



IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZATION ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 9 STUDENTS: BASIS FOR AN ENHANCED DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The increasing use of social media among secondary school students has significantly influenced academic engagement, communication, and learning practices. This study examined the impact of social media utilization on the academic performance of Grade 9 students at Philsaga High School Foundation Incorporated. Specifically, it investigated the effectiveness of social media platforms such as Facebook/Messenger, TikTok, Twitter (X), YouTube, Instagram, CapCut, Canva, and Google Search/Docs in supporting learning essentials including school examinations, classroom participation, compliance with school requirements, and performance tasks. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational design with qualitative support, the study involved 177 respondents composed of 169 students and 8 teachers selected through stratified random sampling. Data were gathered through survey questionnaires, interviews, and academic performance records measured through Mean Percentage Scores (MPS). Findings revealed that Facebook/Messenger and TikTok were perceived as highly effective educational tools when used appropriately. Results further indicated that social media positively contributed to collaboration, communication, digital literacy, and learner engagement. However, excessive and unregulated usage negatively affected students' concentration, time management, and examination performance. Statistical analysis showed significant relationships between social media utilization and academic performance indicators. Qualitative findings emphasized the importance of digital responsibility, structured integration, and teacher guidance in maximizing educational benefits. The study concluded that social media can become an effective supplementary educational tool when integrated strategically into instruction. Consequently, an Enhanced Digital Literacy Program was proposed to promote responsible and academically productive social media use among learners.

Keywords: *social media utilization, academic performance, digital literacy, secondary education, educational technology, student engagement*

INTRODUCTION

The continuous advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed the educational landscape, particularly through the integration of social media platforms into students' daily learning experiences. Social media platforms are no longer used solely for communication and entertainment; they have increasingly become important educational tools that support collaboration, information sharing, and learner engagement. UNESCO (2023) emphasized that digital learning technologies improve accessibility, participation, and flexibility in education when effectively integrated into teaching and learning processes. As educational institutions continue adopting technology-driven learning environments, students are becoming more dependent on social media and digital applications for academic activities and communication.

In the Philippine educational context, students commonly utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Messenger, TikTok, YouTube, Canva, and Google Docs for both educational and personal purposes. The implementation of blended and flexible learning modalities further increased students' reliance on digital technologies to access learning materials, submit school requirements, and participate in classroom interactions. Al-Rahmi et al. (2021) explained that social media platforms positively influence students' academic engagement and collaborative learning when used responsibly and purposefully. Similarly, Ansari and Khan (2021) found that social media enhances collaborative discussions, learner participation, and independent learning among students through interactive digital communication.

Recent studies further highlight the educational advantages of multimedia-based social media platforms. Tang et al. (2022) emphasized that social media promotes collaborative learning by encouraging interaction, peer support, and active student participation in educational activities. Likewise, Mayer (2021) explained that multimedia learning environments improve students' comprehension and retention when information is presented through visual and verbal formats simultaneously. In addition, Zhang et al. (2024) reported that short-form educational videos and multimedia content increase learner motivation and engagement, particularly among secondary school students exposed to interactive digital learning environments.

Despite these positive educational contributions, excessive and unregulated social media utilization remains a growing concern among educators and parents. Xu et al. (2022) found that social media overload negatively affects students' academic performance due to increased distractions, information fatigue, and reduced concentration during learning activities. Similarly, Yimer (2023) reported that excessive use of social networking platforms negatively influences students' psychosocial well-being and academic achievement. Entertainment-oriented digital content may therefore contribute to procrastination, poor time management, and reduced academic productivity among learners when not properly regulated.

Moreover, responsible digital engagement and digital literacy have become essential components of modern education. Ribble (2021) emphasized that students must develop responsible digital citizenship skills to utilize technology ethically, safely, and productively. Schools therefore play an important role in guiding learners toward balanced and academically meaningful social media utilization through effective digital literacy programs, teacher supervision, and responsible technology integration.

Although numerous international studies have examined the relationship between social media utilization and academic performance, limited research has focused on Grade 9 students in localized Philippine secondary school settings. Hence, this study investigated the impact of social media utilization on the academic performance of Grade 9 students at Philsaga High School Foundation Incorporated. Specifically, it explored the effectiveness of selected social media platforms, their influence on learning essentials, and their relationship with students' academic performance. The findings of the study served as the basis for proposing an Enhanced Digital Literacy Program that promotes responsible and academically productive social media utilization among learners.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How effective is the utilization of social media platforms among Grade 9 students in terms of:
 - 1.1 Facebook/Messenger
 - 1.2 TikTok
 - 1.3 Twitter (X)
 - 1.4 YouTube
 - 1.5 Instagram
 - 1.6 CapCut
 - 1.7 Canva
 - 1.8 Google Search/Docs?
2. To what extent does social media utilization influence learning essentials in terms of:
 - 2.2 School examinations
 - 2.3 Classroom participation
 - 2.4 Compliance with school requirements
 - 2.5 Performance tasks?
3. What is the academic performance level of Grade 9 students based on Mean Percentage Score (MPS)?
4. Is there a significant relationship between social media utilization and students' academic performance?
5. What Enhanced Digital Literacy Program may be proposed based on the findings of the study?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design with qualitative support to determine the impact of social media utilization on the academic performance of Grade 9 students at Philsaga High School Foundation Incorporated. The descriptive approach was utilized to assess the effectiveness of various social media platforms, including Facebook/Messenger, TikTok, Twitter (X), YouTube, Instagram, CapCut, Canva, and Google Search/Docs, while the correlational method examined the relationship between social media utilization and students' academic performance measured through Mean Percentage Scores (MPS). Qualitative data were incorporated to provide deeper insights into the lived experiences and perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the educational use of social media. The study was conducted at Philsaga High School Foundation Incorporated located in Rosario, Agusan del Sur, Philippines. The respondents consisted of 177 participants composed of 169 Grade 9 students and 8 teachers selected through stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from different sections. Data were gathered using structured survey questionnaires, interview guides, and academic performance records. The research instruments underwent validation by educational experts to ensure reliability and appropriateness of the items. Prior to data gathering, approval and permission were secured from school authorities, and ethical standards concerning voluntary participation, confidentiality, and informed consent were strictly observed. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, weighted means, standard deviations, and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to determine significant relationships among variables, while thematic analysis was employed to interpret qualitative responses and identify recurring patterns related to students' social media experiences and academic engagement.

RESULTS

The following tables present the findings regarding the effectiveness of social media platforms and their relationship with students' academic performance.

Table 1. Effectiveness of Social Media Platforms as Educational Tools

Social Media Platforms	Weighted Mean	Description	Rank
Facebook/Messenger	4.28	Most Effective	1
TikTok	3.96	More Effective	2
YouTube	3.91	More Effective	3
Canva	3.89	More Effective	4
Google Search/Docs	3.85	More Effective	5
Instagram	3.80	More Effective	6

Social Media Platforms	Weighted Mean	Description	Rank
CapCut	3.77	More Effective	7
Twitter (X)	3.75	More Effective	8
Overall Weighted Mean	3.90	More Effective	

Table 2. Influence of Social Media on Learning Essentials

Learning Essentials	Weighted Mean	Description
School Examinations	3.88	High Impact
Classroom Participation	4.12	High Impact
Compliance with School Requirements	4.20	High Impact
Performance Tasks	4.26	Very High Impact
Overall Weighted Mean	4.12	High Impact

Table 3. Academic Performance Level of Respondents

MPS Range	Performance Level	Frequency	Percentage
90–100	Excellent	32	18%
80–89	Very Good	98	55%
70–79	Good	39	22%
60–69	Satisfactory	8	5%
Below 60	Needs Improvement	0	0%
Total		177	100%

Table 4. Relationship Between Social Media Utilization and Academic Performance

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Social Media Utilization vs Academic Performance	0.67	<0.05	Significant

Table 5. Proposed Enhanced Digital Literacy Program

Program Components	Objectives	Activities	Expected Outcomes
Responsible Social Media Use Seminar	Promote responsible digital behavior	Conduct seminars and workshops	Improved digital responsibility
Academic Content Creation Training	Enhance creativity and productivity	Multimedia content workshops	Improved digital literacy skills
Teacher Capacity Building	Strengthen instructional integration	ICT and social media training	Effective classroom integration
Time Management Intervention	Reduce excessive social media usage	Guidance and counseling sessions	Improved academic focus
Parent Awareness Program	Encourage home-based monitoring	Parent orientation sessions	Balanced digital engagement

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicate that social media platforms have become important components of contemporary educational environments. Students perceived Facebook/Messenger and TikTok as highly effective tools for communication, collaboration, and academic engagement. These findings support Al-Rahmi et al. (2021), who emphasized that social media platforms enhance collaborative learning, interaction, and knowledge sharing when appropriately integrated into instruction. Similarly, Tang et al. (2022) explained that social media supports active participation and collaborative learning experiences among students within digital learning environments.

The significant relationship between social media utilization and academic performance suggests that educationally guided digital engagement positively contributes to students' learning outcomes. Students who utilized social media for academic collaboration, information retrieval, and multimedia learning demonstrated improved classroom participation and compliance with school requirements. Sharma and Behl (2022) similarly found that social media usage influences students' academic performance through increased communication, interaction, and learner engagement. Furthermore, multimedia learning platforms improve students' understanding and retention of information by combining visual and verbal instructional materials (Mayer, 2021).

The study further revealed that platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Canva, and Google Docs support creativity, communication, and digital competencies among students. UNESCO (2023) emphasized that digital technologies enhance learner participation and accessibility when integrated effectively into educational systems. Likewise, Zhang et al. (2024) noted that multimedia-based educational videos improve student engagement and motivation due to their visually interactive learning approaches.

However, despite these educational benefits, the findings also revealed several negative effects associated with excessive and unregulated social media usage. Students who spent excessive time on entertainment-oriented content experienced difficulty focusing on academic tasks and preparing for examinations. Xu et al. (2022) explained that social media overload contributes to information fatigue, reduced concentration, and lower academic performance among students. Similarly, Yimer (2023) found that excessive social media use negatively affects students' psychosocial well-being and academic achievement.

The findings further highlight the importance of digital literacy instruction, responsible online behavior, and teacher guidance in maximizing the educational benefits of social media. Ribble (2021) emphasized that responsible digital citizenship enables students to utilize technology ethically, safely, and productively. Consequently, schools should strengthen digital literacy programs and classroom interventions that encourage balanced and academically meaningful social media engagement.

Overall, the study demonstrates that social media can serve as a valuable supplementary educational tool when utilized purposefully, strategically, and responsibly

within academic settings. Effective teacher supervision, responsible digital engagement, and structured digital literacy instruction remain essential in ensuring that social media contributes positively to students' academic performance and learning development.

Conclusions

This study concludes that social media platforms significantly influence the academic performance of Grade 9 students at Philsaga High School Foundation Incorporated. Platforms such as Facebook/Messenger and TikTok were perceived as highly effective in facilitating communication, collaboration, creativity, and learner engagement. The findings further established a significant positive relationship between social media utilization and academic performance, indicating that educationally guided social media use contributes positively to learning outcomes. However, excessive and unregulated usage negatively affects students' concentration, time management, and examination performance. The study therefore emphasizes the necessity of structured digital literacy programs, teacher guidance, and responsible social media integration to maximize educational benefits while minimizing distractions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, schools should strengthen digital literacy programs emphasizing responsible and educationally productive social media utilization. Teachers should integrate social media platforms strategically into classroom instruction to enhance collaboration, communication, and learner engagement. Educational institutions should also implement policies regulating excessive social media use and promote time management among students. Parents and guardians are encouraged to monitor learners' online activities and support balanced digital engagement at home. Furthermore, future researchers may explore the long-term effects of social media utilization on students' academic behavior and psychological well-being across different educational contexts.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study complied with established ethical standards in educational research. Prior approval was obtained from school authorities prior to data collection. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from respondents. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained throughout the research process. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Ethical principles of respect, beneficence, and integrity were strictly observed during data gathering, analysis, and interpretation.

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