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# Tapping the Educational Potential of Facebook: Leveraging Social Capital and Knowledge

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**Tapping the Educational Potential of Facebook: Leveraging Social Capital and Knowledge***Rex Wang<sup>1</sup>, Cathy Urquhart<sup>2</sup>, Philip Scown<sup>2</sup>, Julie Hardman<sup>2</sup>*

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Facebook is a frequently used Computer Mediated Environment (CME) for college and university students to build social connections and develop as members of their institutions. Facebook functions as a purposed network of identities and deposited self-expression, and is a similar concept to a yearbook, where users can place photos of themselves, their hobbies, interests, movies and music. The value for employing CMEs as a tool for academic purposes is widely accepted. However, whether a social networking site such as Facebook can be used for educational objectives, remains largely unexplored as a research question. This paper discusses studies conducted at the University of Auckland and Manchester Metropolitan University, and explores how students use Facebook, and how it impacts on their social and academic lives. Using theories of social capital, we explore some potential educational uses of Facebook