

## STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE ON USING FACEBOOK (FB) AS A TOOL FOR ACADEMIC USE

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**DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434**

### Abstract

*The purpose of this research was to study the students' perspective on using Facebook as a tool for online classes. There were three research questions; 1) How do students use Facebook for their studies? 2) In what ways do students use Facebook for their studies? 3) What are the ways do students believe that Facebook can be used by the school as a tool for academic use? A descriptive qualitative design was utilized in this study. Purposive sampling was used selecting its participants. Thematic analysis was utilized. Three major themes resulted from the responses of the participants; Facebook is used for academic usage, for communication, and as an information tool. The results of the study further recommends that Facebook can be an alternate access for communication, serve as search engine and a means of delivery mode of learning.*

**Keywords:** Search Engine, Information Tool, Access, Delivery Mode

### INTRODUCTION

Facebook has taken the limelight since the COVID 19 pandemic. The news regarding the onset, continuous spread, and effect of the virus worldwide has covered almost its pages. It has triggered unprecedented educational uncertainty with 1.2 billion students and teenagers around the world affected by school closures (UNESCO, 2020). Educational institutions have temporarily closed in most governments to avoid COVID-19 from spreading. Around 1.725 billion students around the world were affected by school closures in July 2020. According to UNICEF, 106 countries are introducing nationwide closures, with 55 implementing local closures, affecting about 98.6% of the world's student population. The effect is serious, causing learning to be disturbed.

As a result of school openings, people are moving to distance learning services and open educational software and networks are recommended by UNESCO to schools and teachers that can be used for remote learning and hold instructional interruption to a minimum. Online education has grown in importance as answer to the various effect of the pandemic on education and that will decrease the risk of population transmission. Teachers and students will be able to access remote instruction in a range of formats and in ways that extend time and space, as technology will eliminate face-to-face instruction.

Facebook is one of the online technology tools that impacted online classes in different countries. The research revealed that Facebook plays a significant tool in improving accuracy, meaningfulness, transparency, and significance are examples of writing skills. ( Sirivedin, et.al 2018). It also

mentioned that it effects on teachers' English learning attributes, such as fluency, trust, happiness, esteem, and conviction enhancement in self-efficacy. According to Shih (2013), Facebook improves language learning by enhancing learners' grammar skills (tense and structure), Kajornboon (2013) claimed that Facebook is an important platform for learning English and encouraging learning characteristics. Even by using Facebook to reflect on the variety of expertise or awareness of learners, learning may be more successful.

According to research, students with a wide range of expertise and experiences will connect on Facebook (Troike, 2006). It can be used for educational purposes, as (Maxman & Usleuel, 2010) structured an equation relating to how Facebook can be used for communication, collaboration, and resource sharing. Other studies showed that social networking can be used for interaction, collaboration, and learning activities (Hung & Yuen 2010).

The Philippines is one of the countries impacted by the Wuhan coronavirus epidemic (Duddu, 2020). On March 17, 2020, near-end days before the final exams of most of the schools in the country, following a rise in global coronavirus cases, the Philippine government announced a state of calamity for six months. This incident was escalated in putting the entire Luzon Island under Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ) more than 50 million people were concerned. The ECQ bans people from leaving their homes and getting essentials. On March 12, Metro Manila was put under lockdown, with similar restrictions planned in Bohol, Cebu, Cainta, and other parts of the country. Lockdowns were imposed on barangays and municipalities with recorded for at least two positive cases. When the government announced this lockdown, the entity of the country is greatly affected not to mention the educational set-up that prompted every school in the archipelago to the temporary closure.

Don Honorio Ventura State University (DHVSU) is established in Bacolor, a municipality in the province of Pampanga. Suspension of classes was announced at the time of the Luzon lockdown, by then, students opted to submit their final requirements online, until such time that Commission on Higher Education (CHED) discouraged the submission online due to the possible transmission of coronavirus for students who need to go outside for internet café for submission of requirements (CHED Advisory No.3, 2020). Since then, online transactions were observed on the campus in compliance with the government policies on the prevention of possible transmission of the coronavirus.

With the opening of the school year 2020-2021, the DHVSU administration set its preparation on online learning through webinars on various topics fostering virtual learning. A memorandum was issued in compliance with the provision of R.A No. 11469, otherwise known as "Bayanihan to Heal as One". DHVSU Task Force Covid-19 has crafted Post-ECQ guidelines to ensure health, safety and well-being of the DHVSU community, with the challenges of the so-called "new normal"( DHVSU Memorandum No.3,s,2020). Online enrolment was done, and different webinars were held in preparation of flexible learning implemetation as stipulated in CHED advisory. Other colleges, on the other hand, have expressed concern about reopening before a COVID-19 vaccine has been produced. As a result, school officials are struggling to come up with a distance learning curriculum for 27 million children by August. This challenge both the students and teachers for many households face problems of connectivity and owning gadgets or devices that could be utilized for online classes. Teachers were skeptical about delivering remote learning given the challenges on hand. Meanwhile,

President Duterte resuming face-to-face lessons without a COVID-19 vaccine "spells disaster" (Reuters, 2020).

With the approval of IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force), Commission on Higher Education (CHED) was set to implement flexible learning in State Colleges and Universities following no to face to face classes set up. Don Honorio Ventura State University (DHVSU) is a public university set to implement online learning through various platforms. Before the opening of classes this September for its Laboratory High School (LHS) department, the Laboratory High School Student Council conducted a survey on various means of online communication and gadgets to their students which to be utilized for the incoming school year. Data revealed that most LHS students have limited connectivity and some students do not own a device that can be used for online classes. Other problems arise such as; unavailability of digital tools for teachers and students and a poor internet connection, downgraded gadgets, poor economic status, fear of not utilizing the gadgets effectively, lack of knowledge on the use of online platforms, and difficult class schedules (Legamia 2020). Interviews also showed that LHS students were not prepared for online classes set up for it was not observed in their respective classes rather utilized the traditional mode of teaching that is face to face classes. However, for the 2020-2021 academic year, classes began on August 24, 2020, as mandated by the Department of Education. LHS students embraced the "new normal" set-up of education that required them to adopt.

This study aimed to find out what students think about using Facebook as a teaching tool. The participants were Grade 9 students of Laboratory High School of Don Honorio Ventura State University. The participants were of 13-14 years of age, display the following developmental characteristics that affect intellectual growth; physical demands of puberty, short-term thought can take precedence over long-term planning, and a lack of willingness to take substantial learning risks, close friendship gain importance, search for new people to love in addition to parents, learn well in cooperative groups, interested in technology and how things work. Their interest in technology, specifically Facebook, is interpreted as a reference to the use of Facebook for their academic use.

A lot of changes were brought about by this coronavirus pandemic, including the teaching and learning styles. (Kumar, 2010) cited that book of learning might change the face to become Facebook. Levels of appropriateness of contact between faculty and students, gender gaps, frequency and form of use, and inspiration for online presence have also been addressed in studies. (Clipson, Wilson, & DuFrene, 2012).

Facebook is the biggest social network with over 2.6 billion users reported worldwide. Its active Facebook users surpassed one billion in the third quarter of 2012, making it the biggest social network online. It launched its 0 bandwidth making it possible for users to connect without data charges as long as photos are not shown. It makes way for markets to promote their products where consumers use mobile phones for internet access. With Facebook's low bandwidth, students can access the page and messenger even without an internet connection

(Fewkes & McCabe, 2012) cited in his study, students were constantly on social media. Their attention was driven to chatting, posting, and anything less of importance on their studies. This observation triggered educator's attention to what social media play in the lives of the youth. It will

always be second nature in the lives of our students.

A question of value was raised by educators if Facebook can be an ally or an enemy towards learning, being a part of students lives, educators were in searched for an alternative that will enhance students learning. DepEd stated that while social media may be the "brightest innovation of this era," educators should "look at the bigger picture," noting that "social media in and of itself is not the proper medium for schools to use, especially in connection with the delivery of lessons, especially since there are many options specifically designed for educational use"(Manila Bulletin, 2019). Moreover, DepEd stated in its DepEd Memo 2019, social media is one of the "easiest means to convey knowledge in this digital era utilizing the newest available technology," but it also "opens one's identity to the world wide web, exposing young learners to various cyber dangers."( Pascua, 2019).A researcher commented, that learning can take place anywhere as long knowledge is obtained in the meaningful interactions between learners (Petosky, 2015). It then concluded,(Kabilan et al., 2010) that Facebook can enhance learning, that is in the form of constructivism, that allows students to work in collaboration, that is learning together, building communities that construct knowledge based on their interaction.

The students of DHVSU-LHS comprise Grade 7 to 10 coming from different localities with different socio-economic statuses. Generally, students own cellular phones that they utilize for communication purposes. Strict prohibition was observed in the department but students tend to use their phones for social networking that is, most of their break they glance on their Facebook accounts post, share, and comment on various posts seen on the site.

This research is based on Bruner's scaffolding theory, which was influenced by the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. We learn best in a social context, where we build meaning via contact with others, according to Vygotsky. Bruner's approach was based on his Zone of Proximal Development hypothesis, which states that we may learn more in the company of a competent other person.

Bruner felt that as children begin to acquire new concepts, they require active support from teachers and other adults. Kids are initially reliant on adult assistance, but as they gain more independence in their thinking and learn new skills and information, the assistance can progressively decrease. The scaffolding that supports the construction of a building is suggestive of this type of regulated contact between the kid and the adult. As the job is done, it is progressively disassembled.

In a very particular sense, scaffolding indicates a decrease in the number of options available to a kid, allowing them to focus solely on learning the skill or information that is necessary. Bruner's idea is so simple and elegant that it may be used across all industries, for all ages, and for all types of learning.

It is critical for teachers to give opportunities for students to learn new things on a regular basis. Some of them may be quite complicated, need specialized assistance. Teachers must be aware of the developmental stages of each of the students in their care and give appropriate scaffolding.

Although this may not be achievable on their own, instructors can improvise and offer scaffolding by

enlisting the aid of other adults in the classroom, such as teaching assistants (para-educators), parent helpers, or more knowledgeable students.

Teachers may put students in groups to expand each other's learning as they acquire confidence and proficiency in specific areas. It's also critical for instructors to recognize when a kid has reached the stage where they can learn on their own, so that decisions may be made to release them from the scaffolding.

In this way, the social environment that Facebook provides in the many interactions that instructors and students have substantially aid in the acquisition of learning that education simply provides, even during pandemics. Aside from the support provided by professors and classmates, Facebook may be used as part of the learning delivery mechanism. The social connection that may be seen when utilizing Facebook has the potential to have a significant influence on schooling. It is in this manner that researchers found interest in determining the possibility of using Facebook as a tool for academic use.

## OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to find out how students at Don Honorio Ventura State University's Laboratory High School feel about using Facebook as a tool for online classes. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following:

- 1) How do students use Facebook on a daily basis?
- 2) In what ways do students use Facebook for their studies?
- 3) What are the ways do students believe that Facebook can be used by the school as a tool for online classes?

## METHOD

**Research Design:** A qualitative descriptive technique would be utilized in this investigation. A qualitative method was utilized in getting a deeper knowledge of any phenomenon in which little or no information exists, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990). It provides a new viewpoint on well-known issues or better interpretations of things that are hard to quantify. A qualitative descriptive study's goal is to offer a succinct description of real-life activities that people or groups of persons encounter on a regular basis. Of all the qualitative research methods, qualitative descriptive studies are the least "theoretical" (Lambert, 2012). The term "qualitative description" (QD) is a term used in qualitative research to describe studies that are descriptive in character, such as those looking at health care and nursing issues (Polit & Beck, 2009, 2014). QD is a frequently recognized research tradition that has been acknowledged as significant and suited for research questions aimed at determining who, what, and where events or experiences occurred, as well as obtaining insights from informants about a poorly understood phenomena. It's also the label of choice when you need a straightforward explanation of a phenomena or data to build and improve questionnaires or treatments (Neergaard et al., 2009; Sullivan-Bolyai et al., 2005).

The researchers utilized semi-structured questionnaires using google forms in collecting data. Google forms were sent online and participants answered. The researcher may be able to achieve a more in-depth understanding of individual experiences using this tool (Seidman, 2006). Even though there was little empirical data on student use of Facebook, the viewpoints were significant as a

starting point for developing a body of literature on social networking and higher education.

**Participants and Sampling Method:** (Seidman, 2006) stated that in considering a larger population, purposive sampling is vital allowing the researcher to explain the experiences of the population. The respondents were the Grade 9 students of the LHS school year 2020-2021. The participants were selected according to certain criteria; one should be an owner of a cellphone with an active Facebook account and uses the account regularly. These students had not been exposed to any online platform as to their learning delivery mode. We coded the students from S1 to S50. According to Merriam (1998), "purposeful sampling is based on the premise that a researcher must pick a sample from which population they can learn the most to explore, understand, and obtain knowledge.". The primary method of sample selection was that a participant must own a cellular phone with a Facebook account and with an internet connection. A request letter was given to the principal seeking permission to conduct the study. Since the participants were minors, consent from their parents was obtained to encourage them to take part in the study. Google forms were submitted to their Facebook Messenger community after they were approved.

**Instrument:** The main research tool was interview questions in Google forms. An interview, according to Morgan, 1997; Seidman, 2006, is a purposeful dialogue between two people that is driven by one party to acquire information. Interviews are important for this analysis because they help the researcher to develop a deeper interpretation of past emotions, opinions, intentions, and actions as people experience them. (Merriam, 2002; Morgan, 1997; Seidman, 2006). The researchers used interviews to discover how students used Facebook for educational purposes. The interviews were performed online, and participants confirmed that they were eager to participate.

**Data Collection:** The researcher began the interview by explaining the project's intent and giving a detailed description. The researchers introduced themselves as university professors. No student was interviewed until they have granted their permission. Facebook Messenger was used to submitting instructions about how to fill out a Google questionnaire. Although an interview procedure was used for instruction, each interview was performed on its terms. Each participant understood why they are filling out a Google form, according to the researcher. Interviews were performed via Facebook Messenger. ( Bolderston,2012) stated that, internet interview is another form of a remote interview, that taps the potential of the computer as a methodological tool for research. Another study cited, emergent is not fuelled by paradigmatic perspective but through technological innovation (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). Interviews was held at the most comfortable time of the participant that were free from distractions and ensuring privacy. Data collected online and was subjected to data analysis. Researchers make sure that all participants' responses were collected by google form with the corresponding email addresses for possible confirmation of responses. Only the researchers safely kept the participants responses to google forms following the data privacy act.

**Data Analysis:** All data gathered were done online. After which, data were coded. The coding process helped the researchers to make connection and later categorize each data gathered. Codes were used in categorizing data. (Glense, 2006; Merriam, 1998) cited that with the use of codes, researchers can easily sort the data gathered and defined the data need for the purpose of the research. Themes were also used to categorized participants' responses to the interview.

**Ethical Considerations:** For ethical consideration, only the teacher-researchers kept the results and the names of the participants in the data gathered. Specific names were not written thus code names were used in the presentation of the results to assure the confidentiality of the results. Upon the administration of the proposed research, the researchers safely kept the results such the researchers alone would keep the results. Data Privacy Act was clearly adhered in the study.

**Results and Discussions:** This part of the research provides the results of the interview. It answers the presented objectives in the study.

## **I. Usage of Facebook on daily basis**

### **1.1 Facebook as a source of information**

The following were participants responses in verbatim:

“We get updates of the different announcement, like having classes or no classes”.-S10

“I often use Facebook to look for news in and out of the country, however, i also use for entertainment and educational purposes” –S11

“I use Facebook for announcements like for school, brownout,news about what happening in this world(covid) ect..” –S19

“We get university updates, school contacts, reviewing school works”- S37

The responses clearly showed that in this time of pandemic, where everyone is experiencing limited references from the physical library, student opted to use the social media, particularly the Facebook. As opined by Lampe, et. Al (2012), Facebook has become an increasingly important tool for people engaging in a range of communication behaviors, including requesting help from their social network to address information needs.

### **1.2 Facebook as a Communication tool**

Most students experienced isolation in the time of pandemic. The absence of face to face interaction has lead the participants to make use of the social for interaction.

“I used Facebook in staying in touch with friends, communicating with relatives”- S1

“Meeting new friends and reaching out to them, is how I used Facebook”- S4

The majority of participants use Facebook to keep in contact with friends and family both locally and globally, and also as an avenue to meet new friends. Goulat (2012), stated in his study that the use of Facebook promoted new forms of communication, exchange of information, and cultural production, it represents not just a technological phenomenon but also a social, cultural and communication.

### **1.3 Facebook as Source of Entertainment**

Even before the pandemic, various academic groups posted learning materials on Facebook, this was evident in the responses of the participants.

“I use Facebook in sharing memes, to know what the trend is”-S17

“I use Facebook to watch videos and it entertains me”- S18

“Sharing pictures is what I love to do with Facebook”- S42

With the fast track of technology and social networking, Facebook does not serve as a tool for communication, various videos and entertainment materials were utilized to give entertainment to its users.

## Students Use Facebook for their Studies

### 2.1 Facebook for academic use

Participants use Facebook in collaboration with different classroom activities, search engines, discoveries, reading news, watching academic videos, get information, having a conference with classmates, view instructional modules, access educational pages, university announcements, send and receives files, and acquire ICT skills.

“I use Facebook in Asking my other classmates if we have quizzes or test, Answer other homework sent by teachers, communicating with my groupmates in projects” – S1

“ Facebook is used as research or search engine, connection purposes, timely updates”- S3

“ I use Facebook to ask my teacher on things I do not know and improve my reading skills”-S6

“ I use Facebook for watching an academic video, watching how to speak English grammar fluently and reading and learning a lessons”-S7

“ We use Facebook to look for things that are similar to our activity given by our teachers”- S10

“Facebook can allow students to create discussion boards, communicate with each other and their teacher, and can be linked with online projects & other classroom groups.”-S11

“There are tons of informative and educational videos in not only facebook but also in all other socmed platforms. I believe those videos are really useful for me and my co students. Not only videos but also series of post with texts and images that are educational. There are also school app advertisement that are helpful”.-S16

“ We use Facebook for discussing lessons with classmates , announcement about test and helps us to be reminded about academic works we should do”-S29

According to Moghavvemi,et.(2017), Facebook has a positive effect on their academic performance, which indicates that their time spent on Facebook does not affect their education. Students have enumerated academic usage of Facebook; the collaboration with the other students made it possible for them to complete tasks at an earlier time. According to Razak, Saeed, and Ahmad (2013), Facebook is a learning atmosphere that fosters teacher-learner and learner-learner engagement in a range of school activities. According to Bowman and Akcaoglu, some students used Facebook to hold conferences with professors and classmates (2014), reported that students

### Ways Students believe that Facebook can as a tool for online classes

Students agreed that Facebook is useful in their studies. (Sánchez, Cortijo, & Javed, 2014) examined teacher and students interaction when it comes to using Facebook for educational purposes. Student’s used Facebook for announcements and information regarding school matters were disseminated through Facebook messenger. Students used Facebook as a search engine, academic videos, a way of moving learning content, viewing academic articles and modules, and visiting educational sites.

### 3.1 Facebook as a Tool for Distributing Instructional Materials

Facebook as a tool for distributing instructional materials. Participants suggested that Facebook can be used to send PowerPoint presentations, information, topics, homework, modules, academic videos, lectures and files, and links for the lesson.

“Facebook is used for Sending extra presentations, sending extra information’s about the topics, homework’s”- S1

“We use Fb for Sending modules early Sending information. Ask them thru chat when you can't understand the lesson” – S8



“facebook is use for posting educational modules, group collaboration, sharing links”- S13

Students believed that professors can send instructional materials using Facebook, the ease of communication can be observed through chats and messages. Students suggested that a Facebook Group could be created by the professor where he can post lessons and activities. Students listed the possible use of messenger or Facebook room for video calls and conferences. Several students decided that administrators should use the school's Facebook page to share news and alerts so that students are kept up to date with school events. Students believed that Facebook can be a medium for sending files.

## CONCLUSION

The study's findings on the Students' Perspective on Using Facebook as a Tool for Online Classes gave an impact on how Facebook plays a vital role in students' online activities at Don Honorio Ventura State University.

This study was conducted last August 2019 at Don Honorio Ventura State University Laboratory High School. Three major findings resulted from this study: (a) even before the pandemic, students used Facebook as a learning device., (b) Facebook is used by students to interact with their peers, classmates, teachers, families, and family. (c) Students use Facebook as an Information Tool for various information needed in the acquisition of knowledge.

## RECOMMENDATION

The findings of this research can be extended to higher education teaching and practice. One idea is that Facebook should be used as a substitute where other online channels are inaccessible, such as Google Meet, because it allows students to use more info. e results of this study can be used for instruction and practice in higher education. One recommendation is that Facebook can be an alternative means when another online platform is not accessible as in the case of google meet for it requires bigger data usage on the part of the students. Facebook has zero bandwidth, students can easily access files, communicate with the educators, and be updated with the latest announcements and information in the school. Using Facebook as a Search Engine on different instructional materials helps the students in the different learning tasks in online classes. The ease of communication between students and professors contributes to the better discussion of topics intended for a certain period. Lastly, professors and administrations can enjoy accessibility in terms of announcements and information through the created Facebook page.

The limitation of using Facebook as an online tool in online classes lies in the written assessments, where rampant cheating could be observed, but not with an assessment on performance tasks. Data privacy is also a concern in terms of the file uploaded by the author of any learning materials.

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