

## **Do You Still Love Facebook? Understanding Users' Perceptions Through a Novel Qualitative Method**

**Alexandra HUTANU**

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi  
hutanu.alexandra25@gmail.com

**Patricea-Elena BERTEA**

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi  
patricia.bertea@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

Even though Facebook is the most popular and most used social media platform, it is struggling with increased competition from other platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, and with a feeling of disconnection from users, coming from problems regarding personal data protection or the business model itself. Taking into consideration that Facebook was launched in 2004, we can say that the late Generation Z is Facebook native. What are the feelings of Facebook users after such a long “relationship”? This is what we aim to study through a novel qualitative research method called love-break up letter. This method was created in 2009 in the business sector by the consulting company Smart Design and consists of asking respondents to imagine that a certain product, service or brand is a real person and to write a love or break up letter addressed to it. Expressing feelings in writing does not involve any interference from the researcher, allowing respondents to be more honest about positive or negative emotions. In our study, we asked university students to write both types of letters for Facebook. Through content analysis, we identified an ambivalent attitude towards Facebook and the fact that the emotional connection is very strong. However, just like any other relationship, this one has its own ups and downs and frustrations accumulated over time. The present study can help academics understand the strong points of this new qualitative method, while revealing important insights about the attachment between users and Facebook. To our knowledge, there is no research that studies the emotional connection between users and Facebook using this method.

**Keywords:** social media, facebook, love break up letter.

**JEL classification:** M31.

### **1. Introduction**

Facebook is the biggest social network in the world, with more than 2,449 million active users every month (Hootsuite, 2020). It was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and other colleagues while they were attending Harvard University and it was initially designed as a portal dedicated to students. Starting with 2006 it was made available to the large public and, since then, Facebook has changed the way people communicate and interact with technology (Brügger, 2015). According to Hootsuite, in January 2020, Facebook ads could reach in Romania 9.8 million users, from which 50.5% were females and 49.5% were males. The same report shows that Facebook is the second most-used social media platform in Romania, 90% of all internet users being active on Facebook (ages from 16 to 64). The first place is occupied by YouTube (92%), while next positions are occupied by other Facebook-owned platforms: Facebook Messenger (74%), Whatsapp (72%), Instagram (57%).

But what determines users to still use Facebook after such a long time? What are their feelings towards Facebook now, when competitors such as Instagram and TikTok are becoming more popular? Several studies show that users have higher intensity of use and a more favorable attitude towards some other social network platforms, such as Snapchat (Alhabash & Ma, 2017) or both Snapchat and Instagram (Stanley, 2015). Also, a paper from 2018 shows us that 44% of younger American users, with ages between 18 and 29, say they deleted the Facebook app

from their phone in the last year. In comparison, only 12% of older users, with ages over 65, have done so (Perrin, 2018).

Could this be a sign that users are planning to “break up” with Facebook? Or are they not ready yet to end their relationship? What are the motivations that would determine them to stay or leave their “relationship”? This is what we aim to understand in this qualitative study, through a novel qualitative method called love - break up letter. To our knowledge, there is no qualitative study about Facebook that uses this research method, a method considered quite novel, especially in academic research.

## 2. Literature review

Facebook is more than a communication channel, it's a platform where users can actively participate through interacting with other users (by posting, commenting, reacting or sharing), or can passively participate, through monitoring other people's profiles and viewing the content (Calancie et al., 2017). One of the widely applied theories when studying the motivations for using social networking sites is the *Uses and gratification theory* (U&G) (Katz et al., 1974), an approach which explains why and how people seek out specific media. The U&G theory claims that individuals receive gratifications through specific types of media, gratifications that satisfy their informational, social and leisure needs.

Quan-Haase and Young (2010) identified six gratifications associated with Facebook use: to pass time, to show affection, to follow fashion, to share problems, to demonstrate sociability, to improve social knowledge. Hunt et al. (2012) identified that the main reasons for Facebook usage are: interpersonal communication, self-expression and entertainment. Krause et al. (2014) studied the motivations of using Facebook music listening applications and discovered three main ones: entertainment, communication and habitual diversion. Furthermore, some authors claim that Facebook is a source of social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Karapanos et al., 2016; Phua et al., 2017). Christofides et al. (2009) concluded that users are disclosing information on Facebook due to the need for popularity. Nadkarni and Hofmann (2011) found in a study based on reviewing the literature that there are two main social needs that determine Facebook use: the need to belong and the need for self-presentation. Furthermore, they identified that previous studies show that individuals with high levels of extraversion, neuroticism and narcissism and low levels of self-esteem and self-worth have a higher rate of Facebook usage. Aladwani (2014) discovered eight reasons for using Facebook: to connect, to share content, to relax, for personal branding, to organize (events, tasks and meetings), to monitor (friends or celebrities), to express themselves, and to learn.

Facebook's primary role of networking has significantly changed over the years, integrating now many other non-networking functions (Hayes et al., 2015). An early study from 2008 done by Raacke and Bonds-Raacke showed that university students use Facebook and MySpace in order to establish and maintain social connections. This finding is supported by Giannakos et al. (2013), who identified social connection as the main reason for using Facebook, although others were identified as well. However, a more recent study done by Čičević et al. in 2016 shows that second-year and third-year university students rarely use Facebook to form new friendships, but they do use it to stay in touch with high school friends. Moreover, Alhabash et al. (2014) demonstrated that, if in the past the main reason for using this platform was maintaining social relationships, now the highest motivation is entertainment. Other motivations identified were information sharing, medium appeal, escapism, socialization, self-documentation and self-expression. Tosun (2012), in a study with 143 university students, found that the main reason for using Facebook is for strengthening social relationships and maintaining the ones formed offline.

The platform is even considered an educational tool, enabling interaction, peer feedback and learning in a social context (Čičević et al., 2016). It is common for colleagues to have dedicated Facebook groups for discussing study-related topics. Manca and Ranieri (2013) found five educational uses of Facebook: supporting class discussions and helping students engage in collaborative learning, sharing educational resources, developing content, delivering content that exposes students to extra-curricular resources, and supporting self-managed learning. Going further, Facebook can improve relationships between students and teachers, giving them the possibility to interact in other contexts, which could positively impact students' learning outcomes. However, teachers' academic credibility could be diminished (Roblyer et al., 2010).

While analyzing the motivations for using Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter, Alhabash & Ma (2017) found that the reasons for Facebook usage are, in this order: convenience, entertainment, passing time, medium appeal, information sharing, self-documentation, self-expression and social interactions. In comparison, the first motivation for using Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter was entertainment, followed by convenience, medium appeal, passing time and self-expressions (the ranking of the other three motivations varied across the three social networks). Thus, the other three social networks were considered more entertaining than Facebook.

Beyond the previously mentioned usage motifs, Facebook has become such an integrated part of peoples' lives, that they simply use it out of habit or just for wasting time. This reason, called by different authors boredom, passing time or wasting time, has been confirmed by several studies (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Giannakos et al., 2013; Krause et al., 2014; Čičević et al., 2016; Alhabash & Ma, 2017). The fact that Facebook has become a routine could be caused by increased social and psychological stimulation derived from the medium, stimulation that rewards users and makes them spend even more time on Facebook (Hong & Chiu, 2014). Several studies (Brailovskaia, Margraf, & Köllner, 2019; Brailovskaia, Rohmann, Bierhoff, & Margraf, 2018; Marino et al., 2018) demonstrated that intensive Facebook use leads to the development of a pathological emotional bond. This bond is linked to an obsessive need to always stay online. In extreme cases, this could lead to Facebook addiction, a widely studied issue (Andreassen et al., 2012; Hong & Chiu, 2014; Gábor et al., 2015; Arora & Okunbor, 2016). Facebook is so deeply integrated in people's lives, that Gábor et al. (2015) found that the average compensation for completely losing Facebook was considered 5,284 USD in 2015. Lincoln and Robards (2016) have named Facebook "an archive of the reflexive project of self", mediating the contemporary narrative of life with its key moments. However, taking into consideration the fact that Facebook is on the market for a long time and that, eventually, its novelty is wearing off, some studies show that stimulation is one of the least fulfilled needs by Facebook (Karapanos et al., 2016).

Yazdanparast et al. (2015) studied the main reasons for liking and disliking Facebook. They found that the most liked features were being able to keep in touch with family and friends (83.4%), followed by interactivity and the possibility to see pictures and watch videos (10.6%). At the same time, the features considered the most interesting were the newsfeed and the chat (31.4%). The same study showed that main reasons for disliking Facebook were: lack of privacy (26.7%), too much 'drama' (18.1%), too many unnecessary ads and videos (15.2%) and the fact that Facebook is too time-consuming (13.3%). Meanwhile, the most annoying features were ads (35%), invitations for liking pages or joining games (24.9%) and continuous notifications and pokes (14.3%). On the other hand, 13% of the respondents have declared they do not find anything interesting on Facebook. Studying also the sources of dissatisfaction with Facebook, Karapanos et al. (2016) identified content fatigue and exposure to undesirable content. The same study showed that self-esteem is a predictor of Facebook usage and that the

satisfying experiences created by Facebook are: self-expression, social surveillance, reviving lost connections, social capital and interactions, and lifelogging.

When talking about attitudes towards different media, there are authors who propose differentiating them across different modalities of use (Ledbetter et al., 2011; Tartaglia, 2016). They explain that the attitude cannot be conceptualized positive or negative as a whole, because different modalities of use create different expectations (Ledbetter et al., 2011). Tartaglia (2016) analyzed different attitudes towards Facebook according to the modalities of use. He identified three modalities of use: social interaction (managing relationship and self-expression), the simulation of a different self-image and the search for relations, and that users' attitudes varied across them. While users have a positive attitude towards the first function, believing that Facebook is a useful tool in improving social connections, they expressed concerns regarding Facebook being dangerous and misleading. Other concerns, such as privacy and self-image, were related to the other two functions. Ambivalent attitudes towards Facebook have been identified by Arora and Okunbor (2016) as well, who found in a study that young users from both the USA and India believe that Facebook is both useful and a waste of time.

At the same time, the attitude toward Facebook could have been negatively affected by the Cambridge Analytica scandal. If the percentage of users believing that Facebook is protecting their data was 79% in 2017, the drop was up to 27% in the first week after the incident was divulged (Butow, 2018). In a Consumer Trust Index from 2018, Facebook was on the 89th position out of 100, with a score of 3.45, still slightly better than 2017, when it had the last position. The study was conducted in November 2018 on a sample of 1,000 respondents from the USA (Jebbit, 2018).

### 3. Methodology

This is a qualitative study which uses a novel research method, called *love – break up letter*. Created in 2009 by Smart Design, a consultancy company on innovation, love – break up letter is a research tool used particularly for understanding product, service or brand attachment, especially for technological products (Martin & Hanington, 2012). It is easier to express positive or negative feelings and thoughts in writing, without feeling any restraints or interventions from the researcher. Also, it is harder to articulate these emotions during interviews or surveys (Gerber, 2012). The respondents are asked to personify a certain product and write either a love or a break up letter addressed to that product in maximum 10 minutes, a short time frame avoiding the possibility of overthinking. These letters are helpful in understanding the connection between users and products, the reasons for staying with a product or the disappointments created by it (Martin & Hanington, 2012).

In our study, we asked 52 second-year students from a university of Economics from Iasi, with ages ranging from 20 to 23 years old (35 females and 17 males), to imagine that Facebook is a person. First, they would have to write a love letter for Facebook, and then a break up letter. We wanted to have both types of letters in order to understand both positive and negative emotions associated with Facebook. In the end, we asked participants to choose which one of the two letters they would send to Facebook. After collecting the letters, we digitally transcribed them. Through axial content analysis, we identified 7 themes and 552 codes.

### 4. Results

As proved by other authors (Tartaglia, 2016; Arora and Okunbor, 2016), we have identified that our users have an ambivalent attitude towards Facebook. The love letters revealed Facebook's most appreciated features, their roles in the respondents' lives and the emotional connection felt by the users. In total, there were 314 positive mentions and 238

negative ones. The frequencies for each theme identified in the love letters are displayed in Table 1.

*Table 1: Themes and sub-themes frequencies from love letters*

Positive mentions	Frequency per respondent	Total Frequency (total number of mentions)
<b>Facebook's role</b>		
Maintains social relationships	21	25
Brings happiness	20	24
Offers support	18	26
A way of finding new friends	17	17
Informative role	15	17
A way of killing time	6	7
The user feels appreciated	5	5
Knows the user	4	6
A way of expressing one's self	3	3
Relaxation role	3	3
Following celebrities	2	2
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>135</b>
<b>Appreciated features</b>		
Anniversaries	12	13
Memories	9	9
Personalized content (messages, videos)	8	9
Notifications (about events, the weather)	3	4
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>35</b>
<b>Positive emotions</b>		
Love	43	102
Gratitude	19	22
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>124</b>
<b>Attributed qualities</b>		
	14	20
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>314</b>

In the love letters, the respondents emphasized the role Facebook is playing in their life, this theme having the highest number of positive mentions – 135. Consistent with some of the literature (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Giannakos et al., 2013), the most appreciated role was maintaining social relationships. Facebook is a very important tool for keeping in touch with friends and acquaintances or communicating with people that live far away. However, establishing new connections through Facebook was not considered as important. The second most popular role was contributing to users' happiness. The students mentioned that Facebook makes them not only truly happy, but it makes them laugh, being very "funny", and humor is an appreciated quality in a friend. Therefore, Facebook's role in entertaining was confirmed. Moreover, through all its funny and engaging content, the social platform is a good remedy against boredom. Facebook is also highly appreciated for the genuine support it is constantly offering. Answers such as "you've always been there for me", "you listen to me" and "you support me in everything" reveals the fact that social platform has become a real friend who offers support. Finding such a good friend and great listener in Facebook, it is not surprising that the users feel that Facebook knows all about them: "no one knows me the way you do". Therefore, the respondents feel special and appreciated, demonstrating the success of Facebook's user-centric approach: "you make me the center of your universe". The informative role was also appreciated. Facebook helps in discovering the latest news about the world and always keeps its users updated with the latest trends. Monitoring their friends and favorite celebrities was also mentioned, as well as self-expression and relaxation.



The love letters revealed also the most appreciated features of Facebook (35 mentions). The first one was anniversaries – respondents like receiving notifications about their friends' birthdays. But, more important, they love the fact that other people get notified when it's their anniversary. This is one of the features that contributes to the idea that Facebook is truly attentive and cares about its users. Once again, the social platform proves what a good friend it is through memories – the feature that shows users previous posts from the same day years ago. Lifelogging was previously identified as a satisfying experience created by Facebook (Karapanos et al., 2016) and our participants admitted to feeling nostalgic when seeing their past moments. They appreciate how much Facebook “cares about the moments spent together”. This way, the social network is more than a channel which reminds them about those memories, and is like an old friend who remembers the past experiences lived together. Facebook's concern and care for its users is highly appreciated. The students are grateful for the personalized messages and videos created especially for them (e.g. messages sent in situations such as natural disasters, the videos created when it's the anniversary of a friendship), enjoying the fact that Facebook has always cared about how they feel and what they think. Even the message displayed on top of the newsfeed, “What's on your mind?”, encouraging people to post, has been appreciated. Moreover, respondents appreciated the notifications regarding events or the weather being useful in planning and organizing their days.

Regarding the positive emotions associated with Facebook, we identified two, mentioned 124 times: love and gratitude. Respondents openly declared how much Facebook means to them and their wish to never lose their special connection. Snippets such as: “you are my true big love”, “I cannot imagine my life without you”, “I couldn't replace you with anyone”, “I can't live a day without you”, “you are a part of me” shows that Facebook has past being considered a technological tool and it is now an integrated, inseparable part of life. Together with love, the respondents expressed their gratitude, thanking Facebook for everything it has done for them. Over and above, the process of personification has made the attribution of certain positive qualities to Facebook (20 mentions) possible. The students complimented Facebook and described through adjectives such as attentive, good, fun, full of life, unique and friendly.

Even though the love letters shed light on the strong emotional connection between users and Facebook, the students did not hesitate to reveal their frustrations with it when asked to write the break up letters. Table 2 displays the frequencies for each theme identified in the break up letters.

*Table 2: Themes and sub-themes frequencies from break up letters*

Positive mentions	Frequency per respondents	Total Frequency (total number of mentions)
<b>Facebook's flaws</b>		
The content (low quality content, ads)	25	38
User's lack of control over using Facebook (including addiction)	24	35
Takes too much time	19	25
Features	15	19
It's a negative influence	6	7
Leads to social isolation	6	7
It's boring	2	2
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>133</b>
<b>Negative emotions</b>		
Regret of breaking up	27	36
Angry	13	18
Sadness	8	8
Disappointment	6	8

Feeling out of love	6	5
Hate	2	3
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>78</b>
<b>Other social networks</b>		
Instagram	12	25
Tinder	2	1
Twitter	1	1
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>27</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>238</b>

We identified 133 mentions regarding reasons for disliking Facebook. The tipping point for terminating the relationship with the most famous social network could be the exposure to undesirable content, as Karapanos et al. (2016) found. The students worriedly mentioned that some of Facebook's content is not only useless and lacking of substance, but also dangerous and indecent. Despite Facebook's policy, hate speech and mean comments that could emotionally harm individuals are still visible on the platform. This dangerous content is created by mischievous people. However, some of the respondents mentioned they are happy to have the possibility of blocking these people. Confirming some of the literature (Yazdanparast et al., 2015), frequent and irrelevant ads were another source of dissatisfaction with Facebook, being considered annoying and useless. Frequent notifications were considered annoying as well: "I'm getting headaches from all your notifications".

Despite the low-quality content, annoying ads and continuous notifications, students unhappily admitted that they cannot stop using Facebook, some of them even being addicted to it: "you're making me addicted to you", "I'm counting on you too much and this is holding me back". If in the love letters the respondents declared their desire to never stop their relationship with Facebook, in the break up letters they revealed their frustrations caused by this addiction and the lack of self-control. In addition, Facebook was disliked for wasting too much of their time, being in line with some of the findings from Yazdanparast et al. (2015). Even though Facebook was previously mentioned as a good remedy against boredom, now it was accused of interfering with their studies: "I can't study because of you". This is why Facebook was characterized as "egoistic" and "jealous", keeping its users captive and wanting to control their lives: "I feel monopolized by you", "you're controlling every aspect of my life".

Confirming previous studies (Jebbit, 2018; Butow, 2018), this research shows that the Cambridge Analytica scandal has negatively impacted users' trust. The students mentioned how disappointed they were when they realized how Facebook acted in regards to their privacy: "you betrayed us and used our personal data in an abusive way", "you told our secrets to other companies just for money". Misusing users' personal data was considered an act of betraying a close friend. Another source of dissatisfaction with Facebook was the lack of control over some aspects such as the messages and friend requests received or the fact that other people can save and use their photos. At the same time, some of the students mentioned that they dislike being spied on by their family on Facebook. Nonetheless, some technical issues were mentioned – lagging and frequent freezing.

If the love letters revealed two types of positive emotions – love and gratitude, the types of negative emotions from the break up letters were more varied in nature. However, their frequency was lower: 78 mentions about negative feelings vs. 124 positive mentions about positive feelings. Some of the respondents were furious with Facebook, because it is annoying and stressful. Other users confessed their disappointment, even writing that Facebook has become unrecognizable. Some of them went so far and declared they are out of love with the social network or even hate it. However, the predominant negative emotion was sadness caused by the possible break up. Students admitted that writing the break up letter was not an easy

thing to do, showing that they are not ready to end the relationship. The thought of breaking up was hard even on those who admitted to “cheating” on Facebook with someone else: “I am seeing someone else”, “I cheated on you with your friend, Instagram”. The “mistresses” mentioned were Instagram, 25 times, and Tinder and Twitter (with only one mention each of them). There were respondents who even wanted to explain their unfaithfulness: Instagram is newer, has a better design, less ads and most of their friends are there. Moreover, the fact that Facebook has introduced the story feature has been frowned upon and considered a theft from Instagram. In the end, when asked which letter they would send to Facebook, 27 students chose the break up letter, while 25 students chose the other one.

## Conclusions

Through product personification, the letters revealed the complicated emotional relationships between users and Facebook and insights about potential improvements. Each letter opened with a salutation, usually “Dear Facebook”, suggesting the thesis of the relationship. The ending was typical for a letter as well, having salutations such as “love”, “sincerely” or “I’m sorry”, concluding the feelings. The tone of voice was friendly, very similar to writing a letter to a real friend. The two types of letters helped us in understanding both positive and negative attitudes and emotions towards Facebook. Just like relationships with people, relationships with products have their own ups and downs.

We discovered that Facebook is considered a good friend who has offered great emotional support overtime, being there for its users and listening to them. Facebook is like an old friend who knows everything about their best mate. Its personalized content and some of its features (anniversaries, memories, personalized videos and messages, notifications about events and weather) make users feel special and cared for. Moreover, it is funny and directly contributes to its users’ happiness. Consequently, our respondents openly declared their love and gratitude towards the social platform.

However, like in any other relationship, our participants mentioned some frustrations and motifs of unhappiness in the break up letters. Exposure to undesirable content, ads, and frequent notifications were some of the sources of dissatisfaction. In addition, the issues regarding the protection of personal data affected users’ trust, being considered a betrayal, and trust represents the foundation of a relationship. But despite Facebook’s shortcomings, staying away from it is hard and some of our students even admitted to being addicted to Facebook. This is why the social network was called “egoistic” and “jealous”, keeping its users in captivity. Negative emotions such as anger and disappointment were expressed, but not more than sadness. Although Facebook has its quirks and imperfections, like any person, the emotional connection developed over time is hard to destroy and the thought of breaking up causes emotional distress and sadness. Some of the respondents admitted to cheating on Facebook with other social networks due to several reasons. However, they have invested a great deal into the relationship with Facebook and do not seem ready to let it go, even if more than half of the respondents chose to send the break up letter. The relationship with Facebook, complicated as it is, is hard to break, especially for young people in their twenties, who have grown up with Facebook and have shared their happy and low moments with it.

Regarding the research method used, we consider that it brings valuable emotional insights. There are several reasons why we consider that the love - break up letter method is a useful qualitative research tool that should be embraced by academia. First of all, personification made the attribution of qualities and flaws to the chosen digital system easier. It was very easy for the respondents to imagine that Facebook was a person. Directly addressing it led to a more natural way of expressing oneself. Then, the short time limit imposed did not allow the subjects to overthink their responses. Also, the researcher has little to no involvement



and does not affect the participants' behavior. Last but not least, the participants seemed to enjoy writing the letters, because it was "fun". The process itself was short and writing letters (especially hand writing them) is extremely uncommon in today's world. For many respondents, it was the first time they have directly "talked" to Facebook. However, deeply understanding users' motivations and the reasons for loving or hating certain features could be difficult only by analyzing the letters. The follow up part is missing. Therefore, it is recommended that the love – break up letter is followed by interviews. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see in a longitudinal study how user's emotions and attitudes change over time, by applying this research method.

In conclusion, we consider that this paper contributes to the body of literature regarding both emotional connection between products/brands and users and qualitative research. Furthermore, there are several managerial implications that can be drawn from this study. Taking into consideration the fact that the use and importance of digital tools had skyrocketed in the last months due to the Covid-19 pandemic (including e-learning tools), it is more important than ever for business professionals to understand the emotional attachment between users and digital products/systems. Even though digital products are an integrated part in peoples' lives, the increased competition between tech companies makes it difficult to "win users' hearts". Moreover, the love – break up letter is an easy to implement and cost-effective research method that business professionals from the tech world can rapidly put in practice when needed. For example, Facebook has started to face serious competition from TikTok. The love – break up letter is a technique that allows Facebook professionals to not only understand the user's attitude towards Facebook, but to also compare the two platforms and find a way of bringing back users and engaging more with them.

However, this is an explorative study and has its limitations. The results cannot be generalized for the population. Finally, we believe that this research tool called love – break up letter can provide extremely valuable insights for understanding product attachment. People interact with technology and brands thousands of times every day and investigating the emotional connection between them helps professionals design better products.

## References

- ALADWANI, A.M. (2014). Gravitating towards Facebook (GoToFB): what it is? And how can it be measured? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 33, 27-278. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.01.005.
- ALHABASH, S., & MA, M. (2017). A Tale of Four Platforms: Motivations and Uses of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat Among College Students? *Social Media and Society*. doi:10.1177/2056305117691544.
- ALHABASH, S., CHIANG, Y., & HUANG, K. (2014). MAM & U&G in Taiwan: Differences in the uses and gratifications of Facebook as a function of motivational reactivity. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 35, 423–430. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.03.033
- ANDREASSEN, C.S., TORSHEIM, T., BRUNBORG, G.S., & PALLESEN, S. (2012). Development of a Facebook Addiction Scale. *Psychological Reports*, 110(2), 501–517. doi: 10.2466/02.09.18.PR0.110.2.501-517.
- ARORA, S., & OKUNBOR, D. (2016). Facebook: Hate it or Love it, But Can You Ignore it? A Comparative Study of US and India. *Journal of Information Science Theory and Practice*, 4, 65-73. doi: 10.1633/JISTaP.2016.4.1.5.
- BRAILOVSKAIA, J., MARGRAF, J., & KÖLLNER, V. (2019). Addicted to Facebook? Relationship between Facebook Addiction Disorder, duration of Facebook use and narcissism in an inpatient sample. *Psychiatry Research*, 273, 52-57. doi: 10.1016/j.psychres.2019.01.016.

- BRAILOVSKAIA, J., ROHMANN, E., BIERHOFF, H.-W., & MARGRAF, J. (2018). The brave blue world: Facebook Flow and Facebook Addiction Disorder (FAD). *PLoS One*, 13(7), e0201484. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0201484.
- BRÜGGER, N. (2015). A brief history of Facebook as a media text: The development of an empty structure. *First Monday*, 20(5). doi: 10.5210/fm.v20i5.5423.
- BUTOW, D. (2018, April 18). Trust in Facebook has dropped by 66 percent since the Cambridge Analytica scandal. *NBC News*. Available at <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/trust-facebook-has-dropped-51-percent-cambridge-analytica-scandal-n867011>
- CALANCIE, O., EWING, L., NARDUCCI, L. D., HORGAN, S., & KHALID-KHAN, S. (2017). Exploring how social networking sites impact youth with anxiety: A qualitative study of Facebook stressors among adolescents with an anxiety disorder diagnosis. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 11(4). doi: 10.5817/CP2017-4-2.
- CHRISTOFIDES, E., MUISE, A., & DESMARAIS, S. (2009). Information control and disclosure on Facebook: Are they two sides of the same coin or two different processes? *Cyberpsychology and Behavior: the impact of the Internet, multimedia and virtual reality on behavior and society*, 12, 341-5. doi: 10.1089/cpb.2008.0226.
- ČIČEVIĆ, S., SAMČOVIĆ, A., & NESIC, M. (2016). Exploring college students' generational differences in Facebook usage. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 56, 83-92. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.11.034.
- ELLISON, N., STEINFELD, C., & LAMPE, C. (2007). The Benefits of Facebook “Friends:” Social Capital and College Students’ Use of Online Social Network Sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12, 1143-1168. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x.
- GÁBOR, O., TÓTH-KIRÁLY, I., & BÖTHE, B. (2015). Four facets of Facebook Intensity - The development of the Multidimensional Facebook Intensity Scale. *Personality and Individual Differences*. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2015.11.038.
- GERBER, E. (2012). Tech Break Ups: A Research Method for Understanding Technological Attachment. *Interactions*, 19(5), 26-30. doi: 10.1145/2334184.2334192.
- GIANNAKOS, M., CHORIANOPOULOS, K., GIOTOPOULOS, K., & VLAMOS, P. (2013). Using Facebook out of habit. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 32, 594-602. doi: 10.1080/0144929X.2012.659218.
- HAYES, M., VAN STOLK-COOKE, K., & MUENCH, F. (2015). Understanding Facebook use and the psychological affects of use across generations. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 49, 507-511. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.03.040.
- HONG, F.Y., & CHIU, S.L. (2014). Factors Influencing Facebook Usage and Facebook Addictive Tendency in University Students: The Role of Online Psychological Privacy and Facebook Usage Motivation. *Stress and health: journal of the International Society for the Investigation of Stress*, 32. doi: 10.1002/smi.2585.
- HOOTSUITE. (2020). Digital 2020: Romania. Available at <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-romania>.
- HUNT, D., ATKIN, D., & KRISHNAN, A. (2012). The influence of computer-mediated communication apprehension on motives for Facebook use. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56(2), 187-202. doi: 10.1080/08838151.2012.678717.
- JEBBIT. (2018). The Consumer Data Trust Index. Jebbit.
- KARAPANOS, E., TEIXEIRA, P. & GOUVEIA, R. (2016). Need fulfillment and experiences on social media: A case on Facebook and WhatsApp. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 55, 888-897. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.10.015.

- KATZ, E., BLUMER, J.G., & GUREVITCH, M. (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual. In: Blumler JG, Katz E (eds.) *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*. London: SAGE, 19-34.
- KRAUSE, A.E., NORTH, A.C., & HERITAGE, B. (2014). The uses and gratifications of using Facebook music listening applications. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 39, 71-77. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.07.001.
- LEDBETTER, A.M., MAZER, J.P., DEGROOT, J.M., MEYER, K.R., MAO, Y., & SWAFFORD, B. (2011). Attitudes toward online social connection and self-disclosure as predictors of Facebook communication and relational closeness. *Communication Research*, 38(1), 27-53. doi: 10.1177/0093650210365537.
- LINCOLN, S., & ROBARDS, B. (2016). Editing the project of the self: sustained Facebook use and growing up online. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20, 1-14. doi: 10.1080/13676261.2016.1241869.
- MANCA, S., & RANIERI, M. (2013). Is it a tool suitable for learning? A critical review of the literature on Facebook as a technology enhanced learning environment. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 29(6), 487-504. doi: 10.1111/jcal.12007.
- MARINO, C., GINI, G., VIENO, A., & SPADA, M.M. (2018). A comprehensive meta-analysis on Problematic Facebook Use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 83, 262-277. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2018.02.009.
- MARTIN, B., & HANINGTON, B. (2012). Universal Methods of Design. In *Universal Methods of Design*, 114-115. Rockport Publishers.
- NADKARNI, A., & HOFMANN, S. (2012). Why Do People Use Facebook? *Personality and individual differences*, 52, 243-249. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2011.11.007.
- PERRIN, A. (2018). Americans are changing their relationship with Facebook. *Pew Research Center*. Available at: <https://students.mathsnz.com/3.12/pdfs/Article15.pdf>.
- PHUA, J., JIN, S. & KIM, J. (2017). Uses and Gratifications of Social Networking Sites for Bridging and Bonding Social Capital: A Comparison of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 72. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2017.02.041.
- QUAN-HAASE, A., & YOUNG, A.L. (2010). Uses and gratifications of social media: A comparison of Facebook and instant messaging. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 30(5), 350-361. doi: 10.1177/0270467610380009.
- RAACKE, J., & BONDS-RAACKE, J. (2008). MySpace and Facebook: Applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory to Exploring Friend-Networking Sites. *Cyberpsychology & behavior: the impact of the Internet, multimedia and virtual reality on behavior and society*, 11, 169-74. doi: 10.1089/cpb.2007.0056.
- ROBLYER, M.D., MCDANIEL, M., WEBB, M., HERMAN, J., & WITTY, J. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 13, 134-140. doi: 10.1016/j.iheduc.2010.03.002.
- STANLEY, B. (2015). Uses and gratifications of temporary social media: A comparison of Snapchat and Facebook. Fullerton: California State University, Fullerton.
- TARTAGLIA, S. (2016). Different modalities of using facebook: The influence of actual social relations, wellbeing, and attitude towards the medium. *Studia psychologica*, 58, 3-17. doi: 10.21909/sp.2016.01.703.
- TOSUN, L. P. (2012). Motives for Facebook use and expressing “true self” on the Internet. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(4), 1510-1517. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2012.03.018.
- YAZDANPARAST, A., JOSEPH, M., & QURESHI, A. (2015). An investigation of Facebook boredom phenomenon among college students. *Young Consumers*, 16(4), 468-480. doi: 10.1108/YC-02-2015-00506.