

# An Assessment on Facebook Engagement of AB Communication Students in Private Universities in Pampanga

Cris M. Balingit

**Abstract—** This study, titled “An Assessment on Facebook Engagement of AB Communication Students in Private Universities in Pampanga”, was conducted to describe the utilization of the respondents and to measure their level of engagement in social networking site in terms of such characteristics as openness, participation, connectedness, conversationality, and commonality. Moreover, this study attempted to correlate the significant difference between the level of engagement in relation with the gender, year level and school.

The objectives were answered through the use of an adopted and modified instruments from foreign studies by Junco (2011) and Olmsted(2013). Results have found that the respondents spend an average of 1-2 hours per day. In terms of respondents’ level of engagement in using Facebook, all factors of engagements fell under in high level. Lastly, the respondents’ engagements in using Facebook have no significant difference in the gender and year level.

**Keywords—**engagement, communication, Facebook, utilization.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Change is inevitable in today’s society. Due to technological advancements, researches, and inventions, many of our activities have changed significantly. In today’s era, even student activities, learning processes and the way the younger generation communicate have seen changes through the birth of social media.

As defined by Pridmore et al . (2013), social media is a subset of new media. It was stated that the function of social media is to allow sharing. The development of social media and its interactive components has made the ability to comment, respond, share, critique, change and add to information possible on a broader scale.

In the Philippines, one of the largest used social networking sites (SNS) is Facebook and it is currently the largest worldwide virtual community with over 1.59 billion active users according to the Statistics Portal (2015).

Many studies have mentioned that social networking site such as Facebook as well as blogs have many interesting features that give learners the tools to share opinions, information and ideas.

Facebook offers attractive means for interaction and communication (Acquisti and Gross, 2006). Facebook is one of

the latest examples of communication technologies that has been widely adopted by students and, consequently, has the potential to become a valuable resource to support their educational communication.

Thus, in this study, the researcher chose three universities in Pampanga offering AB Communication courses, namely, Angeles University Foundation, Holy Angel University and the University of the Assumption. The two universities; Angeles University Foundation and Holy Angel University are located in Angeles City while the University of the Assumption is located in the City of San Fernando. These three catholic universities are known in Pampanga for producing top notchers in different academic fields.

As to their AB Communication Department, the Holy Angel University has the most number of students (342) while Angeles University Foundation has 147 and the University of the Assumption 102.

As communication majors, the respondents were expected to be literate enough in using different media platforms such as SNS, specifically Facebook. Facebook utilization activities and level of engagement of the students were described and measured in order to assess the relationship between the respondents’ Facebook usage and their gender and year level. r.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

This paper is a descriptive, co-relational type of research. The levels of engagement of the respondents were described based on the social media characteristics on the gratification criteria of the social media users. In interpreting the levels of Facebook engagement of the respondents the following arbitrary scale was used:

- 1.00 – 1.74 - very low level of engagement
- 1.75 – 2.50 - moderately high level of engagement
- 2.51 – 3.25 - high level of engagement
- 3.26 – 4.00 - very high level of engagement

In this arbitrary scale, the higher the number it takes the higher the level of engagement of the respondents in using Facebook.

Lastly, in order to measure the relationship between two or more variables and to give indication of how one variable may predict another, the T- test and one way ANOVA were applied.

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These tests determined the significant relationships among the given variables in this study such as the relationship of the dependent and independent variables.

### B. Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher used convenience sampling also known as availability sampling. This sampling technique relied on data collection from the respondents of each school that is conveniently available to participate in answering the questionnaire. The total population of AB Communication students for the three (3) universities is 591. The researcher took the opportunity wherein the respondents were gathered in a seminar. The researcher came up with 93 respondents because this is the least number of respondents in one school. In summary the total number of the respondents is 279. From the 279 respondents, there are 79 males and 200 females. Furthermore, in this study there are 17 students from the first year level, 84 second year students, 87 from the third year level and 91 students from the fourth year level.

### C. Instruments

As said, the researcher adopted and modified the questionnaire developed by Junco, Heiberger et al. (2010) in their research titled "The relationship between frequency of Facebook use, participation in Facebook activities, and student engagement" to describe the utilization activities of the students in using Facebook. This utilization activities measure how frequent the respondents used Facebook. Aside from that, it also determines the reason why students use Facebook.

Moreover, the researcher used the adopted and modified questionnaire developed by Chan, Cho et.al (2013) titled, "User Perceptions of Social Media: A Comparative Study of Perceived Characteristics and User Profiles by Social Media", to answer the objectives number 2 and 3. This is to measure the level of engagement of the respondents in using Facebook and determine the significant differences of the level of engagement in terms of the respondents' gender and year level.

## III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The respondents came from the three universities in Pampanga. The total number of the respondents is 279. In terms of gender, 72% or 200 respondents are female while males represent only 28% or 79. As regards the year level, most of the respondents are fourth year with a total number of 91 or 33% followed by the third year, 87 or 31% and 84 or 30% for the second year and lastly only 17 or 6% of the respondents are first year students.

Based on the Facebook utilization most of the respondents visit the SNS on a daily basis with **84.6%**. Meanwhile, **6.09%** of the respondents visit Facebook three to six times a week and **2.87%** or eight (8) from the respondents spent one to two times per week on Facebook.

On a daily basis, **39.07% or 109** of the respondents spent for 1-2 hours in using Facebook. This was followed by **25.81%** of the respondents who exposed themselves for 3-5 hours and **20.07% or 56** of the respondents who spent less than an hour in

using Facebook. Moreover, there are **15.05%** or **42** respondents who used Facebook for more than five (5) hours a day.

The results on the main reason in using Facebook showed the top reason that the respondents want to be connected or to keep in touch with their friends and family. Rank 2 on the respondents list is to communicate with their classmates or groups mates. The third reason is the sharing of photos, videos and music. The fourth reason, again related to their studies which is to communicate with their academic tutors or lecturers. The last reason is to update friends on current things and events.

For the third objective of the research which is to measure the level of engagement, the results indicate that respondents' engagement is more on the higher level. It was found that in terms of **Commonality** ( $M = 2.93, SD = .69$ ), the respondents perceived that this characteristic makes them satisfied in using Facebook, substantially higher than that of **Connectedness**, ( $M = 2.85, SD = .75$ ), **Openness** ( $M = 2.73, SD = .66$ ), **Conversationality** ( $M = 2.71, SD = .66$ ) and lastly **Participation** ( $M = 2.63, SD = .73$ ). Consistently, the result of the standard deviation shows that the respondents' engagement in using Facebook is ranging from **.66 - .75**. This means the respondents are closely homogenous in terms of their engagement on Facebook.

Lastly for the significant difference of the level of engagement of the respondents in relation with their **gender and year level**, results yielded, in terms of **Openness**, a **p-value of .030** was generated together with the gender, implying that there is significant difference between the level of engagement in terms of Openness and the respondents Gender. It shows that the female is more expressive than male. Data analysis further revealed that gender is not significantly related to Participation, Connectedness, Conversationality and Commonality. Over all, for the level of engagement and the gender of the respondents it was found out that there is no significant relationship of the given variables. Meanwhile, concerning the year level of the respondents, results have shown that there is significant relationship between year level and level of the engagement of the respondents in terms of **connectedness** with a **p-value of .000**. However, respondents year level was not found to be related to other factors of engagement such as openness, participation, conversationality and commonality

## IV. DISCUSSION

Majority of the respondents in this research are female which means that AB Communication course in Pampanga is highly dominated by female. Females are very attracted to the future occupations that the course could afford them upon graduation. Moreso, due to K-12 curriculum, minority of the respondents are in the first year level which means other universities have not admitted first year students as for their preparation in the academic year 2018-2019.

The respondents spend an average of 1-2 hours per day in

using Facebook. Being connected to their loved ones, especially family and friends, is the main reason of the respondents in using Facebook. Aside from that, the respondents also used Facebook as an educational tool for learning. They used Facebook to communicate with their classmates and even their professors to talk about their academic requirements. Moreover, they utilized Facebook to pick up information and knowledge about a course they enrolled in. The other reasons are for entertainment purposes such as playing games, discovering new music, books, films & etc., and finding information about brands and products. This means that the respondents fully maximize the benefits they get from the features of Facebook, from the academic to their entertainment purposes.

In terms of the level of engagement in using Facebook, the results show that the respondents highly engaged themselves in terms of Commonness, Connectedness Openness, Conversationality and Participation. This means the higher the respondents engage in Facebook, the more satisfied they are upon utilizing it.

In general, there is no significant difference between the level of engagement and their gender and year level of the respondents. Meanwhile, it was observed that there is relative significance between openness and the gender of the respondents. This means that female respondents are more expressive and they can easily exchange information compared to males. With regard to the year level and the level of engagement of the students in terms of connectedness, a significant difference was yielded. This means the higher the level of the respondents the less time they spend in using Facebook.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the conclusions derived from the study, the following recommendations are offered:

For the administrators of the university, Facebook is a potential medium to market the whole school. They must take this as an advantage to promote the courses offered by the university knowing the fact that many students now spend more time in accessing Facebook. They must emphasize that AB Communication Course is not only for females but it should be equally represented by both genders.

For the students who spend more than five hours in using Facebook, it would be beneficial to minimize exposure to this SNS so as not to have a negative effect or take a toll on their studies. Since Facebook is the most used social networking site by college students, this is an opportunity for the teachers to help students use Facebook in responsible ways that are beneficial to their respective courses. Teachers may use Facebook as an educational tool for learning. However, they must familiarize themselves with Facebook in a way that may help the students in their enrolled courses.

Since the students are highly engaged in using Facebook, they should exhibit the proper knowledge in engaging themselves with the different activities in Facebook. Since it is

considered to be a public entity and if they are not aware of its privacy settings they should learn about the to guard their privacy

The students, especially the girls should not always express everything they see and feel on the sites because this could expose them to criticisms and judgment of the other people in the web. The students especially those in the lower levels, should be conscious of the time they spend in engaging in the said site for them to be aware of the time spent and learn how to manage their time for other things. The school or the institution where the students belong should conduct activities such as forums and seminars that will instill in the students the possible things to happen as they engage themselves in social media.

Future research is needed on Facebook use in higher education and future college students. As Facebook is the most utilized SNS by college students, further research should be conducted on the students' perception about the use of Facebook by their instructors for academic purposes and class related matters. The instructors should learn how they can intensively use Facebook as an educational tool for learning vis-à-vis on the academic performance of the students. They may use Facebook in providing lectures or resources on the subject matter discussed every meeting. They may encourage the students to participate in online discussions. The instructors may use Facebook also as a communication tool to remind students of important dates and events associated with their academic degree. Also, future researchers may continue this study in determining the gratification of the Facebook users.

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