Chinese university students' use of Facebook in the UK

A study submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Information Management

at

THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

by

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September 2012
Abstract

Background. There are literatures shown that Facebook has been widely used among University students and are investigating their motivations of use. However, there are not many researches for Chinese students and their uses of Facebook. It also found that Chinese have uses several Social Networking Sites at the same time.

Aims. This study aimed to investigate the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook in the UK. In particular, this research will explore the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook and other social networking sites in the UK.

Method. The interview are conducted with snowball sampling on 10 Chinese university postgraduate students from the University of Sheffield in UK. Each interview has taken 25 to 30 minutes. Interviews seek the experiences and options of their use of Facebook and other social networking sites. All interviews are recorded.

Results. As previous researches suggested, there are similar motivations found in their uses on Facebook and other SNSs. Moreover, it found that there is a connection between the variation of each SNS and how they will use them. The variations are the type of friends, culture and functions. Furthermore, the results show that the motivations of using Facebook and the main activities on Facebook by Chinese students in the UK. In addition, they have different aspects towards the balance of using these SNSs together.

Conclusion. To conclude, it found that Chinese students cannot use Facebook to replace the others SNSs while even some of them consider the use of Facebook is rather difficult for them to balance the use of the SNSs. The motivations of using Facebook show connections to the previous studies which is similar. Further researches could investigate students from other places. Oh the other hand, different SNS could also be investigated instead of Facebook. It recommends investigating the culture differences between the students themselves and the place they are studying.

Acknowledgments

The research was supported by Information school, University of Sheffield. This paper has tremendously get help from my supervisor, Dr. Peter Stordy, for his help and guidance throughout the dissertation process. I would also like to thank the 10 participants who took the interview in my research.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

With the development of the high technology, the internet is popular among the young people and become a part of students’ daily routine (Jones, 2002). Social networking sites are being more popular as Web 2.0 is more widely used (Bosch, 2009). Students became the majority users of social networking sites while Facebook which have 845 million users, is the most popular social networking site. (Alexander, 2012). Most of the students have an account on Facebook and join the Facebook immediately when they arrived university (Bosch.2009). About half of the students use Facebook everyday while the majority of them uses at least once per week. Students will use at least one per month(Arrington, 2005). Facebook is becoming more popular and had been a part of the students’ daily lives (Nadkarni and Hofmann,2012).

Facebook was designed in 2004 for Harvard and to distinct college networks only. Started in September 2005, Facebook expanded to include high school students, public and everyone with an appropriate email address. Different from other social networking sites, Facebook users cannot make their full profiles public to all users and Facebook has the ability for outside developers to build "Applications" which allow users to personalize their profiles and perform other tasks (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

The growth of social networking sites has become a significant medium of communication and entertainment among the young adults and to exchange the social and personal behavior of Internet users (Das & Sahoo, 2011). The study of Bicen and Cavus. (2010) indicate that most of the undergraduate students chose Facebook to share something with others by social networking sites.The Facebook is becoming the most popular social networking site for students to share and show
their current lives and thoughts. Facebook is basically considered as the leading social networking site among college students(Educause,2006), which has become a tool in that development, allowing students to define a profile, find others with similar interests and it is a function to facilitate and maintain friendship due to users can connect and interact with each other(Dogruer,et al.2011).

Some literatures discuss why students use Facebook. There are many purposes of students' use of Facebook, such as social interactions, daily activities and educational-related purpose of Facebook or using Facebook for self-presentation and self-display since Facebook allow users to describe and present themselves to others. Self-esteem is related to the motivation of Facebook used by students because they use Facebook with low self-esteem and low satisfy life (Ellison,et al. 2007). Students use Facebook after started university for making new friends who are in the same class and university and connecting with family (Madge,et al.2009).

In addition, there are some literatures study the extent of students use of Facebook , Hew (2011) review published researches about how do students use Facebook such as discussing most of the students' activities by Facebook. The Madge(et al.2009) study that the students who are undergraduates at a British university use Facebook to stay connect with old friends, talk about current university experience to others, post their pictures, join groups, plan social events and check friends' profile. Furthermore, West (et al, 2009) reported that most of the students' Facebook friends are peers. Joinson(2008) reported that students set privacy on Facebook personally and students are likely to post their personal information on Facebook profile such as birthday, email address and hometown(Christofides et al, 2009)

Comparing with so many social networking sites, this research focus on the Facebook, However, there are many researches study the pattern of Facebook use
and related to why and how Facebook usage of students who are US, UK and Korea university students, but few articles study why Chinese students use Facebook and their experiences on the Facebook despite Facebook is the most popular social networking sites to students. Ji (et al. 2010) stated that Chinese use Facebook ‘Connection’ function to maintaining offline relationships and the sustain bonding and bridging social capital. Moreover, there is no literature talking about the extent of Chinese students use Facebook in the UK. The purpose of the research is to explore the extent of Facebook use by Chinese students in the UK. According to the Madge (et al, 2009), students join Facebook immediately before joining university or join Facebook immediately after starting university. In the research, it attempts to address why and how the Chinese students use Facebook in the UK. In particular, to explore if the Chinese students use Facebook after they come to UK.

According to the report from CNNIC, with the popularization of the Internet rising steadily, the number of Chinese Internet users had reached 338 million by 2009. In addition, Chinese SNS(Social networking sites) users have 124 million which are half of the Chinese students. In China, there are many social networks nowadays; the most popular is Renren which is an online social network with real name and photo for Chinese students only and Sina Weibo for all public to show their current status, photo and links. According to Zhao (et al. 2010), Chinese spend much more time to play the SNS-game because of leisure boredom. Wan (2009) study the Chinese students which use campus-SNS to know the current status about their classmates and friends and to communicate with others; in addition, Chinese students visit others’ profile frequently and build up their groups with similar background information and interests.

According to Wee (2011), most of the students from China are using both Renren (China’s social network) and Facebook in the Singapore. They use Facebook for
connecting with Singaporeans and to be a part of Singapore community while could contact their existing friends who is in China by Renren. Chinese students still prefer Renen, even many Chinese are using Facebook. We could not find more research to study the extent of Chinese students using Facebook and China social networking sites in the UK.

Hence, this project will focus on the Chinese students which use Facebook and other social networks at the same time in the UK; in addition, How Chinese students balance their use of various SNSs, including Facebook. The project would like to explore what are the different and similar factors why and how do Chinese university students use Facebook and other social networking sites in the UK.

The project could contribute to future researches about the motivation and activities of Facebook usage by Chinese students in the UK and research which particularly study comparing with many China social networks, why Chines students use Facebook and how they use Facebook out of the China.

This project will firstly introduce the topic. Subsequently, this will shows the research aims and objectives. After that, the second section will review the literatures which study the related topic and area. Third section will identify the methodology about the research. Section four will address the result and discussion of this research. Section five will describe the conclusion.

1.2 Aims and objectives

Alms:

The aim of the project is to investigate the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook in the UK. In particular, this research will explore the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook and other social networking sites in the UK.
Research question:
Why and how Chinese university students use Facebook in the UK?

Objectives:
In this project, the objectives are

1. To identify what social networking sites Chinese students use in the UK.
2. To identify the motivation of Chinese university students using Facebook in the UK.
3. To identify how Chinese students use Facebook in the UK.
4. The commonalities and variations of Chinese students’ use of Facebook and other SNSs.
5. How Chinese students balance their use of various SNSs, including Facebook.
2. Literature Review

Although Facebook is the most popular social network to students in the world and there are many literatures have done the research about Facebook, which the participants are university students from any other countries. However, there is few literatures investigate how and why Chinese students use Facebook, Ji(et al.2010) stated that Chinese use Facebook ‘Connection’ function to maintaining offline relationships and the sustain bonding and bridging social capital, while Wee(2011) stated that the Chinese students in the Singaporeans use Facebook for connecting with Singaporeans. Therefore, this chapter will review literatures which study university students including Chinese students use Facebook.

2.1 SNSs

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define

"social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system."

According to Salaway and Caruso (2008), over half of responders report that Facebook is the most commonly used SNS, with MySpace as second choice. A lot of internet users contact old friends, make new friends or share others’ photos, videos, blogs or current situation by social networking sites. (Kim.et al. 2010). Social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Windows Live Spaces, Orkut and Hi5 have attracted millions of users (Bicen and Cavus. 2010). The Friendster.com focuses on the romantic relation, the MySpace.com provide users to share interests and favourite music. Facebook can be oriented towards students’ population (Ellison. et
al.2007).

2.2 students' Facebook usage

2.2.1 Motivation of using Facebook

Some literatures study the students’ use of Facebook for several motivations. These motivations can be categorized into 4 areas, which are 1) social reasons, 2) self-presentation, 3) Leisures, 4) learning purposes.

Social Reasons

Students use Facebook, a social-networking site, which foster social interaction in a virtual environment (Pempek, et al.2009), are enabled to communicate with their peers, friends and family members, as a method to maintain existing relationships. On the other hand, they may meet new people, as a way to form new relationships. Last but not least, they may use Facebook as a platform to organize, plan or held activities, among these people to develop the relationships. As Ellison (et.al.2007) stated that it supports both the maintenance of existing social ties and the formation of new connections. Moreover, as Selwyn (2009) also claims that younger users often use social networking in the micro-management of their social lives, as a place for social exploration and to develop networking skills.

Self-presentation

As students share their profiles and status, they are constructing an image in this virtual world. Facebook may act as a tool to facilitate them by fostering images to their peers, family members, friends and even strangers. By fostering these images, they can present themselves or even to promote themselves, as a way of self-presentation. As Pempek (et.al.2009, P229) suggested that teenagers use social networking sites in order to evaluate themselves through peer’s opinions, which may
consequently affect the identity formation. While Pempek (et al.2009,P229) also stated that users’ self-esteem was directly related to the tone of responses received about information posted on their personal page (i.e. profile) and that self-esteem, in turn, was related to their overall well-being.

Leisure

Facebook has numerous functions, and students may see it as a powerful tool to help themselves with different areas. Facebook also provide some entertaining applications or games. These are also messaging tools which may replace e-mails. These could be the motivation why the students use it. Moreover students may use Facebook just to spend the spare time. These activities are seen as using Facebook as leisure. As Grosseck(et al.2011) suggested that members can also install and use third-party applications based on the Facebook platform, such as games, polls and quizzes or even create pages for different events.

Learning purposes

Students may use Facebook for learning purposes. Facebook, as a social-networking website, connects people together, which enable them seek relative information from others. As Selwyn (2009) suggested that seeking supports and discussing with other peers which have similar difficulties on common issues would be a major part of educational use of social networking sites. Madge (et al.2009) stated that Facebook was sometimes used informally for learning purposes by students. In addition, as Selwyn (2009) also claims that it may also benefit learners by allowing them to enter new networks of collaborative learning, often based around interests and affinities not catered for in their immediate educational environment. According to Ji(et al. 2010), Chinese used Facebook to searching for associated professionals online.
2.2.2 How Students use Facebook

What type of information students disclose on Facebook profile

The information of profile is more related to the self-presentation of users (Zhao, et al. 2008). Similar to the social networkings such as MySpace and Friendster, Users could create in-depth profiles for describing themselves on Facebook (Lampe, et al. 2007), According to the Lampe(et al. 2007), users who are USA university students could disclose information to present themselves. Moreover, the profile elements include the institutional status, Reference index, interest index and contact index. Most of the Canada university students listed their gender on the profile field and almost all users post their image on the Facebook (Young and Quanhaase, 2009). The students also post their hometown, high school name and concentration in order to make students can find common ground, and share narratives. As the interests index, students prefer to post the information about their personal information to present what they want to express and display the common interests to others, such as About Me, favourite music, movies and books. The research of Zhao (et al.2008) report the same result that the students are more likely share their hobbies, appreciated quotes and favourite music and movies on the self-description section. In addition, the “About me” is a direct way to introduce themselves to others through a narrative self-description. In addition, a large majority of students in the USA report that they post the contact information on the profile page include Email, birthday and relationship status. The contact information could make students contact offline like the email and Instant Messenger screen name (Lampe, et al. 2007). Christofides(et al. 2009) found out that most of the students in Canada like to disclose large account of information to many viewers, the most popular are profile image, birthday, high school, hometown, relationship status and the IM(instant message) screen name. In addition, the information of profile is related to the privacy setting which could allow
users set it by themselves in order to blocked the profile and photos to non-Facebook friends from viewing the personal information.

**How do the students use Facebook for learning**

According to Salaway and Caruso (2008), half of the SNS users use these sites to communicate with classmates about course-related topics. Students not only use the Facebook for social purposes but also for various academic purposes (Bicen and Cavus.2011). Students use Facebook to get information about homework, material, resources or ideas(Akyildiz, 2011) and they use Facebook to discuss academic work with others, arrange their project and contact teachers(Madge, et al. 2009).

Selwyn (2009) study the education-related interaction on Facebook by the UK university students, the study shows that the students use Facebook wall for recounting and reflecting on the university experience which include describe their finished and current lectures experiences such as their courses and library visits. Students also use the Facebook to exchange practical information for information-seeking such as the scheduling and location of their courses and assignment details. While the Bosch (2009) state that the students from university of South Africa use Facebook more often than official university site, which could be explained, by Selwyn(2009) that, the students are likely to use their own method of communication( through Facebook) than any other academic forms( hand-outs, notice boards and etc). The result from Grosseck (et al, 2011) proves that Facebook represents a much more natural learning environment than that provided by schools to university students.

In addition, students also exchange the academic information on Facebook, as Selwyn(2009) suggested, information like reading materials from seminars, content
of examinations, required content of essays or others assessment tasks. Students participate in the academic groups in Facebook and put class-related materials into personal communication. Participants of Bosch (2009) research point out that they spend time on Facebook and their Facebook friends could help them to find and check the learning materials. In addition, students use the Facebook to share lecture and study notes and connect with others about the holiday assignment during the vacations. Moreover, students ask some class-related questions to lecturers online outside class by Facebook.

**How do the students use Facebook for entertaining and leisure**

Students may use Facebook for entertaining and leisure purposes. As Facebook, there are various applications and games. Applications included quizzes, photos modifications and etc. Moreover, Facebook also provide games (which are also in a form of applications. Similar to Joinson(2008) mentioned, which are (1)applications within ,(2)Facebook Playing games, (3) discovering apps because you see friends have added them and (4)quizzes. While Dogruer(et al.2011) stated that more than half of the students stated that Facebook entertained them.

Some students may also use Facebook just to pass time, which may be using the applications or playing the games, some may just view some pages ( page is a specific group which may be concerning celebrities or just sharing some interests, while just need to simply press the [like] button to browse the contents) and the News Feed. As (Dogruer.et al.2011) stated that most of the students believed the using Facebook provided pastime for them.

On the other hand, Facebook may be used to substitute e-mails or albums as it also have similar functions. As (Young and Quanhaase, 2009) stated that Facebook as a
replacement for email and/or instant messaging. As Facebook could also worked as birthday reminder, phone-book as if the users had provided accurate one as (Young and Quanhaase, 2009) also suggested that users find it convenient as they can access Facebook from anywhere and do not have to look up email addresses or phone numbers. Facebook in this regard functions as an address book that is kept and updated by its users.

**How do the students manage the social interaction to others by Facebook**

Students may also use Facebook as a tool to manage their social life, to interact with other users, which may be their friends, schoolmates, former schoolmates, family members or new friends. As (pempek,et al.2009) stated that Facebook.com originated in 2004 to facilitate social interaction exclusively among college students. They may organize activities, develop romantic relationship and etc. While they can also, as (pempek,et al.2009) also suggested creating invitations to events, or online notifications for meetings, parties, and other gatherings can facilitate offline social interactions. Users may also post “notes” or blog-like entries that are linked to their profile pages.. Users may also post “notes” or blog-like entries that are linked to their profile pages. Students could use Facebook to organize their social life more easily, as which also have the function to maintain relationship as the following will mention.

**How students maintain relationship by Facebook**

Users can use Facebook for creating and maintaining social relationships by Facebook (Special & Li-Barber.2012), which primarily as a tool for communication among university students who use Facebook to contact their existing friends and make new friends. Since the use of Facebook can save time and money to communicate and share information (SZ,et al.2011)with their friends who are seen
regularly, hometown friends not seen often and college friends(Pempek, et al. 2009). Students report that their main visitors of Facebook profile are high school friends and people in their classes(Ellison, et al. 2007). According to Pempek (et al. 2009), students use Facebook to communicate with friends by sending private messages to friends or chatting online with instant message, posting message on the wall and create or join groups. Facebook provides the “wall” to post some messages for all of their friends to see and respond (Kim, et al. 2010). Students receive and post wall message for referring to inside jokes, catching up, making plans to get together, commenting on profile or photos and just say hello. Moreover, students use Facebook to let out them emotions to others, talk about their problem and express their anger.

2.3 Online Social Networks of China

In China, there are over a million BBSs and some bloggers (Yu, et al.2011). There are some literatures study the Chinese social networks, the Yu and King (2011) talk about the Douban which is the largest media items database in China and provide users with review and recommendation service for books, movies and music.

However, Chinese have their own Social Networking Websites even there are Facebook, Orkut and MySpace. In China, people use the Douban, Sina Weibo, Renen, Kaixin, Pengyou and Qzone. The most popular online social networks are Renen.com, Sina weibo in China. Sina Weibo is a popular micro blogging network in China which has more than 50 million active users per day, and 10 million newly registered users per month because the Chinese Government blocked the access to Twitter. The Sina weibo is more like Twitter clone (Yu, et al.2011). According to Yu (et al.2011), Sina Weibo users can post messages containing text, pictures, videos and links. However, the difference between the Sina Weibo and Renen is there is no
friends list on the Sina weibo, only has users' fans and someone the users want to pay attention.

The Renren was founded in 2005 was called Xiaonei, that's means on-campus, which was for students only and cover 80% China college students. Most of users use Renen with true identity such as name, photo and contact methods (Xu). As (McGrath.2012) stated that both Facebook and Renren were started by university students but this is where the comparison ends. While (So.2011) a also suggested that Facebook have successfully expanded its coverage, to anyone aged 12 – 60 years old, RenRen is still a predominated university student’s focus. Moreover, (McGrath.2012) also claimed that the philosophy behind RenRen and Facebook is different. Facebook has changed the community base ideas of society and opened the possibility that everyone or anyone in the world can become your online friend for exchange of knowledge, ideas and social atmosphere, but RenRen remains a one language, one community virtual world. In this sense, Facebook and Renren were both started to develop for students, while the policy of China had also be a factor why the usage of Renren is more than Facebook within China. As (McGrath.2012) also stated that Facebook and Twitter were available in China up to the second half of 2009, they were blocked by the government after that.
3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study adopted a qualitative research methodology. In the study, qualitative approach would be useful to investigate the opinions and behaviour of the students (Pickard.2007). According to Saunders et al (2007), research is a process of collecting and analysis data to find new things. Collecting data is a significant stage of research which is guided by methodology. In addition, inductive approach will be used as it can help researcher with analysing data to establish the conditions in which a theory will hold or not (Bryman and Bell, 2007). In this section, it includes research approach, research sampling and research strategy as well as the data collection and data analysis processes. It aims to give the readers an overview about how the researcher chooses the research participants and how the data are gathered and analysed.

3.2 Research approaches

According to Mack (et al. 2005), the qualitative research is a type of scientific research that for answering a question with a predefined process and collects proof. In addition, the qualitative research can create the findings which are inexistent and also the findings may be applicable out of the immediate boundaries of the study.

This study adopted a qualitative approach which is particular effective in obtaining culturally specific information such as values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. The qualitative approach can be used for revealing intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion(Mack, et al.2005). Compare with quantitative approach which is concentrate on the number such as how many, how often or how long, the qualitative approach deal with meanings such as why and how(Dey,2005). Similarly, Merriam
(2002) claims that, the words and pictures rather than numbers are used in qualitative research. In this study the qualitative approach is better than quantitative because the qualitative research approach focus on exploring phenomena, describing individual experiences. Qualitative approach is more inflexible than quantitative approach because it will ask the open question to get data and make participant can response the question in their way and word.

In this study, the aim is to explore the extent of Facebook use by Chinese students in the UK. It should investigate not only the frequency but also the personal experience on the Facebook use. The qualitative method is more related to the human and social aspects. The project attempts to understand and rationalize the phenomena from the participant's perspective. In addition, the qualitative approach is used to understand the meaning people have constructed about their experiences. In another words, how do participants make sense of their experience. This is why this research uses the qualitative because the research explores the individual opinion and experience. The study adopted qualitative approach also this research is primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Wiley, 2002). According to Wiley (2002), the feature of qualitative approach to research is that the process is inductive. On the other hand, this research is inductive because the study attempt to build up or produce something undermined. Researchers should gather and analysis data to build hypotheses or theories. In this research, it is a process of inductive research because the aims of the project are to explore the view of people and see whether their experiences will match the phenomenon or text existing today.

**3.3 Interview**

Mack (et al.2005) claims that there are different approaches for data collection which include in-depth interview, focus group and observation. It will collect data by the
interview in this study. "In-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored"(Mack, et al. 2005).

The interview in the qualitative research can be used for gaining in-depth data and opinion of human perceptions (Pickard, 2007). The in-depth interview are conducted with open questions and provide a opportunity for participants and interviewer to talk face-to-face which is allow participants can answer the question in their own word and way and talk to interview about their experiences, behaviour and opinions of related to the topic. According to Saunders (2009), the in-depth interview is used to explore in depth area and there are no predetermined questions when it conducting. Hence. The interviewer has to be clear and guide interviewees to get the answers and find out the reason for attitude and opinion of interviewees.

In this study, it used the in-depth interview because this study is attempted to explore the experience and understanding of Facebook usage by Chinese university students in the UK. The purpose of the research is not only explore how and when the Chinese university students use social networking sites, including Facebook, but also focus on exploring why do they use and their personal opinion about this topic. In addition, one objective of the study is to explore who do the Chinese university students balance their social networking sites using in the UK, the in-depth could be used for finding out the individual reason, situation and seeking new insights about this topic.

The interviews took place during the period from 1st July to 15th July in 2012. A draft of the interview schedule is presented in Appendix I. In addition, a transcript of interview is presented in Appendix II.
3.4 Sample

While the whole population is not possible or practical to include in the whole research, sampling would be used. This research involved interviewing a sample of 10 students, three males and seven females, between the ages of 23 and 25. All of the participants are Chinese students current studying in the University of Sheffield. The samples are 10 Chinese postgraduate students in the University of Sheffield. The students are recruited with snowball sampling which relies on referrals from first participant to generate additional participants with a purposive approach. According to Castillo (2011). "Snowball sampling is much like asking your subjects to nominate another person with the same trait as your next subject. The researcher then observes the nominated subjects and continues in the same way until the obtaining sufficient number of subjects."

This project is to explore the extent of Facebook use by Chinese student in the UK. Therefore, the samples are only Chinese postgraduate students who are using Facebook in the University of Sheffield. At the first, contact one or two Chinese postgraduate students who are current and active user on Facebook when they are studying in the UK. Secondly, the first participant could invite their friends to take part in this research. The first interviewee recommends second one. The purpose of the project is to investigate how do Chinese students balance the Facebook and other SNSs. Therefore, the participants have to report that they are using both Facebook and other SNSs at the same time. The participant who initial contacted could help to identify the second Chinese postgraduate students until 10 participants as the same character and background, which is active on Facebook and other SNSs.

3.5 Data analysis
The data was collected and recorded from interview which have some open ended questions(See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), the data was summarized together and analysed through classified themes and then related back to the research question and existing literature. There are some software programme can be used such as Nvivo in order to categories and analyse the qualitative data.

However, in this research, there is no computer programmes used for data analysis. Therefore, these data have to be coded when analysing. Develop the themes of code depends on analysis of data which collected from interview. For example, the No.1 interviewee mentioned the date she started to using Facebook, thus if "2011" or "when arrive in UK" was answered, the code would be "after come to UK". Other open questions will be coded in this way. For example, the code is "motivation", through analyzing answers of participants, the code "motivation" include "need to belong","learning english","Blend into culture " and "manage relationship", after that, use these codes as headings and subheadings to summarize and describe. Then, Synthesis data and find out the connection among concepts. Through looking into the patterns of the classified sections, which is, if there is a logically development and relationship while similar sections had come out. For example, if one of the interviewee responded using Renren was to keep in touch with old friends, would other interviewees responded using Renren could similarly for keeping in touch with old friends. If so, there is a pattern which shows a logically development, hence the connection can be raised.
4. Findings

4.1 When do the Chinese students use Facebook

Many interviewees reported that they start using Facebook after they come to UK. "I started use it when I arrived UK, about October 2010"(Interviewee No.9). The findings indicate that almost all of the Chinese students register an account on Facebook after they come to UK. The interviewee No.4 reported "I heard it the first time when I was here". It is unavailable to access the Facebook in China due to it was blocked by government at 2009. The website would show the page with "network Timeout", which the Facebook is blocked and Chinese connect internet without Facebook (Bass.2009). However, a certain portion of participants still already know Facebook though they never use it. It leads them to has some queries when the try to use Facebook because interviewee No. 7 explained that "I can't use it when I am in China, so I think it is quite new to me". Facebook is the top social networking site in the world. Comparing with the other Chinese social networking sites, Chinese students never try it and causes they use Facebook when they arrived UK to know why Facebook is the most popular and be curious about reason which caused Facebook blocked in China. In particular, what are the differences between Facebook and Chinese SNSs which result in they have to use Facebook through their experience.

4.2 Chinese students prefer Chinese SNSs

The precondition of recruiting participant is that all of the participants have to use more than one social networking site include Facebook. From the data collection, participant stated that using more than two social networking sites including Facebook at the same time in the UK.

Few participants claimed that they have Twitter account in the UK, which, foreign
SNS they use only Facebook."Except Facebook, I use Renren , Qzone and Twitter.....Yes...Twitter .haha, I used it for few years ...haha."(Interviewee No.3)

However, the findings also explore most of the Chinese university students still prefer Chinese social networking although they are studying in the UK, in particular, they mention that spending more time on Weibo. "I use Renren, Weibo and Qzone (except Facebook)"(Interviewee. No.9)

The western culture and situation of life did not influence the use of social networking sites by Chinese students in the UK. All of them still use Chinese social networking sites while using Facebook. It seems like Chinese students spent a lot of time and energy for a large number of social networking sites because many participants use three to five websites at the same time. In addition, Twitter is unpopular among Chinese. According to Bass(2009), the Chinese are equivalent of many of these sites remain available, such as Renren, the Chinese version of Facebook and Weibo, version of Twitter. Twitter was blocked like Facebook and Weibo has similar functions as Twitter, while it has many users in China(Leung,2011). That causes Chinese students spent more time on Sina Weibo but not Twitter in the UK.

4.3 Motivation

4.3.1 Learning English

To Chinese students, the Facebook is used for their academic learning. Some participants claimed that they use Facebook for improving their learning and English language.

"I think i can (use Facebook) to practice my English through communicate
more with foreigners.... I will learn the sign and attitude from the foreign friends when I am chatting with them, such as lol"(interviewee No.5)

Comparing with Facebook, most of the Chinese social networking sites only have Chinese version and language which lead most of the foreigners cannot understand them. The most of the friends on Chinese SNS are Chinese which is opposite on Facebook. Chinese students study abroad for obtaining the academic knowledge and improving the English language, in particular the use of English. Except communicating with foreign classmates and teachers, Chinese students also wanted to find out other ways such as joining the Facebook to improve oral English with English natives. Moreover, in class, Chinese students learn the academic English but the Facebook enable them to learn informal English which is not focused on the grammar or get to know more slang which can only learned in daily lives.

4.3.2 For blending into western culture

The findings show that Facebook as a medium to provide a platform which make Chinese students to understand British culture, they attempts to use Facebook to chat with local people and will concern the information on Facebook for blending into western culture.

".....and the 2nd one is....when we are in UK....there are foreigners....and they use this....so...certainly....we have to blend into their culture....by this....as a medium."(Interviewee No.3)

In addition, the interviewee No.9 uses Facebook to understand the new things of UK including some foreign news and foreign students' activities.
4.3.3 Manage relationship

Almost all of the Chinese students in the UK use Facebook for manage their relationship which include maintain the existing relationship and make new friends. "I remember it is Halloween…because I met lots of people during the party. To keep in touch..Haha…I use Facebook."(Interviewee No.4)

The finding of this research indicate that Facebook was used to maintain relationships with existing known friends including foreign schoolmates and Chinese schoolmates who are known after come to UK.

In addition, Chinese use Facebook also for making new friends.

"Yes yes…actually there is 2 sides….one is to make new friends and one is to understand this tool…this new web site….to see what the advantages are and how to use it."(Interviewee No 3)

As above mentioned, Facebook is used by Chinese students to communicate with English native to improve English, which is related to adding foreigners only as friends on Facebook.

4.3.4 Need to belong

Some participants stated that one of the motivations to use Facebook is the need to belong. "……I don’t want to be shamed that being not internationally updated or fall behind the international trend."(Interviewee No.1)

Baumeister and Leary (1995) study that the people need to get social support by others. Moreover, human need love and approve from others. According to Schutz
(1996), the need to belong can be described from inclusion, "which pertains to the need to belong to or include others in a circle of acquaintances". In this research, the interviewee who hope others accept them and does not like be alone claimed the reason of using Facebook is, all the people are using and she does not want to be laughed at. Similarly, some interviewees mentioned the one of reason they use Facebook is their friends surround have the Facebook account. "Basically, checking what is the latest trend among friends, different SNS are for different group of friends." (Interviewee No.7)

4.4 Activities on Facebook

4.4.1 Maintain relationship

In this research, the finding indicated how the Chinese students interact with their friends on Facebook, which by post on wall, instant message and privacy message, press “like" and comments.

Some of participants reported they use Facebook to contact and chat with their friend though instant message or post on wall rather than send private message.

"Um..sometimes I will concern my friends who are online and causally chat to them if someone are online. I won’t talk if they are offline. In addition, I don’t like use the function which is text like email unless someone should tell me something and I will send message to them. (To private chat), usually I would chat instant, most time we are talking about what are you doing or how about you these days, or are there some funny things or new things. Um..sometimes I might comment on their wall for say hello.(interviewee No.5)"

Chinese students prefer send the instant message if their friends are online, the
instant chat can replace sending messages or phone to know how they think without money and can save time. The content of message is the status recent; they won't chat if their friends are offline. In addition, few participants mentioned she will post on their friends' wall for just say hello or say happy birthday. Moreover, Chinese students would communicate by the comment or respond under the photos or status, and "like". For maintain the relationship or make new friends, Chinese students also received the friend request or search or check the friends they may know. According to Pempek (et al. 2009) study that students interaction on Facebook by online lurking, communicating on wall and group talking. The result show the students would like talk by wall posts (where many students can see what they are doing all at once) rather than sending private messages.

4.4.2 Leisure

Play games

Some Chinese university students in this research also use Facebook to play games for passing time in the UK.

"Umm….actually Facebook…I play games the most…I like the [little paradise] which my good friends played with me together…and….Texas poker…this is because…haha….I don't want to waste money on gamble. So I do it on Facebook." (Interviewee No.6)

In this research, many respondents claimed that they likes the relaxing game on Facebook particularly, "I play the games with my friends together", (interviewee No.4) such as the Interviewee No.7 suggested "I would connect to Facebook and play it with my friends together by cellphone". Therefore, it is for better interaction with Facebook friends and more entertaining. The interviewee No.4 said
"I playing Facebook games and extend my social network because not only play with friends but also start a topic to with new friend about the games. In addition, I could share some photo shots of the games and my achievement in the games".

**Social network surfing**

To Chinese students, the social network surfing is take a large proportion of Facebook usage. Most of the respondents reported that using Facebook for browsing profiles of friends to know current status and browse the news and latest information. ".......Um ...since classmates here use Facebook too....like they use Facebook to post status...I can know how they do..."(interviewee No.6)

Not too many students mentioned they would comment after they browse others' wall, such as their friends' latest status. The reason is like one participant said; the friends on Facebook are those not close and not stranger. It is embarrass if she comments to photos or status of them. This lead to Chinese students prefer browse than comment on others' wall to concern their friends' status recently.

In addition, few responders claimed that using Facebook to know update news and latest information. No.2 claimed that

"...in most of the time was to understand some messages, like Facebook, twitter of Weibo, there are a lot of information distributed and some instantaneous information, like what happened in somewhere and have a look on weibo will give you the information. It doesn't have to be in a particular site but each after each."
4.4.3 Post and share on wall

Post status and photos

Responders stated using Facebook for posting contents on their wall which include post their own status and share others. "I will occasionally post some photos and let my friends to see how is my life recently." (Interviewee No.7)

Many respondents post their photos on the wall of Facebook. The reason of this is, Chinese students want their friend to know their current lives though the photos which mostly are photos of traveling such as the photo was taken in the Europe or in the club.

Another is because of self-presentation,

"Um…photos are basically that I travel…with scene and persons…but I will be sure those are nice ones…I don't post some bad one…I think I am not looking too good…haha….i wish I can seek confidence in the photos…haha…” (interviewee No.6)

For posting status on wall, Chinese students would like post their status about recent lives and feeling about their study. The recent status include their feeling in the UK because of different country they lives and post their feeling about culture of UK. In addition, Chinese students would like to complain about their study on the wall of Facebook.

"Um…I will go on Facebook sometimes and share how I am annoyed and exhausted by the recent studying. Like, I am almost dead for this essay or I got some spots of face recently..haha….seldom for others…." (interviewee No.4)
Responders report that using Facebook to post their feeling of sadness or angry only about their learning such as problem of essay, in particular, they are unable to finish their assignment or do not want to do the essay.

**Share and repost**

On the wall of Facebook, Chinese students also repost and share others' events what they are interesting.

"I would share some GIF, the animated photos...it's fun...let me think...um...and those photos post by my friends and tagged me. I would share it to my own page for memory. And...um..share ..right? those tagged me...I would share...and the location sharing stuff...when I going somewhere...those share and tagged me..i will put it in my page as well." (Interviewee No.6)

Chinese students re-post and share because they are interesting about it such as share funny photo and photos which are tag themselves, funny video and music on their wall. Moreover, they would repost others' status and news they like.

**4.4.4 Learning aspect**

**Learning English**

To some extent, Chinese university students use Facebook for learning English because the Facebook represent a learning environment to them.

"I think....at first....is to learning some local English, because if we learn English, we focus on Grammar and usually formal English. However, in Facebook, I can know more about local English. " (Interviewee No.7)
As we mentioned above, majority of Chinese students practice their English on Facebook by chat with foreign with private message or talk to them on the wall. In addition, a small number of respondents indicated that changing the Chinese language to English version for learning English. "I use the English version, thus, this is related to my learning. I can learn English." (Interviewee No.9)

**Exchange Education-related information**

Chinese students use Facebook to search or exchange the information about their study.

"Um... for example, there is a group on Facebook, all classmates of the same class join and discuss in the Group. We would talk about what everyone is doing recently; it is convenient to talk about assignment. Another group is my faculty group with our teachers who would post some information in the group such as the information about meeting." (Interviewee No.2)

The girl joined the group which include all of their classmates and teachers, the Facebook provide the convenient platform to help Chinese students obtain the information about assignment easily. Some of the participants felt that they get the educational information from the group or pages on Facebook. To the class-related group, No.7 said that

"Facebook provide to allow teachers can post information about learning and I can discuss some learning experience with those who graduate from the same module. In this group, I can discuss about the learning experience recently and teachers will introduce some jobs which is useful to me".
In addition, Chinese students would join some pages such as university students service on Facebook to ask questions about their exams and get help from higher level schoolmates.

4.4.5 Share Identities

In the research, responders are sharing their identities on Facebook include join groups or pages, plan or join events and manage romantic relationship. From the findings, we can find out how the Chinese students share identities on Facebook. Some participants claim that they joined the group.

"About my life...which is the Chinese students unions page...um....when I was first here....not too familiar...um....when I go to Facebook for this page...the CSU....it is mainly for help Chinese students to solve some UK life issues. When I first come to UK....i don't what how to do and I raise a question and the page helped me while lots people answering ...then I know here is a lot of 2nd hand items...books...which is a great saver...and very convenient ."

(Interviewee No.6)

As mentioned on the last section, more of them only joined the faculty groups with their schoolmates and teachers. Chinese students prefer share identify with the same class and school.

Moreover, few respondents stated that Facebook is used for planning and accept events.

"...Haha...and while it is my birthday ....lots of my friends are invited
through Facebook.... Through the [event]....which there mentioned the location and time. I can invite them to my party and if someone invite me there... "(Interviewee No.4)

Because most of the Chinese students add few friends by their Facebook, they does not like to plan events on Facebook to invite their friend to join, that's why few participant report that they have accepted only some invitations on Facebook.

In addition, some of them also manage their relationship on Facebook.

"But my name is my real name ...em...let me think.....I did nott post a lot of information....only personal details....birthday...where I live and relationship status ...which is if I am single or in relationship."(Interviewee No.4)

4.5 Personal information and privacy setting on Facebook

Many participants responded that they would fill the personal information on their profile of Facebook which include some basic information about them.

"I write any other information of mine without my home address and real phone number......I would like show my relationship and political conviction". (Interviewee No.1)

Chinese would edit their basic information on Facebook including their birthday, gender, hometown and relationship. Moreover, they post their real photo, name and the university they study currently. Few of them disclose their habits and favourites but not contacting information such as address or phone number. Generally, Chinese students would finish the basic information on Facebook. In this research, majority
of interviewee report that they make their profile open to anyone on Facebook.
"Um...privacy. Privacy setting is low level, because..., this is requirement of my major which make all people can browse my wall."(Interviewee No.2)

4.6 Balance

4.6.1 Easy to balance

Some participants expressed the brief that they balance their use of Facebook and other SNSs easily.

"Um...actually there is no conflict. I browse WEIBO by mobile phone after I get up every day. And I would login WEIBO when I am having breakfast or going to toilet.Um... If I have more free time, I would login in RENRE, or neglect it if I have no enough time because the article on RENREN update slowly. "(Interviewee No.2)

This type of Chinese students reported that there is no conflict when they use Facebook because they would check all of social networking sites such as Facebook, Renren, Qzone and Weibo everyday by cell phone or computer. The interviewee No.8 explained that would login Facebook twice per day and No.5 is the same and spend less than 20 minutes in Facebook each day, the most interesting is all of them claimed that spending more time on Weibo anytime, anywhere by cell phone.

4.6.2 Normal balance

A certain of participants responded that their balance of SNSs is normal because they spend less time on Facebook obviously. "For balanciingg, Um....I personally mainly...use twitter....Facebook is assistant..."(interviewee No.3)
This group of responders login and check Renren, Twitter or Weibo every day without Facebook, however, they would login Facebook once three days to one week. Moreover, few of them also check Facebook by cell phone, however, same with those who reported balance easily, Weibo is the most frequently sites to all Chinese students even login 8-10 times or while eating and go to toilet. To this kind of users, Facebook is used only for concern others' status recently and post less their feelings and photos.

4.6.3 Hard to balance

Interviewee No.1 claimed that “I don't think there is a problem with balancing, since to me, accord to each importance, I put them in orders. I think I won't use Facebook anymore if I am back to china”. She explained the reason for this, although Renren and Weibo is copied from Facebook and Twitter, Renren and Weibo can satisfy all the need without Facebook, other and that, her message was lost because the failure of Facebook function and always send junk mails and get me annoyed. It shown that this interviewee prefers the Chinese SNS and already had a preference of use, therefore the balance was hard for her.

4.6.4 Balance changed

The results of the interview shown that the use of Facebook had changed when comparing to the time they began. Some interviewees claimed that the use had increased since they are more familiar to Facebook and found that the Facebook is actually a very strong tool for them. "These traditional media...to Facebook....and slowly transferred....actually I slowly ...planned to use Facebook only afterwards....and others are outdated."(No.3). and the No.8 suggested

"Yes, like I said. I did not use it for the first year, just a few friends. And till I
am in the University of Sheffield, I began to use it, which is because those friends around me use it. And the frequency is higher. And the photo tag I will use it recently. Moreover, someone always add location for me and I won’t do it myself.”

Moreover, some of the interviewees also stated that when they are having more and more friends, and added to Facebook. The use of Facebook was increased in order to communicate and keep in touch with them. However, it had shown that the Chinese SNS did not have a significant effect on affecting the use of Facebook. In addition, the use of Chinese SNS did not have a change after they come to UK.

The concept map:
5. Discussion

This section will analysis and discuss the results that were found during the research process, which related to the research question at the beginning of the dissertation. Finally examined the exist research as summarized in the literature review.

5.1 Motivation

This research focused on the reasons why Chinese university students use Facebook in the UK. Consistent with previous research (Ji. et al.2010), Facebook was used by Chinese students for maintaining offline relationships. Wee (2011) resulted that Chinese students use Facebook to keep in touch with Singaporeans and participant to Singapore group since study in Singapore. While, the finding of this research indicated that Facebook was used to maintain relationships with existing known friends such as foreign schoolmates and Chinese schoolmates who are known after come to UK by Chinese students. In the research of West (et al.2009), none reported having joined Facebook to make new friends as suggested by Joinson(2008), few participants hold that use Facebook to get new friends. The difference with this research is that, Chinese students use Facebook for making new friends, but only with foreigners not Chinese. According to Madge(et al.2009), British undergraduate students stated Facebook was used mainly for social reasons, not for formal teaching purposes, although it was used informally for learning purposes sometimes, similarly, in the study of Hew and Cheung (2012), no respondents who are Singapore students reported using Facebook for educational purposes. However, the study environment influences the use Facebook by students. Most of the Chinese postgraduate students reported Facebook was used for learning English language. Compare with existing studies, the most important reason of Chinese students use Facebook since they study in the UK is attempting to blend into British culture quickly and harmoniously. Facebook have comprehensive functions to show the
foreign culture, such as traditional Chinese students view how popular the party is, from the photos post by foreigners and the culture of night club in UK by looking at the activities of foreign students.

5.2 Chinese students use Facebook after come to UK

South Africa students register Facebook immediately when arrived university, students mainly use Facebook is for social networking and seeking support from peers, community building on campus, and student activism (Bosch, 2009). Chinese students sign up when arrived UK University is for social networking just like South Africa students. Moreover, In mainland China, the Renren which claims itself as Chinese Facebook have widen their scope of users and become the top social networking sites in the campus. The colour, interface and characteristic of Renren are completely same with Facebook (Leung, 2011). People always take Renren as a simile and Chinese version of Facebook (So.2011) because Renren uses the blue colour and similar logo with Facebook. Because of this, Chinese students would like to know what exactly the Facebook is and what are the differences between Facebook and Renren.

Chinese students have the opportunity and are the only way to allow them tries the Facebook when they study in UK.

5.3 Variations and social networking sites use

According to the respondents of the interview, it had shown there are several reasons in different in using Facebook and the CSNS. Found that these reasons can be identified and further categorized into 1) Different in friends, 2) Different in culture and 3) the different of the function. These differences will affect the reason of using such SNS and how they use these SNS.
5.3.1 Friends and Facebook use

It is found that the respondents reported that they have different friends added in their SNS accounts. These different friends are added since the users thinks that they are in different social groups. In another words, each SNS are used for different group of friends they have. It could be friends in high school which is in China or friends known now while studying in UK. For example, they added the classmates here in Facebook and use it for learning purposes by discussing about study matters. West (et al.2009) suggested the similar result, Students hold that there are most of real-life friends on Facebook such as university friends, old school friends and the weird friends of friends. According to Akyildiz & Argan (2011), the result of the study revealed that the majority of the students have between 101 and 300 friends on Facebook. However, Chinese students have less number of friends on Facebook.

In addition, Chinese students check the news of the celebrities on Twitter or Weibo. Added friends or old schoolmates in Renren to maintain the relationship. Using Qzone to keep in touch with their family members. These different groups they concern are separated by the SNS. The users do not put them together since they have different level of relationship between them. Therefore, their interactions are different. And by using different SNSs, they are able to maintain the relationship separately and using each SNS independently. Therefore they can free post whatever they want to particular group of friends. Comparing to Ellison(et.al.2007) which stated that SNS support both the maintenance of existing social ties and the formation of new connections. It had found that the respondents have such reasons of use, but not to handle all the relationships by one single SNS. The reason behind is believed that the users have different level of relationship among these people, and what they do on these SNS also varies since the target audiences are different. It had
found that the respondents tend to post something more open to heart in Renren with is with their close friends in Mainland China. However, while on Facebook, the content is not that in depth, which is designated for those classmates only but not real close friends. Pempek(et al.2009) stated that the members who are “friends” may post public messages on each other’s “walls, however, Chinese students would like post only their own status and via their emotion, Chinese participants prefer post their complain about their study and essay because they does not need set up a positive image on Facebook. Selwyn (2009) study that the UK university students use Facebook wall for recounting and reflecting on the university experience. However, Chinese university students only disclose negative emotion about learning on Facebook wall. Compare with Selwyn (2009) which study undergraduates from UK, the Chinese students post the content which is similar with UK students, they post problem about their university work to their peers for requiring the support and comfort.

Compare to Zhao (et al.2008), the result revealed that students are more likely disclose their hobbies, favourite music and movies on the profile of Facebook, moreover, they would not put their interests and habits to further describe themselves since the friends on Facebook and mostly unfamiliar people, only basic information include hometown, gender and birthday as suggested by Young and Quanhaase, 2009. Respondents also stated that they would share more information, more personal stuffs on CSNS, since close friends and family are in there. Another example of variation is, although they would post photos to these SNSs, however, the amount and content could be completely different. As above mentioned, the messages could be more open to heart as using renren and qzone. Users may also post photos. The respondents tend to post more in amount and more personal photos
in Renren and claimed that Qzone which is for family mostly have the most photos. While Facebook, would be the least like one or two each time. Moreover, the photos post of Facebook are also designated for public, unlike Renren or Qzone which have more personal and private photos which do not design for strangers. On the other hand, the description about the photos also varies, which have a similar situation that what kind of photos are post. Very simple description are made for Facebook while for CSNS are more details and emotional.

According to Bosch (2009), students accessed Facebook on campus, with a smaller number of them claimed that they would then only update their status off campus using their mobile phones. In this study, almost all of Chinese students said they would login, check and update their status of Weibo or Renren by mobile phone many times per day. However, for Facebook, Chinese students would not login by mobile phone because there is not too much people on Facebook they care and want to follow to make them check Facebook immediately anytime and anywhere.

5.3.2 Culture and Facebook use

Moreover, respondents also stated that the culture differences in the culture of each SNS affect their usage. Since CSNS mainly consist of Chinese users which are also mainly from Mainland China while Facebook is an international SNS which have a mixed and even a more complex or combined culture which consist of users all over the world. The cultural differences affects a lot since the respondents claimed that these differences make them feel unfamiliar to and feel like it cannot satisfy the needs. The culture factor influences their use of Facebook including post on wall, join group and search information. Chinese students stated that people on Facebook often post photos about party and club; however, they would only post their lives which are positive and traditional on Chinese social networking sites. Some of social
networking sites provide small number of groups and assign new members to one or more of them and also allow members to create new groups, and/or join them (Kim, et al. 2010). According to Bosch (2009), "Facebook fosters micro-communities of people who share interests or partake in similar activities, and the question is whether this kind of effective social networking might be similarly extended from the personal, into the realm of the academic". Therefore, Chinese students join university group on Facebook only for learning because they reported the culture of Facebook is different with CSNSs and cause them cannot find and join group which have members with same opinion and interest. Finally, Chinese students would search information and read news those are blocked in China. In particular, abroading news or products which are popular in the UK.

5.3.3 Function and Facebook use

In addition, the functional differences which related to each SNSs, like privacy settings are one of the reasons why the respondents have choose a particular SNS for certain moves. It is found that the respondents may found certain functions not convenient for certain moves. First is some Chinese students claimed that the privacy setting each by each is troublesome and annoying which leads them open the Facebook to public. This findings is different with Young & Quan-Haase (2009), most of Canada university students edited the visibility of their profile only to their friends of Facebook. Most USA students set their profile page to be visible to all their networks and all their friends (Pempek et al., 2009). Secondly and importantly, According to Leung (2011), there is a feature that visitors would leave a footprint on Renen, however, the Facebook is determined not to adopt it. Chinese students prefer choose Facebook to search and view someone they like or hate, such as concern the status of ex-boyfriend on Facebook which curbs stalking to some extent. In addition, the Facebook makes third-party applications accessible to users to play them and recommend the achievement to other members (Kim et al. 2010). According to
Grosseck (et al., 2011), American university students use various applications based on the Facebook platform, such as games, polls and quizzes or even create pages for different events. Facebook provide the platform to allow user to play various kind of game. Compare with Zhou (2010), most Chinese students played SNS game for relaxing themselves, maintaining interpersonal relationship, and achieving to a high level in the game and to earn more virtual money. Except to earn more virtual money, the reason of Chinese students those are studying in UK use Facebook is same with the Chinese students in China.

5.4 SNSs use situation and Balance

The findings indicate there is a close connection between the variations of Chinese students use of various SNSs and balance their use of SNSs. According to Mirani (2011), a larger proportion of students from Pakistan maintained their accounts on two sites mainly Facebook and Linked In. Moreover, Chinese students have more than two sites in the UK. Responders report that there is no conflict and they could balance their use of various SNSs because they use different sites with different time, motivations, activities and emotions. This is why they cannot use only one social networking site. As mentioned above, variations affect the use of each SNS, which related to their balance of SNSs including Facebook. It found that the respondents have different aspects towards the balance. While some of them find the balance is easy and some found difficult. The reasons could be they have different experienced of handling the SNSs. Some respondents which found the balance is easy claimed that they already have scheduled what to do in what time. For example, they only log on once a week on Facebook to discuss academic matters with classmates and every on Renren to chat with their old friends. These respondents think that it is easy to cope with and ease to use both SNSs. On the other hand, those who found the balancing is difficult claims that Facebook is not that useful for them and they don't have a high demand of using it. They stated that Renren and other SNSs can replace
Facebook. Moreover, some also found Facebook not familiar to use, which also discouraged them to continue the use of Facebook. These respondents found the balance is difficult since they don't need Facebook or they don't like Facebook. Eventually, it also claimed that they would not use Facebook anymore if they are back in China.
6. Conclusion

6.1 conclusions

To conclude, this study suggests that Chinese students attempt to Facebook after they come to UK. They used Facebook since they want to try it since they cannot use it before in China since it is banned and was not popular. They used other Chinese SNSs before and therefore there is a comparison between the uses of these SNSs. Chinese students then continue the use of the Chinese SNS and start trying Facebook. Many social networking sites Chines students use in the UK, including Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, Renren, Douban and Qzone. However, students still prefer SNSs of China in the UK, in particular, Weibo.

The motivations of using Facebook by Chinese students in the UK include 1) Learning English 2) blend into British culture 3) manage relationship and 4) need to belong. Furthermore, the results show the main activities on Facebook by Chinese students in the UK, which consist of maintaining relationships, entertainment and leisure, posting and sharing on wall, share identities and learning aspect activities.

For the commonalities and variations of the use of Facebook and other SNSs among Chinese students, it found that the students use different SNSs to do particular actions which are relevant with the variations. And through these different actions and started to re-assess the importance of each SNSs and having a new understanding of how to balance the use of SNSs at the same time. In addition, Chinese students use more than two social networking sites at the same time, however, their balance of SNSs usage are not coincident which have three situations: easy to balance, normal to balance and hard to balance. It shows that students may have different options on using Facebook along with others SNSs. Some of them thinks that Facebook can be
used continuously as simple as they can have an easy balance of using these SNS while some others thinks the use of Facebook is no longer necessary and the balance of use is rather difficult. There are also students which have both thoughts and they think that the balance is just stable and normally, they can balance them without too easy and too hard.

6.2 Limitation

The limitations of the study are, first, only one type of social networking site which Facebook was focused on here. Secondly, the research was mainly accessed by small number of participants and they were predominantly female. There are existing literatures concerning on the gender-related differences in Facebook use, however, this study did not focus on the effect on motivation and use of social networking sites by different gender. Moreover, Participants also have the limitation that is participants are only Chinese postgraduates from the University of Sheffield. All of them are come from the mainland China but not Hong Kong or Taiwan and all of them are studying in the UK. Lastly, the respondents in the study are from one university only, that's lead we cannot get information about Chinese students in others university except University of Sheffield and other countries because the different countries have different cultural background which causes the difference of using Facebook.

6.3 Recommendation

Further researches may apply this conceptual framework to assess other type of social networking sites such as MySpace and Twitter, or different samples such as college students or undergraduate students, in particular, Chinese students those study in other countries. Based on this study, future studies could extended to include a size and number of participants and concern other countries university students use
social networking sites. Different students from different countries cause the various motivations and activities on social networking sites. Therefore, future study could clarify and explore the samples of other countries extent of their use of social networking sites, then compare with the Chinese students those use many social networking sites at the same time. In addition, further study may explore the balance of foreign social networking sites’ usage with participants’ own sites from their countries.
Reference


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Appendix 1

Interview Schedule

*My name is Xuanzhen Lin, and I am a postgraduate student who is studying for MSc Information Management in Sheffield University. I appreciate your participation with my research which is about Chinese students' use of Facebook in the UK. I’m really interested in hearing what you have to say about this issue.*

1. **Tell me about when you started to using Facebook?**

Tell me about why do you use Facebook in the UK.

2. **Tell me about why do you use the Facebook ?**

Tell me about what information you post on the profile.

Tell me about the privacy setting on Facebook.

Tell me more details about your activities on the Facebook.

Tell me about how do you access Facebook.

How do the students use Facebook for learning?

How do the students manage the social interaction to others by Facebook

How students maintain relationship by Facebook

Pass time.......  

3. **Tell me about how do you use Facebook in the UK.**

4. **Could you tell me, do you use other social networking sites except Facebook when you studying in the university of Sheffield? what social networking sites you are using in the UK.**

5. **Tell me about why do you use XX sites in the UK.**

6. **Tell me about how do you use xx sites in the UK. Tell me more details.**

Tell me about what information you post on the xx or xx sites profile.

Tell me about the privacy setting on xx sites
Tell me more details about your activities on xx sites.

Do the use of Facebook and xx effect your academic performance? Or social relationship?

........

7.(a) "Tell me about how you balance your use of Facebook with other SNSs?"

(b) "Do you feel this balance has changed since you started at University?"
Appenix 2

A example of Interview transcript from interviewee No.6 Female

谈一下你是什么时候开始用 Facebook 的？

来英国之后开始用的，因为中国没有，来英国之后才知道有他

除了 Facebook，你还有用什么社交网站吗？

除了 Facebook，我还用用新浪微博，人人网，qq 空间，空间来英国之后我就没再用了

谈一下你为什么用 Facebook

嗯....因为这边的同学吧都在用 Facebook，比如说他们用 Facebook 发状态，我就可以了解他们在干嘛，他们发视频我也可以看看，笑一下，还有就是为了方便和他们交流，所以才开始使用 Facebook 的，呵呵。

能再说多一些具体的原因吗？

其实还有一点小优惠的地方，就是用 FB 看别人的页面是不会留下痕迹的，所以我经常用 FB 关注一些八卦人物，还有去关注一些帅哥。

来英国之后，为什么你仍然用其他的中国的网站？

嗯..首先用微博是因为他的信息传播速度比较快，所以在微博上看到一些讯息都是很及时的，而且因为微博的每一条博文都有限制，在 140 字以内，所以看每一条微博的时候一扫而过，就能知道大概的内容。呃。。然后微博里有很多名人和明星，我喜欢关注潘玮柏，陈冠希之类的帅哥，也喜欢关注一些女明星的八卦，感觉他们这些名人能够贴近我们的生活吧。嗯。。说一下我用人人就只是为了联系大学或者高中的同学。偶尔发一些状态照片之类的，发泄一下我有的没的情绪。

谈一下你是怎么使用 Facebook

呃。。首先我会用他跟别人聊天，就是下面有一条及时通讯那一栏，可以和他们 send message
之类的，嗯。及时聊天可以让我们不用发短信，打电话就可以知道对方的想法。

可以举例吗？
比如把，和我最好的朋友就喜欢聊一些感情上的问题，有什么不懂的学习问题我也可以问同学，而且能马上能得到回复，还可以和男生搞搞暧昧，因为一个人在英国比较无聊。

学习的方面，可以说具体一点吗？
嗯，学习上，让我想想，之前学校有发过一个连接，是关于呃。就是一个连接，能直接连接到学校的 student service 的 Facebook 主页，在上面我认识了一些学长和同学，他们在我学习上的帮助很大，比如吧，有一次我考试之前对考试范围不是很理解，偶尔就点进了 Facebook 的链接，在上面问了一些关于我考试的问题，嗯，马上就有人帮我解答了。我觉得这点非常有用，以后我也会继续用他。

除了这个主页，你还有关注其他什么主页吗？
还有一个关于生活的，就是中国学联的主页，嗯，刚来英国的时候，对这边不熟，嗯。上 Facebook 的时候找到了这样一个主页，是中国学联在 Facebook 的主页，他主要就是帮助中国留学生解决一些在英国生活上的问题，刚来英国不知道怎么打的，也就是在主页上发了这样一个问题，然后主页君就帮我转发了，很多人都踊跃帮我解答，后来就知道了，上面还有发帖出售 2 手家具或者生活用品的，还有 2 手书籍，为我省了很多钱，也很方便。谈谈你在人人和微博会分享主页吗？
都是留学方面的主页，微博没有

之前我们谈到私聊这一点，能谈一下这方面吗？
嗯，私聊的话就是我刚刚说的那些，私聊我大部分都是和中国人聊天，就是在身边读书的中国同学，还有几个外国同学也偶尔会聊聊，但是不多。除了私聊，其实我会用其他的方式来交流，比如评论啊赞啊这些。又不是只能私聊
说到评论和赞，能举例或者说的具体一点吗？

平时看到自己关注的人发照片就会赞一个，偶尔觉得很有感触的时候，就会发表一些小评论，而且基本能得到他们的回复，感觉关系更近了，然后看到好的视频，除了评论以外啊，我还会选择转发和分享，让我的朋友也看到这些有趣的视频，也笑一笑。

说到分享的话，你还在 Facebook 上分享什么东西呢？

我还会分享一些 GIF 图片，就是动态图，很好笑的，我想一下，嗯。。还有就是有些朋友发的照片，里面有圈了我的，我也会转发到我自己的页面，留作纪念。然后吧，嗯。转发是吧？还会转发一些和我有关的状态，比如我们一群朋友出去玩，他们会发布一些状态，里面有 at 我的，我也会转发，还有就是那种签到功能，有时候我们一起出什么地方，别人签到里面 at 了我，我也会转发到我的页面。

那你自己有在你的页面原创什么内容吗？除了转发之外？

当然有啊，我发的最多的是照片，其次是状态。

能举例吗？具体说一下发状态和照片是怎么样的？

呃。。照片基本上都是我出去旅游的照片，有风景的有人物的，但是肯定必须是最漂亮的照片，丑的我都不会发不出来，我觉得我太丑了，哈哈哈，希望从照片上找到自信，哈哈哈。

其实在 Facebook 上我发的照片算少的，我一般都在人人上发布我的照片，因为，怎么说呢？人人有浏览痕迹，我知道谁看过，我心里有底而且我的 Facebook 是公开的，大家都能看到。所以 Facebook 自己的照片不太多，但是人人上都是自己认识的朋友和同学，所以放很多照片我也不介意，我也是设置成好友可见，我也很享受大家评论我照片的那种感觉。我觉得这也是一种交流方式，我比较喜欢和同学培养感情，不喜欢和陌上人交谈。我不喜欢他们评论，不大好。

能说一下为什么 Facebook 是公开，人人是好友可见呢？
因为 Facebook 我觉得设置很麻烦，我不太懂用这个洋货。而且我 Facebook 的隐私的东西和信息也不多，所以随便什么人都可以看。无所谓。

Facebook 上面有写什么个人信息呢？
个人信息？
就是 profile
比如我只公开了我的生日还有我现在是单身，其他到没什么，哦哦哦，还有就是我来自哪里，我现在就读的学校。其他的个人信息，关于我，宗教之类的我都没有写，我的联系方式，电话和 email 的，我也不太懂。但是人人的话，上面的朋友都是认识的，所以写的就多了一些个人信息，比如比 Facebook 上多了我之前念过的学校，然后我的 email 地址，这样方便我的朋友在和我失去联系的时候找到我。但是我人人和 Facebook 上提供的都是我的真实信息，微博就不是了，微博不是我真实的信息，我不会写我的真实姓名和联系方式，因为微博是所有人都可以看到，不需要任何验证，这一点微博与 Facebook 完全不同。

那么请谈谈 Facebook 的其他一些使用吧。
嗯...其实 Facebook，我用的最多的就是游戏，我最喜欢玩小小乐园，小小乐园是因为几个好朋友在玩，我也跟着一起，还有玩德州扑克，这个是因为，哈哈哈，我不像花钱在赌博上，所以就在 Facebook 上玩扑克。

在 Facebook 上面还有什么其他的应用程序吗？
应用过话，我想想，不太记得了，我会玩一些测试，比如，测试你的前世今生，还有我未来的职业，这些当然不是真的啦，有的仅供娱乐，有的可以提供参考，比如那个未来职业，他是测试我的性格适合什么样的职业，这样让我对今天的职业规划有点认知，还是很有意思的。

你在 Facebook 上面有加入什么群组吗？
嗯，有加一个我们学院的群组，但是我基本不看，因为那个群组里面的人都不怎么说话，
没什么好看的，还有一个应用是博客，但是也不常用。

其他网站你有加入什么群组吗？
有，人人网我加了一些灵异的群组，专门讲鬼故事和灵异事件的，还有一个英国留学组。

谈一下为什么在人人上比 Facebook 的群组使用多呢？
因为 Facebook 基本是外国人，外国人用，中国人，尤其是中国大陆人不怎么用，所以上面写的东西不怎么符合我们的口味。人人是中国本土网站，那些群组都是我感兴趣的。

你同时使用 Facebook，人人和微博，你是怎么平衡使用的？
嗯，怎么样平衡使用，一般我每天三个网站都会登录一遍，基本上都是在晚上吧，白天上课事情多，我都是晚上看看大家发了什么状态照片，转发了什么帖子，或者发一发自己的心情。但是时间上不同，我花的比较多的还是微博，因为微博更新快，信息量比较多，我时刻可以发现新的事情，因为我在微博上关注的人比较多，但是人人和 Facebook 的朋友就没有这么多，微博上关注的不仅是名人还有很多专门做小贴士，比如我喜欢做菜，我就会关注那个叫什么来的，嗯，呃。全球。。呃。全球美食搜罗，因为出国我经常自己做饭，所以想多学习一点菜式，其次是用人人比较多，因为里面有很多比较符合我兴趣爱好，中文帖子，比如如果对付小三，哈哈哈哈，如何对付小三。就这样。

能在单独说一下 Facebook 怎么使用的呢？
用的最少的是 Facebook，一般一天只用 20 分钟，20 分钟就随便看看，玩玩游戏什么的。
其实我觉得 Facebook 的中文版很多都解释不清，虽然中文版本是英文的翻译版，但是只是翻译过来，我觉得没有加入中国的思维方式，所以让我觉得用起来有很大的距离感，更不用说用英文版了，那些复杂的设置和应用程序，我根本看不懂，所以很多细节问题和功能我都没有弄清楚，比如我之前说的，到现在都不会设置隐私，因为他的隐私都是没一个单独的，还有就是 profile 里面那个，因为叫 about me，中文确实关于你，到底是关于你还
是关于我？

哈哈，有一些什么是你会同时在几个网站都会做的吗？

我觉得我是平衡使用他们的一些功能，比如照片上传三个都可以，但是不同，微博我就会发一些及时的照片，比如刚烧好的菜，我就会用手机马上照下来，上传到微博，然后人人网我主要是想要朋友和同学展示我的生活状态，所以会发旅游照片，就是一次性上传很多照片，可是 Facebook 面都是我精心挑选的漂亮照片，为了自己看看。

你刚提到手机登录微博，那会登录其他的吗？为什么？

我也有用手机上人人和 Facebook，但是和微博不同，手机上人人和 Facebook 只是随便看看，不怎么发东西，因为 Facebook 和人人在我看来不是及时信息集中地，没有必要及时发那么多。

在英国学习之后，平衡有没有变化？

嗯。。变化肯定是有有的啦。比如来英国之前，我就不知道有 FB，现在，现在就每天都花点时间看，跟刚来时候比，现在使用也越来越多了，微博相对来说使用却减少了，因为我关注的那些博主，都开始发布一些广告了他们很少像之前那样发一些感情的东西，而是做一些广告，或者是为一些商家做广告，对于人人的使用，嗯。。基本保持吧，因为人人除了和国内的朋友有交流之外，也能和在英国认识的朋友联系，而 Facebook 最大的不同就是有一些外国人在上面。

Q: Tell me when do you start using Facebook?
A: Started when I come to UK.since there is no Facebook in china and I will heard of it only when I come to UK.

Q: Well, tell me except Facebook, what other SNS do you use?
A: Other than Facebook…I use Sina Weibo, Renren and Qzone. When I come to UK…I didn’t use Qzone anymore.
Q: Tell me why do you use Facebook?
A: Um …since classmates here use Facebook too. Um….like they use Facebook to post status.I can know how they do and they post videos which I can watch…..have a fun….have for more convenient to chat with them, I started to use Facebook..haha…
Q: And any other reasons?
A: Actually there is a little advantage which is there won’t be a browsing record…so I use Facebook for concerning some gossip people…and some handsome boys.
Q: .so….tell me why do you use other SNS?
A: First, I use Weibo since its message spreading speed is faster and they are very instantaneous. And there is a limit of 140 words which I read which for a short time and I will get it. Um….there are lots celebrities and star on weibo. I like PanWeiBo and Edison Chan….those cool guys…I like female stars gossips as well.  Feel like they are closer to our lives. Um….i use renren to keep in touch with my university or high school schoolmates in china. I will post some photos sometimes or just release my emotions.
Q: I see….so…Tell me about how do you use Facebook?
A:Um….I will chat with others first…which is the bottom instant chat box. I am send them message as well….um….instant chat can replace sending messages or phone to know how they think.
Q: Can you give me some examples about chat on Facebook?
A: Like…with my best friends, I like to talk about my relations stuffs….and if I encounter any difficulties on study I can ask my classmates with instant responses. I can also flirt with the boys while it is quite bored in UK.
Q: For learning, could you be more specific?
A: Um…for studies…let me think…the uni had post a link…which is.um…just a link which can goes to the uni student services Facebook homepage. I know some higher level schoolmates and classmates there. They contribute a great help for my
study…..Like… I am not so sure about the syllabus about exams…um…someone answered me. I think this is very useful and I will keep using it.

Q: so…other than this, what else? about groups or pages?

A: About my life which is the Chinese students unions page…um….when I was first here….not too familiar…um….when I go to Facebook for this page the CSU….it is mainly for help Chinese students to solve some UK life issues. When I first come to UK. I don’t what how to do and I raise a question and the page helped me while lots people answering …then I know here is a lot of 2nd hand items…books…which is a great saver…and very convenient.

Q: Would you share some pages on renren and weibo?

A: Those are some pages for boarders…not in weibo.

Q: So…expect these….are there anything else? Arh! We talked about instant messages; tell me more about this please.

A: Um….like chat box…I chat with the Chinese, those study here….and some foreign classmates other…but not much…except for chat box…I use others to communicate …like…giving a like ….it is not just for private chat.

Q: Comment and like? So….could you give some examples?

A: When I see those I concern post a photo..i will give a like. And when I am touched, I would post some sharing….at least I can get their reply….seems the relationship is closer. Then when I found some good videos…I share them and let my friends to have fun too.

Q: You mention the share….Do else do you share on Facebook?

A: I would share some GIF..the animated photos…it's fun…let me think…um…and those photos post by my friends and tagged me. I would share it to my own page for memory. And…um..share ,right? those tagged me…I would share…and the location sharing stuff…when I going somewhere…those share and tagged me.I will put it in my page as well.
Q: So, are there anything original on your page? Except sharing?
A: Yea..of course…I post photos the most and then the status.
Q: Oh, please tell me more about this.
A: Um…photos are basically those I travel with scene and persons but I will be sure those are nice ones…I don’t post some bad one…I think I am not looking too good…haha…i wish I can seek confidence in the photos. haha…actually those I post of Facebook are less than in renren….why? um…it’s renren has the browsing record and I can know who saw them…I more prepared as the Facebook is open to all everyone can see it….so I don’t post much on Facebook…but those on renren are my friends and classmates. I don’t mind to post a lot. I set it to only friend can see…I enjoy people talking about my photos…I think this is a way of communication and I like to work on our relationship with classmates. I don’t like to talk to strangers. I don’t like they criticizing..not too good.
Q: OK…..so…why? Tell me why Facebook is public while renren is only for friends?
A: Because the setting of Facebook is troublesome.I don’t really know how to use this [ foreign product] ….and my privacy and information are not much on Facebook. so …let some random people see whatever they wanted to see…doesn’t matter.
Q: Could you tell me about what personal information do you put in the profile?
A: Personal information?
Q: That's your profile
A: Oh…Like …I just posted my birthday and I am single….not much for others…oh oh…and where am I from, where do I study and others like personal information…about me…religion…I skipped those…my contact method,phone,email,I won’t…but for renren….those are people I know. I filled in more. Like I filled where I studied before on renrenbut not Facebook…and my email which this is easier for those lost contact to reach me but both renren and Facebook are real. but weibo isn’t .those are not real…I those give my real name and contact
method...since everyone can see it on weibo...can there is no verification which is
different from Facebook.

Q: ...please tell me about the use of Facebook and others, what about games on
SNSs?
A: Umm....actually Facebook...I play games the most...I like the [little paradise]
which my good friends played with me together and texas poker, this is
because....haha....I don't want to waste money on gamble..so I do it on Facebook.

Q: Tell me do you use any third applications on Facebook?
A: Apps....let me think....can't really remember. I will do some quizzes.
Like....testing my past life....and my future career. Of course those are not real....but
they are entertaining....and for references....Like the future career one....it tests which
jobs best fit my characters ....which....it gives basic ideas how the jobs nowadays are
like....it is quite meaningful.

Q: I see....what kind of groups you have joined?
A: Um....I joined a group of my module. I don't usually check it since those people
don't really talk....nothing special on there....and a blog which I don't usually use.

Q: Do you do so in other SNS?
A: Yes....I joined a super-natural group....which is for ghost stories and shocking
stuffs and UK boarder group.

Q: Tell me why there are more groups on renren than Facebook?
A: Since those who use Facebook are foreigners....Chinese....especially from the
mainland china those really use it....those on there are not really meant for
us....renren is a local Chinese SNS and those groups interest me more.

Q: So how do you use Facebook renren and weibo at the same time....I mean....how
do you balance the usage?
A: Um....how to balance it? I log it 3 of them per day....usually at night....while day
time is for studying stuffs. I check the status and photos that people posted...or
sharing my feelings. Since there is a different time zone. I like weibo more…since it updates faster and there are more information…I can always check some new stuffs since I concern more people on weibo. But renren and Facebook are less. I concerned not only celebrities but always some professional tips on weibo. like…I love cooking.I will join those …what’s it called..?Um….global….um….global food search since I am here. I cook for myself…I wanted to learn more dishes and I use renren ….seems there are more information which I am interested in Chinese…like how to deal with the bitches. haha….deal with the bitches. haha…. Q: How do you Facebook then? 
A: I use Facebook least….20 minutes a day….just skim through it….play some games and I think there are many places the Chinese edition didn’t define well enough….although it is translated from English….but it is just translated. It doesn’t turn into a Chinese thinking style….so I feel there is a gap of actual using it….don’t even have to think about the English version. Those complicated settings and apps…I cant understand them….so lots details and factions I still didn’t figure out….like I said….till now. I don’t really know how to make the privacy settings since its setting are not for particular…and the profile one….that about me in Chinese it is [ about you]. Is it about you or about me?
Q: Are there anything else? 
A: I think I just use those functions evenly….like I post photos on 3 of them but the differences are….for Weibo, I post some instant stuffs….like the dish I just made….I take a snap shot by phone and post it…..and for renren, I wish to show hows my life with my classmates and friends. I upload a lot each time….but for Facebook, I picked them carefully….are it is for myself.
Q: You have mentioned using mobile phone to log in….so…will you do so for other?
A: Arh..yes.
Q: Please also tell me why?
A: I use my phone to log in renren and Facebook, but different from weibo, renren and Facebook on phone. .....I just check them and don’t really post anything, since Facebook and renren is not an instant information tool and there is no need for too much instantaneous stuffs.

Q: After studying in UK, is there any change in the balance?

A: Umm..there must be changes...like before I come...I didn’t know there is Facebook and now, I spend some time on it...comparing to when I was first here…I use it more and weibo is less...since those I concerned ...started to post some commercial ads instead of those emotions sharing….those ads are for some shops or whatever....and renren….um…I keep using it since I can contact my friends in china and also those I knew from here and for Facebook.. The biggest differences would be it is only for foreigners.
Appendix 3 Information sheet

Participant Information Sheet

1. **Research Project Title:**

   Chinese university students’ use of Facebook in the UK.

2. **Invitation paragraph**

   You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is
   important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will
   involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it
   with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like
   more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank
   you for reading this.

3. **What is the project’s purpose?**

   The purpose of this research is to explore the use of Facebook by Chinese university
   students studying in the UK.

4. **Why have I been chosen?**

   You are chosen because you are Chinese postgraduate taught students who are
   currently studying in the University of Sheffield.

5. **Do I have to take part?**

   Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary and you can decide if you take part or
   not. You will get this information sheet to keep if you decide to take part this research
and you need to sign a consent form. You can discontinue participation at any time without penalty, loss of benefit or reason.

6. **What will happen to me if I take part?**

If you take part, you should participate the interview and if there is need to collect more information when I analyze the data, you will need to participate the interview at middle of July and about 30 minutes. Your travel expenses are unavailable. If you take part this research, you should participate the interview by answer open question and answer question in your word and any way you want. All answers may not need to be very accurate but needed to be true.

7. **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

The disadvantages of project is that could take some of your time.

8. **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There will not be financial and immediate benefits, but the research will be stored in the database and show the contribute great help to the research.

9. **What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?**

The data and information collect will be destroyed.

10. **What if something goes wrong?**

If something goes wrong, you can call or email my supervisor.

11. **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or
12. **What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project’s objectives?**

The amount of usage and the reasons why using Facebook will needed to be investigate while these information are needed since the research will examine these to conclude a result.

13. **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The results will not be published.

14. **Who is organizing and funding the research?**

The research is undertaken under the control of the University of Sheffield.

15. **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

The information school of the university of Sheffield and its academic teaching staffs may have access to it and review.

16. **Contact for further Information**

Contact me or my supervisor:

Dr. Peter Stordy:

Address:

Room 220

Information School

The University of Sheffield

Regent Court
211 Portobello Street
Sheffield S1 4DP

Phone Number: 0114 2222668
Email:peter.stordy@sheffield.ac.uk

Lin XuanZhen:
Email:XLin2@shef.ac.uk
Appendix 4 Consent-Form

Title of Research Project: Chinese university students’ use of Facebook in the UK.
Name of Researcher: Xuanzhen Lin

Participant Identification Number for this project:
1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project. □

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline (contact number: 0114 2222668. Email: peter.stordy@sheffield.ac.uk ). □

3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymized responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research. □

4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

5. I agree to take part in the above research project. □

_________________________  ______________________
Name of Participant  Date  Signature

_________________________
Lead Researcher  Date  Signature
Appendix 8—Application form

University Research Ethics Application Form

for Undergraduate & Postgraduate-Taught Students

This form has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC)

Complete this form if you are an undergraduate or a postgraduate-taught student who plans to undertake a research project which requires ethics approval via the University Ethics Review Procedure.

Your Supervisor decides if ethics approval is required and, if required, which ethics review procedure (e.g. University, NHS, Alternative) applies.

If the University’s procedure applies, your Supervisor decides if your proposed project should be classed as ‘low risk’ or potentially ‘high risk’.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR DEPARTMENT MAY USE A VARIATION OF THIS FORM: PLEASE CHECK WITH THE ETHICS ADMINISTRATOR IN YOUR DEPARTMENT*

Further guidance on how to apply is at:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/approval-procedure/review-procedure
Guidance on the possible routes for obtaining ethics approval (i.e. on the University Ethics Review Procedure, the NHS procedure and the Social Care Research Ethics Committee, and the Alternative procedure) is at:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/approval-procedure/ethics-app

Once you have completed this research ethics application form in full, and other documents where appropriate, check that your name, the title of your research project and the date is contained in the footer of each page.

**If your Supervisor has classed the project as ‘low risk’**:  
- Email this form, together with other documents where applicable, to your Supervisor; and  
- Sign and date **Annex 1** of this form and provide a paper copy to your Supervisor.

| Important Note for Supervisors:  
| Following the ethics review the Supervisor must provide the academic department's Ethics Administrator with a copy of the 'low risk' research ethics application that s/he reviewed and a completed Ethics Reviewer's Comments Form indicating the ethics decision that s/he took in relation to it. The Ethics Reviewer's Comments Form can be downloaded here: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/further-guidance/universityproc edure2/reviewersc |  
| The Ethics Administrator reserves the right to consult the Chair of the academic department's Ethics Review Panel (or equivalent) of s/he has concerns that projects classed as low risk should in fact have been classed as potentially high risk.  

| If your Supervisor has classed the project as potentially ‘high risk’:  
| Email this form, together with other documents where applicable, to your department’s Ethics Administrator; and  
| Ask your Supervisor to sign and date **Annex 2** of this form and provide a paper copy of it to your department's Ethics Administrator.  
| Ethics Administrators are listed at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.991051/file/Ethics-Administrators.pdf |
I confirm that I have read the current version of the University of Sheffield
‘Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal
Data and Human Tissue’, as shown on the University’s research ethics website
at: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy

A1. Title of research project: Chinese university students’ use of Facebook
in the UK.

A2. Name of Student: Xuanzhen Lin
    Department: Information school Email:XLin2@shef.ac.uk Tel.: 07553718494
    Name of Supervisor: Peter Stordy

A3. Proposed Project Duration:
    Start date: 17/6/2012           End date: 03/09/2010

A4. Mark ‘X’ in one or more of the following boxes if your research:

- [ ] involves adults with mental incapacity or mental illness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Option</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves prisoners or others in custodial care (e.g. young offenders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves children or young people aged under 18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves using samples of human biological material collected before for another purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td>involves taking new samples of human biological material (e.g. blood, tissue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td>involves testing a medicinal product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves taking new samples of human biological material (e.g. blood, tissue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves additional radiation above that required for clinical care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>involves investigating a medical device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* If you have marked boxes marked * then you also need to obtain confirmation that appropriate University insurance is in place. To do this email insurance@shef.ac.uk and request a copy of the ‘Clinical Trial Insurance Application Form’.

It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the University’s Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue before completing the following questions. Please note that if you provide sufficient information about the research (what you intend to do, how it will be carried out and how you intend to minimise any risks), this will help the ethics reviewers to make an informed judgement quickly without having to ask for further details.

A5. **Briefly summarise:**

1. **The project’s aims and objectives:**

   **Aims:**

   The aim of the project is to investigate the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook in the UK. In particular, this research will explore the extent of Chinese students' use of Facebook and other social networking sites in the UK.

   **Objectives:**

   In this project, the objectives are

   1. To identify what social networking sites Chinese students use in the UK.
   2. To identify the motivation of Chinese university students using Facebook in the UK.
   3. To identify how Chinese students use Facebook in the UK.
4. The commonalities and variations of Chinese students use of Facebook and other SNSs.

5. How Chinese students balance their use of various SNSs, including Facebook

ii. The project’s methodology:

There is 30 minutes for face-to-face interview.

A6. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

There is no more harm and distress to participants.

A7. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project? (especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)

Yes.

If yes, explain how these issues will be managed.

The interview will be taken in the room of university place.

A8. How will the potential participants in the project be:
i. **Identified?**

participants will all be 10 postgraduate taught students who are currently studying in the university of Sheffield.

ii. **Approached?**

postgraduates that I know well will be asked to contact their friends and i will email to invite them to take part in this research.

iii. **Recruited?**

Confirm the Chinese postgraduate who are use the Facebook.

---

**A9. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If informed consent or consent is **NOT** to be obtained please explain **why**. Further guidance is at:

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/policy-notes/consent](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/policy-notes/consent)

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**A9.1.** This question is only applicable if you are planning to obtain informed consent:
How do you plan to obtain informed consent? (i.e. the proposed process?):

Before the interview, I will email the information sheet to participants. At the beginning, I will give them the consent form to get their signature and there are two copies which the participants can keep one and I keep one.

A10. What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

The participant names will not be kept with their personal data and the data will be store in the University drive.

A11. Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided)

No.

A12. Will the research involve the production of recorded media such as audio and/or video recordings?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

A12.1. This question is only applicable if you are planning to produce recorded
media:

**How will you ensure that there is a clear agreement with participants as to how these recorded media may be stored, used and (if appropriate) destroyed?**

These recorded media will be stored the safe location and destroyed on time.

Guidance on a range of ethical issues, including safety and well-being, consent and anonymity, confidentiality and data protection’ are available at:

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/policy-notes](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy/policy-notes)
For Undergraduate & Postgraduate-Taught Students

Student Declaration

(The student completes Annex 1 if the Supervisor has classed the student's proposed research project as ‘low risk’)

The Supervisor needs to receive an electronic copy of the form, and other documents where appropriate, plus a signed, dated paper copy of this Annex 1 ‘the Student Declaration’.

Full Research Project Title: Chinese university students' use of Facebook in the UK

In signing this Student Declaration I am confirming that:

- The research ethics application form for the above-named project is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

- The above-named project will abide by the University’s ‘Good Research Practice Standards’: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/good

- The above-named project will abide by the University’s ‘Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue’: www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/gov-ethics/ethicspolicy

- Subject to the above-named project being ethically approved I undertake to adhere to any ethics conditions that may be set.

- I will inform my Supervisor if prospective participants make a complaint about the above-named project.
• I understand that personal data about me as a researcher on the research ethics application form will be held by those involved in the ethics review process (e.g. my Supervisor and the Ethics Administrator) and that this will be managed according to Data Protection Act principles.

• I understand that this project cannot be submitted for ethics approval in more than one department, and that if I wish to appeal against the decision made, this must be done through the original department.

Name of Supervisor: Peter Sturdy

Name of student: Xuanzhen Lin

Signature of student: Xuanzhen Lin

Date: 17/06/2012
Supervisor Declaration

(The Supervisor completes Annex 2 if s/he has classed the student’s proposed research project as potentially ‘high risk’)

The Ethics Administrator needs to receive an electronic copy of the form, and other documents where appropriate, plus a signed, dated paper copy of this Annex 2 ‘the Supervisor Declaration’.

Full Research Project Title:

In signing this Supervisor Declaration I am confirming that:

- The research ethics application form for the above-named project is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- The above-named project will abide by the University’s ‘Good Research Practice Standards’: [link]
- The above-named project will abide by the University’s ‘Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue’: [link]
- Subject to the above-named project being ethically approved I will undertake to ensure that the student adheres to any ethics conditions that may be set.
- The student or the Supervisor will undertake to inform the Ethics Administrator of significant changes to the above-named project that have ethical consequences.
- The student or the Supervisor will undertake to inform the Ethics Administrator if prospective participants make a complaint about the above-named project.
- I understand that personal data about the student and/or myself on the research ethics application form will be held by those involved in the ethics review process (e.g. the Ethics Administrator and/or reviewers) and that this will be managed according to Data Protection Act principles.

- I understand that this project cannot be submitted for ethics approval in more than one department, and that if I and/or the student wish to appeal against the decision made, this must be done through the original department.

Name of Supervisor:
Name of student:

**Signature of Supervisor:**

**Date:**