

Determining the Benefits of Using Profanity in Expressing Emotions of Grade 12 Students in FCIC

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Abstract—A person who uses profane words no matter the intention will be given a negative image. This research though was not carried out to shed light on this matter but to investigate on the benefits to the users and whether they've been influenced by their own kin or in the community to engage in such mannerism, and if it truly tolerates pain. This descriptive analytical study was conducted among Grade 12 students in FCIC, comprised of 15 female and 15 male students. Data were collected with the use of a validated questionnaire. The study found that profanity benefits its user in expressing emotions, tolerating with pain and communicating the emotional responses effectively. Most common influences found were peers/friends and social media. Both genders were found to use profanity equally in verbal or non-verbal. However, females uses profanity privately more than males. These findings suggest that there is more to profanity that it gives benefits to the user and that we should free ourselves from stereotypes.

Keywords—Profanity, Negative Image, stereotypes, emotional, social.

I. INTRODUCTION

Profanity, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is “an offensive word” or “offensive language”, strong language, coarse language, foul language, bad words, vulgar words, cursing, cussing and the likes. This language is considered to be impolite, rude or offensive.

The term “profane” originates from classical Latin “profanus” literally “before (outside) the temple”. It carried the meaning of either insulting what is holy or treating something with an irreligious purpose as early as 1450s CE. Profanity presented irreligious indifference to religion or religious figures, while blasphemy was a more offensive attack, and a direct violation to the Ten Commandments, many Bible verse speak against swearing.

Like any powerful tool, profanity words can be used for constructive or destructive purposes. The utterance of a single profane word can convey the state of a person whether they are

Manuscript received October 25, 2017. This research paper is in partial fulfillment of the requirements in Practical Research 2 presented to the Faculty of Basic Education- Senior High School Department (SHS) of Franciscan College of the Immaculate Conception in Baybay City, Leyte Philippines

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angry, upset, excited, surprised or aroused and it also convey the intensity of that state (Bergen, 2016).

The researchers of this study intend to know what are the common influences of Grade 12 Senior high school students that makes them use profane words and to determine which gender practices more profanity. In addition, we would like to also distinguish the benefits of the said mannerism to the emotional and social stability of the students. Based on shallow perception, the researchers were able to come up with two ideas concerning this phenomenon: (1) that the common influences of this mannerism can be found at home and in the community and (2) that those who practice profanity are less likely to become depressed stating the hypothesis that through swearing it can relieve pain. However, these hypotheses are yet to be proven correct.

This research aimed to determine: (1) the two most factors that influence the practice of profanity by the students, (2) the top three beneficial effects of using profane words in regards to the emotional and social well-being of the students; and (3) which gender is most likely to practice this type of act

This research study will also provide adequate information needed by the reader(s) concerning the influences and reasons that are behind this mannerism. As well as, to heightened the consciousness on the benefit of using profane words in expressing emotions towards the Grade 12 Senior High students in FCIC. Moreover, to make a contribution to the emotional and social discussion on the said study.

This study was conducted in the Grade 12 Senior high school department of the Franciscan College of the Immaculate Conception. The population of this study included 5 students per strand. Thus, there were 30 respondents to be interviewed.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Functions of Swearing

Catharsis or expressing negative emotions may lead to lessened tension and refrain a person from putting up a fight or being aggressive according to Rassin & Muris (2005). From the research of Jay et al (2009), students have experienced a feeling of stress relief after swearing excessively. According to Montagu (1967), swearing out of annoyance and frustration is more likely to occur when an individual feels extremely stressed (Baruch & Jenkins, 2007).

When a person feels extremely stressed and frustrated, he can avoid physical aggression by swearing and by avoiding physical aggression, he can also avoid consequences brought by it. Stephens, Atkins, and Kingston (2009) found out that the students can tolerate more pain using swear words than using neutral words.

B. Approaches To (Im)Politeness

Most people who are engage in this behavior are often get into trouble, because sometimes it's not just the words itself utter by the speaker is the issue but the way the hearers perceive the word. The pressure and threats the utterance carries to the hearer. (Bousfield, 2010).

Based on what Culpeper and Brown said, we cannot control each other's actions towards each other and we cannot predict each other's intentions but as interlocutors and interactants we must always work on respecting each other's' mindsets, viewpoints and having only polite intentions to pursue better understanding and to pursue a better way of approaching with politeness.

TABLE I:

FREQUENCY OF USING PROFANITY BY GRADE 12 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FCIC

Gender	Verbal	Non-Verbal	In Secret
Male	6.67%	20%	13.33%
Female	6.67%	20%	26.67%

C. Effect of Profanity in Social Conditions

If an excessive swearer is in a culture wherein swearing is prohibited, this will lead to the Johnson and Lewis' 'expectancy-violations explanation,' in which the individuals who swear are perceived negatively. Thus, swearing negatively affect that person's social status and how other people look up to him as a person. And by nature, we strived to be accepted that is why we try our best to prohibit ourselves from swearing.

D. Gender Usage of Profanity

According to Jay et al., (2006), men swear more than women and men learn swear words earlier than women (Johnson & Lewis, 2010). Thus, men know more swear words and use more swear words (Jay, 2000). According to Johnson & Lewis (2010), women are reported to swear less than men and consider using swear words on newspapers or in televisions as less appropriate.

III. METHODOLOGY

This part discusses about the participants, research design, instruments and research procedure.

A. Research Participants

This study, "Determining the Benefits of Using Profanity in Expressing Emotions of Grade 12 Students in

FCIC" was conducted in Franciscan College of the Immaculate Conception Inc., Grade 12 Senior High School department. The population of this study included Grade 12 students. There were 5 respondents per strand— a total of 30 respondents.

B. Research Design

This study is in a form of descriptive research design because our study is concerned with investigating the cause of why students practice profanity. Also it deals with measuring and describing the factors that cause this phenomena as well as the benefits of profanity in terms of emotional and social stability.

C. Research Instrument

The questionnaire used by the researchers in gathering adequate information in regards to answering the objectives of this study was adapted from the paper entitled "The Relationship between Profanity and Honesty" by (Feldman, n.d.).

D. Research Procedure

First, the researchers gathered the data by approaching and asking permission from the Grade 12 students who practice profanity. Next, the researchers gave the adapted questionnaire to the respondents and let them answer it. After testing the questionnaire, the data was gathered and had undergone data analysis.

E. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by the researchers through the use of tables to clearly understand the data gathered. Simple statistical tool such as percentages was used when interpreting the data from the tables. The percent rate is equal to the amount of respondents over the total population.

TABLE II:

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE GRADE 12 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN USING PROFANITY

Parents	Peers	Relatives	Neighbors	Social Media
6.67%	96.67%	13.33%	33.33%	43.33%

$$\text{percentage rate} = \frac{\text{number of responses}}{\text{total population}} \times 100$$

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the discussion and interpretation of the data gathered is presented.

After the conduct of the adapted questionnaire, data were gathered obtaining and showing the following results.

Table I shows the frequency of using profanity by Grade 12 Senior High School students. According to Jay et al., (2006), men swear more than women and men learn swear words earlier than women but this research doesn't coincide with this conclusion because in terms of using profanity verbally, 6.67% of the 2 genders uses profanity too often.

In using profanity non-verbally, 20% of both male and female uses profanity too often and in using profanity secretly, only 13.33% of the males use it too often and for the females, 26.67% of them uses profanity too often surprisingly, which leads to the contradiction of what Johnson and Lewis said that women are reported to swear less than men. This suggests that stereotyping between men and women should be avoided because as what the result has shown, women are found to be using profanity more

than men and gender should not be used as a basis to validate someone to use profanity.

Table II shows the factors that influences a person to use profanity. It is believed that a child solely acquire his behavior and attitude because it is in home where a child learns his firsts but according to our research, only 6.67% of the students said that parents were the ones who influenced them. Ironically, 96.67% of them said peers/friends where majority of a child's time is being spent with, 13.33% of them said relatives. This includes his/her cousins that could also influence a child to adopt the mannerism. 33.33% of them said neighbors where a child is prone to be influenced by the attitude of the people around him and 43.33% of them pointed out that social media, which most of all the people are being exposed upon.

Table III reveals the top 3 benefits of using profanity: (1) Profanity allows us to express anger, disgust or pain, or indicate to someone that they need to back off without having to resort to physical violence.

TABLE III:
BENEFICIAL EFFECT OF PROFANITY TO GRADE 12 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FCIC

Benefits	Mean	Ranking
Profanity allows us to express anger, disgust or pain, or indicate to someone that they need to back off without having to resort to physical violence.	2.97	1 st
Profanity helps us to communicate effectively in stating our emotional response to something.	2.47	3 rd
Swearing can increase tolerance to pain.	2.57	2 nd

According to Rassin & Muris (2005), this effect is said to be one of the top reason why most people swear. sAs a human being, it is our nature to find an outlet to at least vent our negative emotions that can also prevent us from resorting to physical violence and using profanity is the most convenient way to opt to. (2) Swearing can increase tolerance to pain. This coincides with what Stephens, Atkins, and Kingston (2009) conclusion that the students can tolerate more pain using swear words than using neutral words. A person using profanity may experience personal problems and he finds profanity to be a machine that can increase pain tolerance or at least minimize the impact of the pain towards the user, and (3) Profanity helps us to communicate effectively in stating our emotional response to something. This helps in enabling the speaker to impart his thoughts or response towards something and in order also for the listeners to determine the intensity the speaker is feeling.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Conclusion

The study reveals that there are reasons as to why people uses profane words. First is because they are able to effectively express their emotions without resorting to physical violence. Second, they use profanity in order to increase tolerance in pain. Third, through profanity they can effectively communicate in stating their emotional response to something. The common notion in this world is that men are most likely to be caught using profane words. However, this research proves this notion

wrong. In terms of using profane words verbally and non-verbally, men and women stands the same. But when in secret, the women are more likely to use profane words. Lastly, the common factors that people may think of in terms of influences that cause this mannerism are the friends/peers but the results say that the exposure of Social Media had also greatly affected the spread of using profane words next to friends/peers.

B. Recommendation

The researchers recommend the following:

- People who uses profanity should never be judged right away because we never know the reasons how they were able to adapt this mannerism.
- There is a need to break the stereotype. It doesn't mean that if a person is a male, then he is qualified to curse or use bad words and just because a person is a female, then she can't use profanity because it violates the feminine code.
- Another study that will focus more on the disadvantages or non-beneficial effects of using profanity with regards to the emotional and social status of young people.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to our Almighty God who give us all the energy, knowledge, time, safety and guidance needed for carrying out of our research. The success of this research only lies in Your Mighty hands and power, Lord. This is all for You.

To Mr. Dominic Libres who was always there for us, guiding us all the way in creating this research paper.

To our Research Adviser, Ms. Catherine Villamor for allotting her time in reviewing the errors made in our manuscript and for giving us corrections that made this research paper possible.

Credits also to Ms. Leandra Margrett Paderes, where we got the inspiration of having profanity as our topic.

To Mr. Elpedio Vesera for serving as our pillar of knowledge because through him, we were introduced about research.

To our parents, who were very supportive financially, morally and academically.

And to our respondents who are very considerate in dedicating their small amount of time in answering our given questionnaires and contributed greatly in completing this research.

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