for different reasons and requirements. In this

theory, the majority of people behave according to their free will. Individuals expect the gratification from media channels. These gratifications are relaxation, loneliness problem solving, entertainment, excitement and forgetting about their problems.

Nowadays, people's needs, which the traditional media tries to satisfy, can be satisfied more effectively by social media. People on television, can communicate with others verbally and visually while the Internet and the social media can create much more interactive individuals. Nowadays, without having to leave the comfort of their home, people can engage in any kind of social activity and communication environment by sitting in front of a computer. (Trans.: Sevük, T., Güngör; 2011: p.110).

Individuals who wish to satisfy their needs appeal to every possible media channel and can get what they want. However, at the same time they become the address of positive and negative effects of these media channels. Social media which satisfies individuals' needs maintains a static position for individuals at the same time. Users who develop social relationships from home or offices on the internet have to focus on computers physically and mentally within a constant physical position. Even if users continue to connect to the internet through their mobile devices, they still may isolate themselves from the real world. When users connect to the internet, they feel relaxed, because they focus on the virtual world and they forget about the problems in the real world.

Consequently, Uses and Gratification Theory focuses on: (1) the social and psychological origins of (2) needs which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or

engagement in other activities), resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones (Katz E., Blumber J.G., Gurevitch M. 1974, p.20).



## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

In this study, to understand the *influences of Facebook on interpersonal communication* both primary and secondary information is used. For obtaining the secondary information in introduction and literature chapters, different books, articles and internet based sources are investigated. For obtaining the primary information, quantitative research method is used and a questionnaire is applied. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the research methodology and design, the population and the sample selection of participants, data collection instrument, validity and reliability of data collection instruments and data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Methodology and Design**

In this thesis, a questionnaire technique is used from the quantitative research methodology. This study is designed as a case study. Primary data is collected from the university students who study at the Eastern Mediterranean University, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies in the academic year 2012-2013, Spring Semester. Social network sites, especially Facebook is very popular and an acceptable media vehicle among students. They used it to communicate with each other. Therefore, this questionnaire is generated to understand the influences of Facebook on the interpersonal communication of university students.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Instrument**

In this study, a questionnaire is prepared which consists of 66 questions. These questions are prepared on the basis of the uses and the gratification theory. Also

these questions are prepared aiming to find out the influences of Facebook on interpersonal communication. In the first part of the questionnaire, there are demographic, psychological and behavioural questions. There are 37 questions in the first part. Then, the five-point Likert Scale questions are introduced. The first one is the 'Uses of Facebook'. There are 14 questions about the 'Uses of Facebook'. The second section's title is the 'Effects of Facebook on Interpersonal Communication'. This part has 15 questions.

In addition to these, questions 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, and 26 are multiple-choice questions. Also, reverse coding is used in questions 41, 42, 43, 57 and 61.

### **3.3 Population and Sample of the Study**

The population of this study consists of the students who study in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies at the Eastern Mediterranean University. The total number of participants is 200 and they consist of university students. In the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, there are a total number of 482 registered students in the spring semester of the academic year 2012-2013. The Department of Public Relations and Advertising has 196 students, the Department of Radio, Television and Film and Journalism has 181 students and the Department of Visual Art and Communication Design has 105 students. Non-proportional Random Sampling strategy was applied for selecting the sample of the study.

### **3.4 Validity and Reliability of Data Collection Instrument**

Firstly, before commencing the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out with 10 Master and PhD students in the department of Communication and Media Studies of FCMS at EMU. The current study was shaped according to the pilot study. Master students gave feedback on the questionnaire. The feedback was provided in order to

set the standards for the study. This enhanced the content validity of the survey. Data was collected with this questionnaire. In this questionnaire, firstly demographic, behavioural and psychological questions were asked. Next, a means of statements was analyzed for the Likert Scale questions.

#### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	200	100.0
	Excluded (a)	0	.0
Total		200	100.0

a) Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.954	29

To support the whole sample, a factor analysis was carried out for all Likert- Scale type questions (29 in number). The alpha coefficient of reliability analysis for all question were 0.954 indicating great reliability of the data collection instrument. The alpha coefficient reliability for the total scale was .830 and .721 respectively.

Usually a reliability coefficient over 0.70 is considered sufficient for exploratory studies (Nunnally, 1978; p: 245).

### **3.5 Data Analysis Procedures**

In this study, the collection of data was carried out with the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program which is used to analyze the data.

## Chapter 4

### ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the outcomes obtained from the research carried out in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies (FCMS) at the Eastern Mediterranean University in 2013. The analysis of demographical characteristics of the participants was carried out in the first part of the questionnaire. In the second part of the questionnaire, the use of Facebook, and the effects of Facebook on interpersonal communication are studied. The means of statements were studied with the five-point Likert Scale. In this study, the values attached to the choices of attitude scale questions are as follows: 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Undecided, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly Agree. Balçı (2004) suggests that the division for the five-point Likert Scale would be as follows: (1-1.79) Strongly Disagree; (1.80-2.59) Disagree; (2.60-3.39) Undecided; (3.40-4.19) Agree; (4.20-5.0) Strongly Agree.

#### **4.1 Analysis of Characteristics of the Participants**

A total number of 200 participants, who study at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies (FCMS) at EMU, are used as subjects. 105 (52.5%) of participants were males and 95 (47.5%) were females. 44 (22.0%) participants' ages are between 18-21, 103 (51.5%) are between the ages of 22-25, 44 (22.0%) are between the ages of 26-29 and 9 (4.5%) are either 30 or above 30. With regards to the nationality of the participants, the number of Turkish students (students from Turkey) are 105 (52.5%), Nigerian students are 48 (24.0%), Turkish Cypriots are 25 (12.5%), also Turkish & Turkish Cypriot students are 6 (3.0%), the number of Iranian students are

14 (7.0%) and 2 (1.0%) participants are from other countries such as Syria and Palestine. 81 (40.5%) students are from the Public Relations and Advertising department (PRA), 75 (37.5%) are from the Radio-TV and Film (RTVF) and Journalism department and 44 (22.0%) are from the Visual Art and Communication Design department (VACD). 56 (28.0%) participants have been studying at EMU for more than 5 years, 37 (18.5%) participants have been studying for 4 years, 46 (23.0%) of them have been studying here for 3 years, 36 (18.0%) of the participants have been studying for 2 years and 25 (12.5%) of them have been studying at EMU for 1 year. 101 (50.5%) participants stay in private accommodation and 99 (49.5%) of them stay at dormitory.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Who do you stay with at home/dormitory?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I'm alone	71	35.5	35.5	35.5
I'm staying with my Friend/friends	89	44.5	44.5	80.0
I'm staying with my family	19	9.5	9.5	89.5
I'm staying with my partner	21	10.5	10.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The percentage of students who live with their friends is 89 (44.5%). On the other hand, 71 (35.5%) students live alone. 19 (9.5%) students are staying with their families, 21 (10.5%) students are staying with their partners. In total, 129 students stay with their families, friends and partners, whereas, 71 students stay alone. Majority of students do not stay alone. Students prefer to stay with their 'bonding social capital' who becomes their families, partners and close friends. 166 (83.0%) students like to spend time at home/dormitory whereas 34 (17.0%) students do not. The biggest proportion of students likes to spend time at home/dormitory.

27 (13.5%) students have had their first personal computer in 1990's. 104 (52.0%) students have had their first personal computer between the years 2000 & 2004, 42 (21.0%) participants have had their first personal computer between the years 2005 & 2009, and 27 (13.5%) students have had their first personal computer between the years 2010 & 2013. 19 (9.5%) students started to use internet for the first time in 1990's. 134 (67.0) students started to use internet for the first time between the years 2000 & 2004, 40 (20.0%) students started to use internet for the first time between the years 2005 & 2009 and 7 (3.5%) students started to use internet for the first time between the years 2010 & 2013. 200 (100.0%) students have Facebook accounts. While choosing participants for the questionnaire, students, who have Facebook accounts, were preferred. 107 (53.0%) students heard about Facebook for the first time from their friends, 16 (8.0%) participants heard about Facebook for the first time from the traditional media channels, 51 (25.5%) students heard about Facebook for the first time while surfing on the internet, 13 (6.5%) students heard about Facebook from their relatives and 13 (6.5%) students heard about Facebook with e-mail. The objective of Facebook is to have users move their bonding and bridging social capital to Facebook and to continue to communicate on Facebook (Toprak, Yıldırım, Aygül, Binark, Börekçi, & Çomu, 2009). Facebook aims to allow people to create their own network of friends. Users become members, and then they invite their friends to join Facebook. If friends are not members, then users insist and ask their friends to become a member of Facebook.

All of the students who participated in this study are members of Facebook. When the students were asked "why did you become a member of Facebook?", 111 (55.5%) of them use Facebook to contact with their current friends. 96 (48.0%) the students use Facebook to find their old friends. 116 (58.0%) students claimed that all

of their friends are on Facebook. 64 (32.0%) students use Facebook just to spend time. Also, 79 (39.5%) students use Facebook to get to know their friends. 35 (17.5%) students want to meet different people on Facebook, 32 (16.0%) of them want to flirt on Facebook and 15 (7.5%) students use Facebook to contact with their colleagues (For this particular question the respondents were given the opportunity to choose more than one answer). On Facebook, students are in contact with their friends. They prefer to communicate with their current and old friends. Already, they are the social capital of students. Participants who do not prefer to meet new friends focus on their social capital. They use Facebook to communicate with existing friends. Also, participants indicate that all of their friends are on Facebook. This result shows that Facebook is a new and important communication platform for students. It is a platform that gives them the chance to communicate with their friends.

In the question “Where do you connect to the internet?” The participants were free to choose more than one answer. 160 (80.0 %) students claimed that they connect to the internet from home. 67 (33.5%) students connect to the internet from internet cafes, 49 (24.5%) students connect to the internet from their offices, 34 (17.0%) students connect to the internet from university labs, and 28 (14.0%) students connect to the internet from the media monitoring centre of FCMS. According to the result, students prefer to be at home and in dormitories, while using the internet. Also, they like to spend time at home/ in dormitories. These two factors are parallel. Although they live their social capital, they are in contact with their remaining social capital on Facebook.



Another question that the participants may choose multiple responses was “What do you think about Facebook?” 67 (33.5%) students’ think that Facebook is entertaining. 120 (60.0%) students think that it strengthens friendship, and according to 78 (39.0%) of the students, Facebook creates nostalgia effects on users, 91 (45.5%) students think that Facebook increases solidarity. Participants focus on friendship. According to the results, Facebook has positive effects on friendship. They believe that it strengthens friendship.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of students’ answers to “What do you feel when you login to Facebook?”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Relaxation	57	28.5	28.5	28.5
Feeling Less Lonely	93	46.5	46.0	74.5
Reducing Stress	21	10.5	10.5	85.0
Satisfaction	29	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

57 (28.5%) students feel relaxed when they login to Facebook, 93 (46.5%) students feel less lonely, 21 (10.5%) students feel less stress and 29 (14.5) students feel satisfied. Students want to stay at home / in dormitories, and they can feel alone. Therefore they use Facebook for socialization, and then they feel less lonely on Facebook, so they feel relaxed, because socialization is one of their basic needs which seem to be satisfied in the virtual environment. Students are looking to satisfy their socialization needs on Facebook.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How long have you been using Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
5 years	81	40.5	40.5	40.5
4 years	31	15.5	15.5	56.0
3 years	53	26.5	26.5	82.5
2 years	30	15.0	15.0	97.5
1 year	3	1.5	1.5	99.0
Less than 1 year	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

81 (40.5%) students have been using Facebook for the last 5 years. 31 (15.5%) students have been using Facebook for the last 4 years. 53 (26.5%) students have been using Facebook for the last 3 years. 30 (15.0%) students have been using Facebook for the last 2 years. 3 (1.5%) students have been using Facebook for 1 year, and 2 (1.0%) students have been using Facebook for less than 1 year. The majority of the students have been using Facebook users for a long time. Facebook becomes an indispensable part of their lives.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How often do you login to Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Once a month	13	6.5	6.5	6.5
Once a week	22	11.0	11.0	17.5
Once a day	67	33.5	33.5	51.0
2-7 times a day	68	34.0	34.0	85.0
I'm online all day long	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

As it can be observed from the table above, 68 (34.0%) students login to Facebook 2-7 times a day, 67 (33.5%) students login once a day. 30 (15.0%) students stay logged in to Facebook all day. In total, 165 (82.5%) students login to Facebook daily. 22

(11.0%) students login to Facebook once a week and 13 (6.5%) students login to Facebook only once a month. As the table shows, the majority of the university students prefer to use Facebook daily.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How many hours do you spend on Facebook in a day?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than an hour	36	18.0	18.0	18.0
1-2 Hours	63	31.5	31.5	49.5
2-3 Hours	43	21.5	21.5	71.0
3-4 Hours	34	17.0	17.0	88.0
More than 4 Hours	24	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to table 5, 36 (18.0%) students spend less than an hour on Facebook in a day, 63 (31.5%) students spend between 1 & 2 hours on Facebook in a day, 43 (21.5%) students spend between 2 & 3 hours on Facebook in a day, 34 (17.0%) participants spend between 3 & 4 hours on Facebook in a day, and 24 (12.0%) students spend more than 4 hours on Facebook in a day. The majority of the students use Facebook daily. Facebook is a routine communication medium for them. 106 (53.0%) students spend between 1 & 3 hours in a day on Facebook.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Which technological tool do you use to login to Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Desktop	23	11.5	11.5	11.5
Laptop/Notebook	117	58.5	58.5	70.0
Mobile Phone	37	18.5	18.5	88.5
Tablet PC	23	11.5	11.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Most students login to Facebook with a laptop/notebook. The number of these students is 117 (58.5%), 37 (18.5%) students use mobile phones, 23 (11.5%) students use tablet PCs. Also, the number of students who use desktops is 23 (11.5%). In total, 177 (88.5%) participants prefer mobile devices to login to Facebook. Students, who login to Facebook daily, use mobile devices. They can login to Facebook in anywhere and anytime. The new technology of connecting to Facebook by using mobile devices makes it easier for the users to login to Facebook.

Students at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies of EMU, share many information with their friends on their Facebook pages. (Here, the respondents were free to choose more than one category). 185 (92.5%) students share their names on Facebook. According to this result, Facebook represents the existing users. These users mostly use their real names. This is one of the rules of Facebook (Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, 2013). 70 (35.5%) students share their occupations, 115 (57.5%) students share their likes and interests, 46 (23.0%) students share their political views. 80 (40.0%) students share their relationship status, 50 (25.0%) students share their mail addresses, 27 (13.5%) students share their telephone numbers, 84 (42.0%) students share their educational backgrounds, 89 (44.5%) students share either their birth dates or ages, 6 (3.0%) students share their home addresses. 90 (45.0%) students share their locations, 143 (71.5%) students share photographs and 89 (44.5%) students share videos. Sharing is the main action on Facebook. Users make contact with others by sharing posts. Students share information about themselves. According to the result of the survey they shared their names, likes and interests the most; their home addresses and telephone numbers the least. This shows us that they are relaxed when they share general information like their names and interests. On the other hand, they do not want to share more private

information like their telephone numbers and home addresses. This is an important indicator which shows that university students do not trust Facebook that much to share their personal information. Moreover, they do not want everyone to have their contact information and reach them whenever they want.

When the participants were asked “What kinds of photographs they share in their Facebook?”, 139 (69.5%) students claimed that they share photographs of their families. 129 (64.5%) students share photographs of their friends and 91 (45.5%) students share their own photographs. 26 (13.0%) students share their partners’ photographs, 47 (23.5%) students share their animals/pets photographs, 62 (31.0%) students share photographs of party celebrations and 35 (17.5%) students share landscape photographs. (In this question, the respondents were given the opportunity to choose more than one answer). Students reflect their private lives by sharing photographs. They share the photographs of their family members, friends and their own. These photographs provide information about students’ social environment.

In the question, “What do you mostly share on Facebook?” the respondents were free to choose more than one answer. 76 (38.0%) students said that they share videos on Facebook. 105 (52.5%) students mostly share photographs on Facebook, 46 (23.0%) participants share news, 50 (25.0%) students share music on Facebook. 75 (37.5%) students share comments on Facebook, 44 (22.0%) students share citation/apophthegm on Facebook, 11 (5.5%) students share none of them, and 87 (43.5%) students choose to share all of them. Students mostly share photographs, mainly, because they want to share their daily activities with their Facebook friends. If they are away from their families and friends this will be a great chance to share their daily routines with their beloved ones.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How often do you update your profile page?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Once a day	58	29.0	29.0	29.0
Once a week	36	18.0	18.0	47.0
Once a month	66	33.0	33.0	80.0
Once a year	40	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

When the students were asked "How often do you update your profile page?", 58 (29.0%) students pointed out that they update their profile pages once a day, 36 (18.0%) students update their profile pages once a week, 66 (33.0%) students update their profile pages once a week, 40 (20.0 %) students update their profile pages once a year. The table shows that university students update their profile pages frequently.

The participants answers to what is/are private for you in Facebook are as follows; 67 (33.5%) students indicate that their photographs are private. 41 (20.5%) students indicate that comments are private for them, according to 85 (42.5%) students, their personal information is private, 87 (43.5%) students indicate that their relationship status is private. 55 (27.5%) students indicate that their political views are private, 14 (7.0%) students indicate that nothing is private and according to 49 (24.5%) students, sharing all of the above is private. (In this question, the respondents gave multiple answers). The majority of the respondents think that sharing personal information and relationship status are private for them; still they continue to share them on Facebook. Users are happy to share things on Facebook. They feel that they are part of Facebook, and Facebook becomes part of their lives.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of students' answer to "How do you spend most of your time in Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sending message	60	30.0	30.0	30.0
Playing Game	26	13.0	13.0	43.0
Using Instant Message	49	24.5	24.5	67.5
Controlling Activities of Friends	64	32.0	32.0	99.5
Other	1	0.5	0.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 8, 60 (30.0%) students prefer to send a message to friends on Facebook, and 64 (32.0%) students prefer to control the Facebook activities of friends by Facebook. Furthermore, 49 (24.5%) students use instant messaging and 26 (13.0%) students play games on Facebook and 1 (0.5%) student reads news on Facebook. Most students (109 students) prefer to use Facebook in order to send messages and/or engage in instant messaging. Students focus on their friends on Facebook. They prefer Facebook mostly to send messages. Also, they would like to see the posts shared by their friends, rather than sharing posts themselves. Students prefer to monitor their friends' activities.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you use Facebook to congratulate your friends on special days?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	136	68.0	68.0	68.0
No	64	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 9 above shows that 136 (68%) of students use Facebook to congratulate the special days of their friends, whereas, before Facebook, people preferred other communication channels, such as telephones, letters, and telegraphs. Now, Facebook

is the new communication channel. Facebook with its rich content holds users close via computers. They use Facebook because it is a quick way of contacting with others and it is also free.

Participants were asked whether they send virtual gifts to their friends on their special days via Facebook. 104 (52.0%) of them claimed that they send virtual gifts to their friends on Facebook. To send virtual gifts is very popular among university students. Before the widespread of Facebook, students used to visit their friends and give them presents. Nowadays, they send them virtual gifts through Facebook. This way is both quicker and free of charge. Yet, the face to face contact which is an important aspect of interpersonal communication is not presented.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How many of your Facebook friends are your friends from daily life?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 100	77	38.5	38.5	38.5
Between 100-300	84	42.0	42.0	80.5
Between 300-500	27	13.5	13.5	94.0
Between 500-800	6	3.0	3.0	97.0
More than 800	6	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 10 shows that, 77 (38.5%) students know less than 100 Facebook friends from their daily lives, 84 (42.0%) students know between 100-300 Facebook friends from their daily lives, 27 (13.5%) students know between 300-500 Facebook friends from their daily lives. 6 (3.0%) students know between 500-800 Facebook friends from their daily lives and 6 students know more than 800 Facebook friends from their daily lives. People transfer their social capital to Facebook. 84 (42.0%) participants know between 100 and 300 people from their daily lives who are in their Facebook



friends list. This shows us that the majority of students prefer to socialize with the people they know well. They mostly communicate with people from their closer social environments.

Table 11. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "How many of your Facebook friends are your friends from Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 100	82	41.0	41.0	41.0
Between 100-300	72	36.0	36.0	77.0
Between 300-500	20	10.0	10.0	87.0
Between 500-800	14	7.0	7.0	94.0
More than 800	12	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

82 (41.0%) students know less than 100 Facebook friends from Facebook, 72 (36.0%) participants know between 100-300 Facebook friends from Facebook, 20 (10.0%) students know between 300-500 Facebook friends from Facebook, 14 (7.0%) students know between 500-800 Facebook friends from Facebook, and then 12 (6.0%) students know more than 800 Facebook friends from Facebook. In total, 154 (77.0%) students know between 100 and 300 friends from Facebook. They do not personally know these friends. These friends are virtual friends for them. Students might be expecting to expand their social capital with these virtual friends. Such students feel happier and more satisfied when their social capital is increasing. As Morrow (1999) suggests "young people with more social capital are more likely to engage in behaviours that lead to better health, academic success and emotional development".

Table 12. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you have any friends in your Facebook list that you meet face-to-face in your daily life?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	161	80.5	80.5	80.5
No	39	19.5	19.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

161 (80.5%) students have friends on their Facebook friends list whom they know from their daily face-to-face communication contacts.

Table 13. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you have any friends in your Facebook list that you don't meet face-to-face in your daily life?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	131	65.5	65.5	65.5
No	69	34.5	34.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

131 (65.5%) students have friends on their Facebook friends list but in their lives they do not meet them face-to-face. These friends can be either virtual friends or common friends.

Table 14. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you feel that your activity is closely followed by your friends when you share something on Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	122	61.0	61.0	61.0
No	78	39.0	39.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 15. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "If you feel that you are being followed, would this disturbing you?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	109	54.5	54.5	54.5
No	91	45.5	45.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

122 (61.0%) students felt that they are monitored by their friends, and 109 (54.5%) students indicated that this situation disturbs them. Sharing something in Facebook is a routine activity. Users show their existences by sharing. When they share something, their friends show reactions. These reactions are comments, likes and re-sharing. Although users are aware of the possible reactions, they still continue sharing. When users share something, they know that they are being monitored. This monitoring and following process is routine activity in Facebook. However students feel uncomfortable when they feel that their posts are closely monitored by others.

Table 16. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you want to share everything that you post in your Facebook with all of your Facebook friends?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	111	55.5	55.5	55.5
No	89	44.5	44.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

111 (55.5%) students want to share everything. Also, 139 (69.5%) students look at their friends' walls on Facebook. Although students feel uncomfortable when they are closely followed by others, they still want to share posts.

Table 17. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Do you look at your friend's wall in Facebook?"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	139	69.5	69.5	69.5
No	61	30.5	30.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

139 (69.5%) students indicated that they look at their Facebook friends pages. They monitor their friends' walls on Facebook. Also, students prefer to visit their friends' profile pages. This is also a kind of observation. Even though, they do not like to be monitored, they still want to monitor others.

#### **4.2 Descriptive Analysis of the Attitude Scale Statements**

In this current study, a five-point Likert Scale was used for analysis. Students (participants) were asked whether they agreed with the statements or not. The first part (Table 18) is on the means and attitudes of participants on the 'Uses of Facebook' and the second part is on the means and attitudes of participants on 'Effects of Facebook on Interpersonal Communication'.

Table 18. Means and Attitudes of participants on the Uses of Facebook

Statements	FCMS Students
38) I usually communicate with my friends on Facebook	3.61 (A)
39) I have met virtual friends via Facebook	3.56 (A)
40) I can access Facebook easily by technological devices when I'm outside	3.31 (U)
41) Even though I am very busy I still want to log on to Facebook	2.74 (U)
42) Because I spend too much time on Facebook; I cannot concentrate on my studies	2.93 (U)
43) I share my private life with my friends freely on Facebook	3.01 (U)
44) I accept friend requests from unknown people	2.73 (U)
45) On Facebook, I engage in some activities with my friends that I do not usually engage in daily life	3.16 (U)
46) I visit my Facebook friends' pages every day	2.92 (U)
47) I join different groups on Facebook	3.40 (A)
48) I join Facebook group activities physically	2.93 (U)
49) I feel asocial, when I don't receive a message on Facebook for a long time	2.66 (U)
50) I cancelled my Facebook account, but I re-registered again	2.48 (D)
51) I trust Facebook	3.33 (U)

Table 18 presents the means and attitudes of participants on the Uses of Facebook. According to this table, students in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies agree with the statements 38, 39 and 47; disagree with the statement 50 and are undecided about the remaining statements.

Table 19. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "I usually communicate with my friends on Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	9	4.5	4.5	4.5
Disagree	37	18.5	18.5	23.0
Undecided	33	16.5	16.5	39.5
Agree	66	33.0	33.0	72.5
Strongly Agree	55	27.5	27.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

University students usually communicate with their friends on Facebook. Students transfer their friends, who are from daily lives, to Facebook, and users can contact with their friends from their Facebook friends list easily, because students have their social capital in their Facebook friend list.

Table 20. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "I have met virtual friends via Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Disagree	15	7.5	7.5	10.0
Undecided	75	37.5	37.5	47.5
Agree	74	37.0	37.0	84.5
Strongly Agree	31	15.5	15.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 21. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "I can access Facebook easily by technological devices when I'm outside"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	18	9.0	9.0	9.0
Disagree	45	22.5	22.5	31.5
Undecided	32	16.0	16.0	47.5
Agree	68	34.0	34.0	81.5
Strongly Agree	37	18.5	18.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Students can contact with virtual friends from other countries and places, instead of their real friends. They might be expecting to expand their social capital. Students prefer Facebook to communicate with their friends, but they do not seem to agree on 'I can reach Facebook easily by technological devices when I'm outside'. Although the majority, a total number of 105 (52.5%) students agreed and strongly agreed that they prefer technological devices to login to Facebook. The outcome average of the

particular statement is calculated as undecided. These students can login to Facebook everywhere, because majority of them use mobile devices, so they do not have to log out from Facebook when they go out.

Table 22. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Even when I am very busy, I still want to login to Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	23	11.5	11.5	11.5
Disagree	35	17.5	17.5	29.0
Undecided	34	17.0	17.0	46.0
Agree	82	41.0	41.0	87.0
Strongly Agree	26	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Even though it seems that the students are undecided about 'even when I am very busy, I still want to login to Facebook', 108 (54.0%) students agree and strongly agree with this idea. The majority of the participants want to login to Facebook, even when they are busy. This can be concerned with the users' needs for monitoring their friends and checking their message boxes. They wonder what is going-on in Facebook. They want to allocate time for Facebook, even though they are busy, because they are happy when they login to Facebook.

They are undecided about 'Because, I spend too much time in Facebook, I cannot concentrate on my studies'. This result shows that they do not think Facebook is a threat for their studies. Students are also undecided about the following statements; 'I share my private life with my friends freely in Facebook', and 'I accept friend requests that come from unknown people. According to the results, the participants hesitate to trust to Facebook. So they don't want to share their private lives with their friends freely in Facebook or accept friend requests that come from unknown people.

In addition, participants are also undecided about statement 46 that is ‘I visit my Facebook friends’ pages every day’.

There are lots of different groups in Facebook. These groups are generated by political, religious, interests and sports communities. Students agree on the following statement; ‘I join different groups in Facebook’. They join different groups on Facebook, but they do not all join to Facebook group activities physically. So, it can be said that their actions are mostly limited to Facebook.

Table 23. Descriptive statistics of students’ answers to” I feel asocial, when I don’t receive a message on Facebook for a long time”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	23	11.5	11.5	11.5
Disagree	86	43.0	43.0	54.5
Undecided	39	19.5	19.5	74.5
Agree	41	20.5	20.0	94.5
Strongly Agree	11	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

It seems that students are also undecided on the statement; ‘I feel asocial, when I don’t receive a message on Facebook for a long time’. Yet, 109 (54.5%) students disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. They don’t feel asocial when they don’t receive messages on Facebook for a long time. It shows that the majority of the students think that virtual life does not affect their real lives directly.

According to the results of the survey, students did not cancel their Facebook accounts and re-registered again. This shows that the students are happy to have Facebook accounts.



Students are undecided about the statement; ‘I trust Facebook’. This is mainly because everybody has access to Facebook and they may be monitored by people that they do not know.

Table 24. Means and Attitudes of participants on Effects of Facebook on Interpersonal Communication

<b>Statements</b>	<b>FCMS Students</b>
52) Facebook makes my communication easier	3.82 (A)
53) In Facebook, I can express myself freely	3.34 (U)
54) I feel close to my friends on Facebook	3.13 (U)
55) I can communicate with my friends from the opposite sex easily on Facebook	3.03 (U)
56) Facebook restricts people’s private life	3.40 (A)
57) Facebook reduces face-to-face communication	2.82 (U)
58) Facebook reduces loneliness	3.50 (A)
59) I feel free on Facebook	3.30 (U)
60) I don’t feel alone on Facebook	3.57 (A)
61) I feel alone on Facebook	3.24 (U)
62) I believe you can start romantic relations on Facebook	3.15 (U)
63) When I want to socialize with my friends I mostly use Facebook	3.16 (U)
64) When I want to socialize with my friends I mostly use face-to-face communication	3.52 (A)
65) When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use Facebook	2.86 (U)
66) When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use face-to-face communication	3.21 (U)

Table 24 points out the means and attitudes of participants on the Effects of Facebook on Interpersonal Communication. The results show that students in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies agreed with the statements 52, 56, 58, 60 and 64. Yet, they are undecided about the rest of the statements.

According to the students in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Facebook makes communication easier. There are lots of communication devices and communication channels, but Facebook is more popular among students. If students have a computer and an internet connection, they can communicate for an unlimited time on Facebook. Moreover, Facebook is cheaper. Students can contact with their friends on Facebook easily, if their friends are members of Facebook.

Table 25. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Facebook makes communication easier for me"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	7	3.5	3.5	3.5
Disagree	20	10.0	10.0	13.5
Undecided	33	16.5	16.5	30.0
Agree	83	41.5	41.5	71.5
Strongly Agree	57	28.5	28.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 26. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "In Facebook, I can express myself freely"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	9	4.5	4.5	4.5
Disagree	46	23.0	23.0	27.5
Undecided	43	21.5	21.5	49.0
Agree	72	36.0	36.0	85.0
Strongly Agree	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

They are undecided about 'In Facebook, I can express myself freely'. 102 (51.0%) students agree and strongly agree with the statement. These students indicate that Facebook is a place where they can express themselves freely. Students use computer and Facebook at homes/ in their dormitories. They can feel safe in these places, because they are not in direct contact with the other users. They can reflect their

ideas as they wish. This is less risky than face-to-face communication. Also, people can respond to any comment or a message after a period of time. When they think about their responses for a while, they can express themselves more clearly.

Table 27. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "I feel close to my friends on Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	15	7.5	7.5	7.5
Disagree	49	24.5	24.5	32.0
Undecided	47	23.5	23.5	55.5
Agree	74	37.0	37.0	92.5
Strongly Agree	15	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The participants are undecided about question 54 which is 'I feel close to my friends in Facebook'.

Similarly, students are undecided about the statement 'they can communicate with my friends from the opposite sex easily on Facebook'.

Table 28. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "Facebook restricts people's private life"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	9	4.5	4.5	4.5
Disagree	42	21.0	21.0	25.5
Undecided	43	21.5	21.5	47.0
Agree	73	36.5	36.5	83.5
Strongly Agree	33	16.5	16.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Students agreed with the statement 'Facebook restricts people's private life. Students are disturbed of being monitored, because they do not trust Facebook that much they

believe that Facebook restricts their private lives. Sharing posts is a feature of Facebook, but this can cause private lives to be revealed. When students want to share something, they have to think whether these posts are private or not.

Students agreed that ‘Facebook reduces loneliness’. In Facebook, students have their friends, and students can communicate with their friends easily. Therefore, students think that all their friends who are members of Facebook are under control and they are in an accessible position on Facebook. They can get in touch with them whenever they want.

Table 29. Descriptive statistics of students’ answers to “Facebook reduces loneliness”

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	11	5.5	5.5	5.5
Disagree	30	15.0	15.0	20.5
Undecided	49	24.5	24.5	45.0
Agree	68	34.0	34.0	79.0
Strongly Agree	42	42.0	42.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Students move their social capital to Facebook. Therefore, students do not feel alone, while using Facebook, because their friends are not exactly virtual. Most of them are also their friends from their daily lives. Students are undecided about the statement that ‘Facebook reduces face-to-face communication’.

Students in the FCMS do not feel free in Facebook; because they can feel that they are being monitored in Facebook. Therefore, students do not feel alone on Facebook. And also, they have friends. As parallel with this, they are undecided about whether they ‘feel alone on Facebook’.

Table 30. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "When I want to socialize with my friends I mostly use Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	21	10.5	10.5	10.5
Disagree	42	21.0	21.0	31.5
Undecided	52	26.0	26.0	57.5
Agree	54	27.0	27.0	84.5
Strongly Agree	31	15.5	15.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

For the statement 'I believe you can start romantic relations in Facebook', students are undecided. Students are also undecided about 'When I want to socialize with my friends mostly I use Facebook'. Students response to this statement shows that in socialization students do not mostly use Facebook but depending on the situation they may use other forms of communication as well.

Table 31. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "When I want to socialize with my friends mostly I use face-to-face communication"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	6	3.0	3.0	3.0
Disagree	34	17.0	17.0	20.0
Undecided	56	28.0	28.0	48.0
Agree	59	28.5	28.5	77.5
Strongly Agree	45	22.5	22.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Students prefer to socialize with their friends with face-to-face communication. Even though students use Facebook as a communication tool, they prefer to meet their friends face-to-face. This shows that the importance of face to face communication is still valid among university students. Face to face communication is still an important element of the socialization process.

Table 32. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use Facebook"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
Disagree	63	31.5	31.5	46.0
Undecided	33	16.5	16.5	62.5
Agree	58	29.0	29.0	91.5
Strongly Agree	17	8.5	8.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 33. Descriptive statistics of students' answers to "When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use face-to-face communication"

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	15	7.5	7.5	7.5
Disagree	56	28.0	28.0	35.5
Undecided	40	20.0	20.0	55.5
Agree	51	25.5	25.5	81.0
Strongly Agree	38	19.0	19.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Also, they are undecided about 'When I want to socialize with my partner mostly I use Facebook' and 'when I want to socialize with my partner mostly I use face-to-face communication'. This is an important result showing us that when university students want to socialize with their partners they use both Facebook communication and Face-to Face communication. I believe this is mainly because partners are not always together. When they are away from each other, they may prefer to use Facebook; whereas when they are together, there is no need for Facebook.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter aims to summarize this study. In this chapter, all given chapters are evaluated and research questions are revisited and conclusions are drawn from the study. Lastly, suggestions for further research are mentioned.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

Facebook is a communication tool for users. This communication tool attracts users to Facebook. Facebook is a digital world. Almost 901 million people live in this world. Nowadays, users of SNS define Facebook as the most popular Social Network Site around the world. Facebook is also a popular Social Network Site in TRNC.

University students use Facebook in order to fulfil their needs and gratifications. One of these needs and gratifications is communication. Students communicate with each other with instant messaging, video, mail, photo, citation and comment. This shows us that Facebook has rich contents, and students prefer Facebook. These specialities reflect real world activities. Students in the FCMS at EMU utilize their visual, auditory and interactive functions on Facebook. Students prefer Facebook, because they assume that Facebook is an effective communication tool. Also Facebook users are global. Distances are shortened by Facebook. Users transfer their social capital to Facebook, and then they can monitor their environments in this virtual world. So, users can engage in their environment easily on Facebook. This factor increases the

uses of Facebook. Facebook contribute to inter-personal communication with its content. Students prefer Facebook to communicate with their friends.

This study aims to explore the effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication among FCMS students. There are three research questions; these are ‘what is the impact of Facebook on inter-personal communication?’, ‘does Facebook contribute to the socialization process of university students?’, and ‘what is the importance of Facebook for university students’ lives?’

This study reveals how Facebook affects the inter-personal communication. Users sometimes prefer Facebook communication instead of inter-personal communication, but inter-personal communication (as face-to-face communication) and Facebook communication are both preferred by students at different times depending on their needs. The findings of this study show that Facebook has a strong effect on inter-personal communication. Today, Facebook is a crucial part of the people’s communication life. Facebook can shape people’s life and social environment.

Today Facebook has the power to create a global agenda. Everyone can communicate with each other. Distances are not important in Facebook. Facebook can make distances short. Facebook’s aim is to allow users to socialize. If users become addicted to Facebook, they spend lots of time in front of the computers, and they will be social only within the virtual world. This is virtual socialization.

## **5.2 Conclusion Drawn from the Study**

The aim of this study is to explore Facebook’s impact on inter-personal communication, the effects of Facebook for socialization among university students and the importance and usage of Facebook for university students’ daily lives.



Students prefer to use Facebook due to a number of factors. Facebook is one of the most popular social network sites. It is very common among university students. All students who participated in this study have a Facebook account. Facebook is an inevitable part of the university students' lives.

In order to draw conclusions, research questions will be revisited in line with the findings of the study.

### **1. What is the impact of Facebook on inter-personal communication?**

In this study, some positive and negative effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication are obtained.

There are some positive effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication. Facebook aims to allow people to socialize. Because of its structure, Facebook allows its users to gather all their friends on Facebook friend lists. In other words, students can contact with their friends easily on Facebook. Even if there is a geographical distance between students and their friends, Facebook can overcome this distance. They can connect to each other whenever they want to on Facebook. Therefore, Facebook is an important communication tool for students. This is the positive side of Facebook.

Facebook shortens distances for users, because of this fact, it is preferred by users. Users know that all of their friends, who become members of Facebook, are reachable with Facebook. This opportunity allows users to communicate with their friends on Facebook more easily than having a face-to-face communication. Students

are able to login to this environment wherever they like. Students use mobile devices, so they login to Facebook and contact with their friends everywhere. They can socialize easily. Also, Facebook is a cheap communication tool. If students have computers and internet connections, they can easily login to Facebook. Everyone can become a member of Facebook, because people do not have to pay to become a member of Facebook.

Also, students think that Facebook strengthens friendship and solidarity. When students use Facebook, they do not feel alone in front of the computer.

There are some negative effects of Facebook on inter-personal communication. In Facebook friends lists, there is not just close friends. Sometimes Facebook advises some friends to users and users add them to their Facebook friend list. This is one of the functions of Facebook. This is related with trust. Students are not sure whether they trust Facebook or not, but they still share photographs of their families and friends with their Facebook friends. At the same time, students share their own photographs. Students reveal their private lives by sharing their photographs. Students mostly share photographs and videos. Even if students do not know all of their friends closely, they still reflect their private lives with videos and photographs. The majority of students do not know between 100 and 300 friends from their daily lives. These friends are unknown or virtual for users. Students have unknown or virtual friends in Facebook friend lists.

Even if they are outside, the majority of the students use mobile devices to login to Facebook. Facebook can isolate students from the real physical world. This is another negative effect of Facebook.

Students want to receive messages on Facebook. This motivates them positively. They like Facebook, and they have not cancelled their Facebook accounts. Also, students are undecided whether they 'trust Facebook' or not. This is another negative point. This is important, because students use Facebook to communicate with their friends, and they share posts on Facebook. Users has to rely on Facebook, in order to continue to share their personal information, likes and interests, photographs, videos and comments.

Participants state that they have partners, and they communicate with their partners both on Facebook and by using face-to-face communication. Partners need to be in close contact with each other. Hence, they choose face to face communication. However, when they are away from each other and they need to be in touch then they prefer Facebook communication. Facebook creates an effective communication platform for them.

## **2. Does Facebook contribute to the socialization process of university students?**

Facebook is a very convenient tool that contributes to the socialization process of university students. According to the students of FCMS, Facebook strengthens friendship and solidarity, as parallel with this; students feel less lonely in Facebook. Communication is easier in Facebook for students. As communication is easier; students do not feel alone when they spend time on Facebook. Students use Facebook for their communication needs, but they prefer to be social with their friends in face-to-face communication. However, they believe that Facebook contributes to face-to-face communication as a communication tool. Students prefer Facebook to communicate with their friends. Effects of Facebook on inter-personal

communication are not dominant. When students use Facebook, they are alone in front of the computer, but they do not avoid engaging in face-to-face communication.

Students update their pages continuously. In order to update their information, users add new information, photographs and videos. So, users introduce themselves more clearly. Students introduce themselves to their friends to be social in Facebook. The biggest proportion of students use their names, likes and interests, educational backgrounds, photographs, locations, birthdates and videos in their personal walls. Therefore, students introduce themselves to their friends without any hustles. Although students share some of their personal information, the relationship status and contact information are kept private. In other words, when students' friends look at their contact information, relationship status and these are invisible. However, students feel that they are being monitored by others, and this situation disturbs them, however they continue to share. Students want to be social; they use Facebook to be social. At the same time, Facebook aims to allow people to socialize. Because of its functionality, Facebook allows people to have all of their friends within the same environment. In other words, Facebook creates a street. In this street, users and all of their friends live together. Therefore, Facebook is an important communication tool for the socialization of students.

### **3. What is the importance and the daily usage of Facebook for the university students?**

According to the demographic analysis of this study, both sexes are almost equal in sample. All the students who participated in this study have a Facebook account. Facebook is used as a communication tool by FCMS students, because, majority of the students came to TRNC from Turkey or other countries. Their friends and

families live away from their current location. All participants stay at home or in dormitories. They are not alone at home or in dormitories. They live with their friends, families and partners. Only a few students stay alone. Even though 129 (64.5%) students do not stay alone at homes or in their dormitories, they still prefer Facebook to socialize. Also, they often connect to the internet from their homes or dormitories.

The biggest proportion of students has been studying at EMU for 3 years and more. Students communicate with their friends and families on Facebook. Especially, students prefer Facebook to communicate with their friends. Facebook provides an opportunity for students to find out and communicate with their old friends. In addition, a significant number of the students declare that all of their friends are on Facebook. Students contact their friends via Facebook. Students have been using internet for a long time. The majority of the participants are internet users since the early 2000s. Also, they have been using Facebook for 5 years or more. The majority of the students login to Facebook daily. When they login to Facebook, they look at their Facebook friends' walls and they send messages or connect to the instant messaging service and contact their friends on Facebook. 30 (15.0%) users are online all day long. The majority of students use Facebook between 1 and 2 hours a day and prefer to send celebration messages and virtual gifts to their friends via Facebook. This situation shows that university students' communication habits are different when compared with the previous generations. They prefer computer-mediated communication rather than traditional communication tools such as telephone, letter, and celebration cards. Facebook has an important role in university students' lives as a communication tool. Students have respectable number of friends in their Facebook friend lists. These friends are transferred to the Facebook friend lists. Students bring

their social capital to Facebook. If there is any relation between users and their friends in daily lives, students can add them to their Facebook friends list. Students use Facebook as a communication tool. Students communicate with their Facebook friends on Facebook. At same time, students communicate with unknown or virtual friends. Facebook is focused on friendship for university students, but they are undecided about whether to accept friend requests from unknown people. They accept unknown friend requests, but not all the time. They are cautious about unknown people. Students are willing to use Facebook to communicate with their friends. Also, students wonder what's going on in Facebook. They visit their Facebook friends' pages. At the same time, students want to share something about their lives on Facebook, but they are undecided about sharing their private lives with their friends freely in Facebook. Students want to share their ideas and their friends, instead of sharing their private lives. According to the students, Facebook is an inevitable communication tool and students agree to become a member of Facebook groups. Students feel the need to communicate and they use Facebook to satisfy their needs.

To sum up, the biggest proportion of students came to TRNC from abroad, and these students have been living here for the last 3 years and more. It means that students are far away from their families, relatives and friends. Students, who stay at home or in dormitories, are not alone. Students live with their university friends at home or in dormitories. Although they are not alone, they use Facebook daily. University students use Facebook to communicate with their friends, and they find old friends on Facebook. Even if they are not alone, they strive to be social on Facebook. Also they heard Facebook from their friends. Students think that Facebook strengthens friendship and it increases solidarity. Due to these, students feel that their loneliness

is reduced with Facebook. When they login to Facebook, they spend between 1 and 2 hours approximately each time. Also, students, who like to spend time at home or in dormitories, use mobile devices to connect to Facebook. According to the results of the survey, students connect to Facebook, even when they are outside. Students, who login to Facebook every day, have between 100 to 300 friends in their Facebook friends list. Students keep in contact with their Facebook friends with instant messages on Facebook. University students feel happy when they receive messages from their friends, and this interaction motivates them to use Facebook. Another reason to use Facebook is students' curiosity about what is going-on in Facebook. Moreover, Facebook presents new alternatives to traditional communication habits. Students use Facebook to celebrate their friends and to send them virtual gifts (they are symbols of real gifts). Because of this, students think that Facebook makes communication easier. Moreover, students find new friends easily on Facebook. Students have new friends, who are not introduced by students from daily lives, in their Facebook friend lists. They can find new friends on Facebook, because students share detailed information about them. These shares can exhibit users' private lives. When others look at the students' profile pages, they can have an idea about them. Students mostly share photographs. Students share photographs of their families, friends and their own. Students share this style information with photographs, to introduce themselves to their new, old and current friends. People can get to know each other with the information shared, before adding a user to their Facebook friend lists. Students increase their practises of socialization by sharing posts about themselves. In addition, FCMS students are members of Facebook groups. These groups represent students' attitudes and ideas. However they are not sure whether they would like to join these groups' activities physically. Students share some posts

like photographs, videos, comments and some information like their names, locations and educational backgrounds. They feel that they are being monitored by their friends and this disturbs them. Students look at their friends' walls continuously. Although they feel that they are being monitored, they still continue to share.

People show their existence and fulfil social needs by communicating. Also, people communicate to survive and to socialize. People communicate in order to produce. Production covers human - human - and human - nature relations. Students also have their social environmental relations. All social relations are generated with the students' social capital. Students have a tie with their social capital. To hold social capital under control is difficult in daily life. Students cannot communicate with their friends all the time. With the development of technology, people began to use the internet. Usage of internet increased day by day. Students follow internet closely. Social Networking Sites make communication easier. Nowadays students realize communication with their social capital on Facebook. In Facebook, there are roles similar to the roles in daily life. Students move their life practices from their daily lives to Facebook. Facebook represents their daily lives. Students continue with their roles in daily lives on Facebook, and they realize their roles with their performances in the virtual world. Main reason for transferring these roles and performances to Facebook is that Facebook is a new and convenient public sphere. Students show their performance with their identities. Students' videos, likes, interests, photographs and comments reflect their identities. Facebook does not accept people to register themselves on the system as anonymous individuals. Students use their real identities in general. They reflect their physical world habits on Facebook. Students give importance to Facebook. Especially, uses of computers are very common. Computers are used in the business sector, education and at home. Service sector is increasing



rapidly. Computer is a very important tool in service sector. This leads to a transition from an industrial society to an information society. Usage of computer is common and so communication is common on Facebook. Now, Facebook is a new public sphere and a communication tool for students.

Facebook satisfies students' communication needs. Facebook has a rich content and makes communication easier. If students have a computer and an internet connection, they can use Facebook. Facebook is interactive, and users are not passive. They communicate using Facebook. Facebook has a variety of applications which allows students to play games. Facebook provides satisfaction for students.

Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe in their article "The Benefits of Facebook Friends: Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Networks Sites" (2007) claim that "Facebook appears to play an important role in the process by which students form and maintain social capital". In conclusion it can be said that Facebook is a great communication tool that contributes to the communication process of university students, brings them together and makes them to be aware of what is going on in their social environments. "Online interactions do not necessarily remove people from their offline world but may indeed be used to support relationships and keep people in contact, even when life changes move them away from each other" (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

### **5.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

This study was conducted at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies of EMU in the spring semester of the academic year 2012-2013. Further studies can investigate other social site or sites. Also, this study can be expanded. For instance,

the number of students can be increased and an observation method can be designed for the focus group. At the same time, the sample can be changed. High school students can be used as a sample for the future studies.

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## **APPENDIX**

## **Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE FORM**

**Dear Student,**

**My name is Tolga Sevük. I am doing MA in the Department of Communication and Media Studies at the Eastern Mediterranean University. My aim is to get information about “Why university students use Facebook and Facebook’s effects on Interpersonal Communication”. This questionnaire aims to collect the required data that is necessary for the completion of this study. Please answer all questions listed below carefully and honestly.**

**E-mail: [tolgasevuk@mynet.com](mailto:tolgasevuk@mynet.com)**

**1) What is your gender?**

- a) Male      b) Female

**2) How old are you?**

- a) 18-21      b) 22-25      c) 26-29      d) 30 and above

**3) What is your nationality?**

- a) Turkish      b) Turkish Cypriot      c) Both Turkish & Turkish Cypriot  
d) Nigerian      e) Iranian      f) Other (please write).....

**4) What is your department?**

- a) Public Relations and Advertising
- b) Radio - TV and Film Studies and Journalism
- c) Visual Arts & Visual Communication Design

**5) How many years have you been studying at EMU?**

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4
- e) 5 and above

**6) What is your accommodation type?**

- a) Home
- b) Dormitory

**7) Who do you stay with at home/dormitory?**

- a) I'm alone
- b) I'm staying with my friend/friends
- c) I'm staying with my family
- d) I am staying with my partner

**8) I like to spend time at home/ in dormitories.**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**9) When did you have your first personal computer?**

- a) In 1990s
- b) between the years 2000-2004
- c) between the years 2005-2009
- d) between the years 2010-2013

**10) When did you first start to use the Internet?**

- a) In 1990s      b) 2000-2004      c) 2005-2009      d) 2010-2013

**11) Do you have a Facebook account?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**12) From who have you heard about Facebook first?**

- a) My friends
- b) Traditional media channels
- c) Searching the internet
- d) My relatives
- e) Notices that come by e-mail
- f) Other (please write).....

**13) Why did you become a member of Facebook? (You can choose more than one answer.)**

- a) To find my old friends
- b) To be in contact with my current friends
- c) To spend time
- d) To be in contact with my colleagues

- e) To meet with different people
- f) To flirt on the internet
- g) Because all of my friends are on Facebook.
- h) To learn about other people's lives via Facebook
- i) Other (please write).....

**14) Where do you connect to the Internet? (You can choose more than one answer.)**

- a) Home      b) Internet cafe      c) Office
- d) University Labs      e) Media Monitoring Centre      f) Other (please write).....

**15) What do you think about Facebook? (You can choose more than one answer.)**

- a) It's entertaining      b) It strengthens friendship      c) It creates nostalgia
- d) It increases solidarity      e) Other (please write).....

**16) What do you feel when you login to Facebook?**

- a) Relaxation      b) Feeling less lonely
- c) Reducing stress      d) Satisfaction      e) Other (please write).....

**17) How long have you been using Facebook?**

- a) 5 years      b) 4 years      c) 3 years      d) 2 years  
e) 1 year      f) Less than 1 year

**18) How often do you login to Facebook?**

- a) Once a month      b) Once a week      c) Once a day  
d) 2-7 times a day      e) I'm online all day long  
g). Other (please write).....

**19) How many hours do you spend on Facebook every day?**

- a) Less than an hour      b) 1-2 hours      c) 2-3 hours      d) 3-4 hours  
e) More than 4 hours

**20) Which technological tool do you use to login to Facebook?**

- a) Desktop      b) Laptop/Notebook      c) Mobile Phone      d) Tablet PC

**21) How many friends do you have on Facebook?**

- a) Less than 100      b) Between 100 and 300      c) Between 300 and 500  
d) Between 500 and 800      e) More than 800

**22) Which information do you share with your friends in your Facebook page? (You can choose more than one answer)**

- a) Name      b) Occupation      c) Likes and interests      d) Political views



e) Relationship Status      f) Mail addresses      g) Telephone numbers

h) Education background      i) Birth date/age      j) Home addresses

k) Location      l) Photographs      m) Videos

n) Other (please write).....

**23) What kind of photographs do you share on Facebook? (You can choose more than one answer)**

a) Family      b) Partner      c) Friends      d) Animal/Pet

e) Party/Celebration      f) Your own      g) Landscape

h) Other (please write).....

**24) What do you mostly share on Facebook? (You can choose more than one answer)**

a) Video      b) Photography      c) News      d) Music      e) Comments

f) Citation/Apophthegm      g) None of them      h) All of them

i) Other (please write).....

**25) How often do you update your profile page?**

a) Once a day      b) Once a week      c) Once a month

d) Once a year      e) Other (please write).....

**26) Which of the following is/are private for you in Facebook? (You can choose more than one answer)**

- a) Photographs      b) Comments      c) Personal Information
- d) Relationship Status      e) Political views      f) None      g) All of them
- h) Other (please write).....

**27) How do you spend the most of your time on Facebook?**

- a) Sending a message to friends
- b) Playing games
- c) Using instant messaging
- d) Controlling the Facebook activities of friends
- e) Other (please write).....

**28) Do you use Facebook to celebrate your friends on their special days?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**29) Do you send virtual gifts to your friends on their special days via Facebook?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**30) How many of your Facebook friends are your friends from daily life?**

- a) Less than 100      b) Between 100 and 300      c) Between 300 and 500
- d) Between 500 and 800      e) More than 800

**31) How many of your Facebook friends are your friends from Facebook?**

- a) Less than 100      b) Between 100 and 300      c) Between 300 and 500  
d) Between 500 and 800      e) More than 800

**32) Do you have any friends in your Facebook list that you meet face-to-face in your daily life?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**33) Do you have any friends in your Facebook list that you don't meet face-to-face in your daily life?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**34) Do you feel that you are closely monitored by your friends when you share something on Facebook?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**35) If you feel that you are being followed, would this disturbing you?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**36) Do you want to share everything that you post in your Facebook with all of your Facebook friends?**

- a) Yes      b) No

**37) Do you look at your friend's wall in Facebook?**

a) Yes      b) No

**Please read the items below and choose the number that describes you the most for each question.**

**(5 -Strongly Agree)      (4-Agree)      (3-Neither Agree nor Disagree)**

**(2-Disagree)      (1-Strongly Disagree)**

<b>38) I usually communicate with my friends on Facebook.</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>39) I have met virtual friends via Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>40) I can access to Facebook easily by technological devices when I'm outside</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>41) Even when I am very busy I still want to login to Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>42) Because I spend too much time on Facebook; I cannot concentrate on my studies</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>43) I share my private life with my friends freely on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>44) I accept friend request from unknown people</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>45) On Facebook, I engage in some activities with my friends that I do not usually engage in daily life</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>46) I visit my Facebook friends' pages every day</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>47) I join different groups on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>48) I join Facebook group activities physically</b>	5	4	3	2	1

<b>49) I feel asocial, when I don't receive a message on Facebook for a long time</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>50) I cancelled my Facebook account, but I re-registered again</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>51) I trust Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>52) Facebook makes my communication easier</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>53) In Facebook, I can express myself freely</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>54) I feel close to my friends on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>55) I can communicate with my friends from the opposite sex easily on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>56) Facebook restricts people's private life</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>57) Facebook reduces face-to-face communication</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>58) Facebook reduces loneliness</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>59) I feel free on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>60) I don't feel alone on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>61) I feel alone on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>62) I believe you can start romantic relations on Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1

<b>63) When I want to socialize with my friends I mostly use Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>64) When I want to socialize with my friends I mostly use face-to-face communication</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>65) When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use Facebook</b>	5	4	3	2	1
<b>66) When I want to socialize with my partner I mostly use face-to-face communication</b>	5	4	3	2	1

