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# Social Media Use and Self-Esteem of First-Generation Secondary Students

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*Abstract* — The study addressed the following objectives: to describe the social media use of first-generation secondary students, to determine the respondents' level of self-esteem, and to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' social media use and level of self-esteem. In this study, descriptive research design was employed through the use of the correlational method in order to address the primary aim of understanding the relationship between and among the variables of the study. Initially, the study took the descriptive aspect through survey method in order to collect information on respondents' level of social media use and their level of self-esteem. Finally, it advanced to the correlation aspect in order to identify if significant relationship exist among the variables. The study considered first-generation secondary students from Nena National High School and San Julian National High School in the Division of Eastern Samar which is composed of eighty (80) students in all, forty from each school. Therefore, total enumeration was utilized to facilitate easy access with the respondents of this study. The researcher utilized an adapted survey questionnaire Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ) by Gupta and Bashir (2018) to collect data relative to the first research question. Meanwhile, in order for the researcher to gather data in response to research question 2, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale questionnaire, a four-point scale, was used to showcase the level of student's self-esteem. In addition, mean and standard deviation were employed to describe the data, whereas, Spearman's rank correlation was utilized to determine the significant relationship between variables. In terms of findings, it was revealed that there was a high to very high level of social media use among the first-generation secondary students. It was also found out that the first-generation students exhibited "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" levels of self-esteem. Lastly, it was discovered that there was a significant relationship between students' level of social media use and level of self-esteem.

*Keywords — Social Media Use, Self-Esteem, First-Generation Secondary Students*

## I. Introduction

The current generation of learners are vastly exposed to social media, even considering it to be a primary need for others who miss to fulfill their basic needs because they are busily immersed in the world of social media. On the other hand, it is imperative to know that social media has a direct effect on a person's self-esteem, whether good or bad. Nevertheless, there

should limitations that a person has to personally establish to mitigate its the negative effects, while making most of the positive outcomes.

As defined by Verduyn, et al. (2019), active social media usage refers to online behaviors that facilitate "direct exchanges" among users. Such behaviors include liking, commenting, sending messages and otherwise engaging with other users. Social media are an online platform that brings people together to communicate in sharing ideas, interest and finding a new friend while Self-esteem is the evaluation of an individual with regards to themselves. It expresses an attitude of approval to one's self. Simply, self-esteem is the way an individual, thinks and views their selves if they are competent and confident enough. The recent phenomenon that is reshaping the world-wide accessibility to the internet. Teenagers mostly access these sites, not just to communicate but also to share and gain ideas. It has been observed that most of the students nowadays particularly among senior high school learners in San Julian District where the researchers shall conduct the study, tend to see posts, trends, and shared posts from other personalities, which they can gain inspiration or aversion towards themselves from, leading to self-evaluation where students assess their capabilities and keep comparing themselves to others. In this way, self-esteem can either be affected or not by their exposure to social media contents and all sorts of information.

In the study of "Psychology of Popular Media Culture", there was a review of a sample of roughly 50,000 understudies from the eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades, representing more than 1 million young people. It was discovered that in mid-2010, the normal twelfth grader, went through around two hours per day messaging, two hours every day on social media, and two hours daily, in surfing the web (Paul, 2020). To summarize it, adolescents go through six hours per day on the web. Worldwide web clients on average, spent about 136 minutes or 2 hours and 16 minutes out of each day surfing the internet (Clement, 2019). Rather than reading books, magazines, papers, and other printed media, young people go through their spare time in looking over spending their time on social media. Facebook is the most common social media platform that people used nowadays. It has more than 42 million users in Turkey, of which 83% were mobile users in August 2019 (Gemius Turkey Research, 2020). Twitter is a platform that allows its registered users to share short comments called "tweets." Users also can share photos and videos with their followers. Thirteen million Twitter accounts exist in Turkey; 91% of these users use Twitter on mobile devices. Instagram is photo-sharing platform that allows registered users to take, share, and comment on photos. Instagram has 22 million users in Turkey, all of whom are mobile users (Gemius Turkey Research, 2021). These platforms are familiar to most people, as their subscribers are constantly increasing. In today's world, the fact that billions of people visit social media on a regular basis is normal behavior. However, researchers have recognized that the use of social media can transform these normal behaviors into behavioral patterns that are pathological and compulsive.

Scrolling up and down on social media may trigger a comparison to one's life and daily activities. Teenagers sometimes overthink what they have seen or imagine themselves as the person on the posted photo. This leads to self-evaluation among themselves as well as other people dependent on social classes, social jobs, excellence, prevalence, wealth accumulation, and other social capacities (Festinger, 2019). In previous studies researchers were more focused on certain social media platforms like Facebook and if it correlates to social-capital or self-esteem. This study aims to investigate the relationship between social media usage and self-esteem among Senior High School Students. There are studies found to be linked with the present study in which the researchers found gaps which constituted to the primary reasons why there is a need to further conduct the same investigation using different conditions such as population and methodology.

**Statement of the Problem**

This study investigated the significant relationship between social media use and self-esteem among fist-generation secondary students. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the social media use of fist generation secondary students?

2. What is the level of self-esteem among senior high school students?

3. Is there a significant relationship between social media usage and self-esteem among senior high school students?

**Scope and Delimitation**

The study was conducted to obtain necessary information pertaining to the respondents' level of social media use and self-esteem. With the use of Spearman's rank correlation, the relationship between the variables was likewise tested. This study was conducted among firs-generation secondary students in San Julian District, composed of Nena National High School and San Julian National School, for School Year 2024-2025.

**Significance of the Study**

The results of the study can assist them with being progressively mindful of long-range interpersonal communication locales and how it influences their confidence. They will realize how to utilize internet- based life appropriately and they can know its effects on their daily lives. Meanwhile, teachers will benefit from this study in understanding better on how they can assist or provide guidance to the students to be more knowledgeable about social media usage and how it affects their performance in school or their self-esteem. Furthermore, the outcome od this research will enable parents to understand that their children, for the most part, depend via web-based social media. It will help them in guiding their children by means of giving restrictions or control on their access to social media. Lastly, this study will also serve as a material or reference for a future

research for a possibility that researchers shall have the interest in determining the other aspects of social media use as a factor for any academic undertaking.

## II. Methodology

### Research Design

The study employed correlational research which refers to a type of study in which information is collected without making any changes to the study subject (Cristobal & Cruz-Cristobal, 2017). However, by using descriptive correlational design, the researchers were able to determine the relationship between level of social media use and degree of self-esteem.

### Sampling Technique

Total enumeration sampling technique was employed in this study to ensure that all first-generation secondary learners in San Julian District were selected as respondents. A total of 80 students were chosen, deemed appropriate sample size from a population composed of 1000 learners.

### Locale of Study

The study was conducted at the two public secondary schools in San Julian District (Nena National High School and San Julian National School), which are the only institutions which offer complete high school (from Junior to Senior High School). The locale constitutes vast first-generation student-population who are the main target of the study.

### Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 80 first-generation secondary learners from the two public secondary schools in San Julian District, which offers senior high school (San Julian National High School and Nena National High School.

### Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is Social Networking Usage Questionnaire (SNUQ) by Gupta and Bashir (2018), which has a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire to measure the level of social networking sites usage of the respondents. Meanwhile, Rosenberg Self -Esteem Scale questionnaire, a four-point scale, was used to showcase the level of student's self-esteem.

### Data Analysis Method

Median and interquartile-range were used to describe students' social media use and self-esteem. On the other hand, to investigate the significant relationship between said variables, Spearman's rank correlation was employed.

# III. Results and Discussion

Table 1. The respondents' profile on social media use

| Statement | Median | IQR | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Domain 1: Academic** | | | |
| *I use social networking sites for/to…* | | | |
| Research | 4.25 | 1.22 | Very High |
| on-line academic discussion | 4.30 | 1.32 | Very High |
| preparation of exam | 4.33 | 1.15 | Very High |
| collaborative learning | 4.20 | 1.05 | Very High |
| learn about my curricula aspect | 4.22 | 0.76 | Very High |
| seek help from my teachers | 4.23 | 0.78 | Very High |
| **Domain 2: Socialization** | | | |
| *I use social networking sites for/to…* | | | |
| Become more sociable | 3.20 | 1.00 | High |
| Create my social identity | 3.00 | 1.50 | High |
| Attend social gathering | 3.15 | 1.25 | High |
| Strengthening interpersonal relationships | 3.19 | 1.30 | High |
| Keep in touch with my relatives | 3.20 | 0.89 | High |
| Get information regarding current social events | 3.18 | 0.90 | High |
| **Domain 4: Informativeness** | | | |
| *I use social networking site for/to…* | | | |
| reading news | 4.26 | 1.00 | Very High |
| share new ideas | 5.00 | 1.00 | Very High |
| getting jobs-related information | 4.39 | 1.50 | Very High |

As shown in the table, the respondents exhibited a very high level of social media use, in terms of academic purposes, as they constituted median results from 4.20 to 4.30, with the values of interquartile ranging which covers from 0.76 t0 1.72. Meanwhile, there had been a high level of social media use among them, in terms of socialization, as emphasized by the median values which stretches from 3.00 to 3.20, supported by the IQR result from 0.89 to 1.50. However, in terms of informativeness aspect of social media use, the respondents exhibited outstanding results as reflected in the following values, median=4.26 to 5.00, IQR=1.00 to 1.50.

It is worthy to note that there is high to very high level of social media among the respondents, which is attributed to the accessibility of social media and its importance as source of information, enabling learners for vast chance to obtain information, explore, and socialize.

This corroborates with the findings of the study conducted by Fukuya (2021), which underscores about the intense to highly intense degree of social media use among high school learners.

Table 2: Respondents' profile in terms of self-esteem

| Statement | Frequency | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SA | A | D | SD | Median | Interpretation |
| 1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on equal plane with others. | 56 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | Strongly Agree |
| 2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. | 58 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | Strongly Agree |
| 3. I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. | 0 | 0 | 28 | 52 | 1.50 | Strongly Disagree |
| 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. | 59 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | Strongly Agree |
| 5. I do not have much to be proud of. | 0 | 0 | 26 | 54 | 1.50 | Strongly Disagree |
| 6. I take positive attitude towards myself. | 50 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 3.75 | Strongly Agree |
| 7. On the while, I am satisfied with myself. | 49 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | Agree |
| 8. I certainly feel useless at times. | 0 | 5 | 50 | 25 | 2.00 | Disagree |
| 9. I wish I had more respect for myself. | 30 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 3.50 | Agree |
| 10. At times, I feel I am no good at all. | 20 | 30 | 30 | 0 | 3.00 | Agree |

It can be noted from the above data that the respondents have strongly agreed with statements 1, 2, 4, & 5 (*I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on equal lane with others, I feel that I have a number of good qualities, I am able to do things as we as most other people, and I take positive attitude towards myself*), earning median values from 3.50 to 3.75. Meanwhile, the students have agreed on statements 7, 9 & 10 (*On the while, I am satisfied with myself, I wish I had more respect for myself, and At times, I feel I am no good at all*), with the median value ranging from 3.00 to 3.50. However, they disagreed with the statement, *I certainly feel useless at times*, with the media equal to 2.00. Lastly, the same group of students were observed to strongly disagree with the statements: *I am inclined to feel that I am a failure and I do not have much to be proud of.*

In general, the students have varied levels of agreement to indicators that specify self-esteem. As results indicate, the respondents corresponded on the statements with strong disagreement, disagreement, agreement, and strong agreement, which can be attributed to several factors that shape their perspectives on how they value their worth as a person. As tackled in the study of Javier (2020), students' view about their strengths and weaknesses are influenced by personal, environmental, emotional, and social factors.

| Variables | | r-value | p-value | Decision | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social Media Use | Self-Esteem | .556 | .000 | Reject Null | Significant |

Spearman's rank correlation was employed to determine of there is a significant relationship between students' level of social media use and self-esteem. However, it was initially hypothesized that there was no significant relationship existing between said variables. Meanwhile, after the test was done, it was found out that there is a significant relationship between them, considering the correlation coefficient equal to .556, coupled with the significance level at .000. Thus, this investigation rejects the null hypothesis.

This result is indicative that social media exposure or use plays a crucial role on students' self-esteem. In comparison, Ramos (2019) asserted that social technology or communication platforms is associated with a person' self-esteem.

## IV. Conclusion

Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusion are made:

1. There is a high to very high level of social media use among the first-generation secondary students.

2. The first-generation students exhibited "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" levels of self-esteem.

3. There is a significant relationship between students' level of social media use and level of self-esteem.

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