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Facebook Engagement Among Philippine Junior High Students: Stimulating Connectedness in the New Normal

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ABSTRACT

Given the prevalence of social media among young millennial learners, this study was conducted to see how teacher-student connectivity via Facebook influences student engagement in junior high school.Student engagement , which is critical to a student's academic achievement, is influenced by a variety of factors, including the typical teacher-student relationship.The two hundred fifty-three (253) students were surveyed using Student Engagement in Schools Questionnaire (SESQ) that examined the extent of their interest, involvement, and drive to succeed in the class, particularly in the class of their teachers who were their Facebook friends. Twenty-two (22) teachers were polled using a self-report questionnaire. Five of them were chosen at random for an interview on their Facebook interactions with students and their views on such connections. Correlational method was used. The findings imply that when teachers use Facebook to develop a social connection with junior high school students, even if the link is simple and routine, it has a significant impact on the students' affective, behavioral, cognitive, and academic involvement in the classroom.

Keywords: Student Engagement, Teacher-student Connectedness, Facebook, New Normal

INTRODUCTION

Dropout and failure-rates among Filipino students are still prevalent throughout the Philippines. If one looks closely inside every classroom, one may observe that low class engagement, involvement, and motivation are the most common causes of such problems. High school teachers are still grappling with how to cope with disengaged students, who are uninterested, reluctant to participate in class activities, neglect assignments, and have poor attendance, all of which lead to poor academic achievement.

While numerous elements influence a student's educational progress, student engagement has been demonstrated to be particularly important. A lot of recent studies have looked into a variety of elements that influence students' engagement. They discovered that in order to improve

student engagement, educators must cultivate relationships with their students. However, the term "student engagement" is not new. It all began with Vygotsky's student engagement theory, which emphasizes the importance of the environment in learning. It uses a basic grasp of the environment as a major external stimulus that has an impact on students' behavior. According to this hypothesis, increasing student participation in the classroom leads to improved educational outcomes.

Nowadays, with the advancement of technology, social media, notably Facebook, is employed in a variety of educational contexts. Teachers' social media presence makes them appear more friendly and relatable to students, making them feel more at ease in the classroom and causing them to respond positively to everyday educational activities. It is reported that students perceive a teacher's use of it as an attempt to foster positive relationships with his or her students, and encourage positive classroom engagement (Mahmud, M.M., et.al, 2016).

Hence, the purpose of this research is to look into how junior high school teachers use Facebook to engage with their pupils and how that affects their interest, conduct, and reactions to everyday educational activities. The study specifically looked on teachers' use of Facebook to connect with junior high school students. It also looked into the affective, behavioral, cognitive, and academic effects of students who use Facebook to communicate with their teachers.

Furthermore, student engagement is compose of four different but interconnected domains: affective, behavioral, cognitive and academic domains as proposed by Christenson et al(2012) in their various studies in the years 2002, 2006 and 2008 .Affective engagement refers to students' affection and emotion towards school, such as interest, boredom, or anxiety (Shernoff, et.al, 2015). It is also called as emotional engagement. Behavioral engagement refers to the learners' involvement in different learning activities. For Skinner & Kindermann (2015) behavioral engagement includes effort exertion and persistence.Cognitive engagement, as the third domain of student engagement involves aspects such as willingness and thoughtfulness to expend the effort required to understand and master difficult tasks with the use of appropriate learning strategies, etc. (Alrashidi, Phan & Ngu, 2015).Moreover, in 2018, Ben-Eliyahu and his colleagues refer cognitive engagement as the extent to which one is thinking about the learning activity, or attending and focusing on the task.Academic engagement, the fourth dimension of student engagement, as proposed by Appleton, et.al. (2008) is reflected by indicators such as time on tasks, homework completion, goal orientation and accumulation of credit.

Different experts have come to similar conclusions on the importance of student involvement in students' academic progress, and student engagement can be influenced by a variety of circumstances. And, as many prior studies have shown, teacher-student connection is a major factor in student engagement. As a corollary, this study looked at how junior high school students

connectedness with their teachers using Facebook have influenced their engagement in the class.

Review of Literature

1. Teacher-Student Connectedness

Educators are expected to adjust to the specific characteristics of this generation's students when dealing with them. One characteristic that today's youth has is a desire to be connected to others. "Social acceptance and social connectedness were significant on adolescents' wellbeing" (Arslan, 2018). Many researchers agree on this, taking account on the prevalence of social media use among the young millennials. The relationship with their professors is one social link that young millennials regard as extremely important. Such need was shown in the result of the study by LoCasale-Crouch, et.al. (2018) that tells, "when students had classroom experiences with teachers who showed greater sensitivity, responsiveness, predictability and emotional warmth in their interactions, students reported greater motivation, were observed as more engaged, had more teacher-reported closeness and less conflict, and performed at higher levels academically."

In the study of Al-rahmie, et.al. (2014), young millennials' interactivity with peers and with their teachers, as well as their engagement in the class altogether contribute to improve students' academic performance. Moreover, the result of this study highlights the students' interactivity with peers having the highest percentage contributing to improve students' academic performance. Their interactivity with teachers must have helped enhanced teaching and learning experience though.

Such like the results in Mahmud's research (2016), uncovering students' perception regarding their instructors being active on social media. A significant number of respondents agreed that their impressions and perceptions of their teachers determined how well they perform in the subject itself. Results reveal that teachers who are active on social media are perceived as being more akin to a "real person", instead of a mere source of knowledge and information.

2. Facebook and the Millennials

Social media is accessible to mostly everyone, at any time at any place. (Jankauskate, 2015). Sarapin and Moris (2015) say that students' use of Facebook is primarily for socializing. It provides venues for offering real-time peer affirmation where people convey their support for friends through "liking", commenting, sharing friends' post and many others (James, et. al., 2017).

Social media is also playing a big role in boosting academic fields like in social sciences. Many studies have addressed different aspects of using social media at various academic and social levels. Taken together the results of previous studies, it can be affirmed that social media can open an

avenue for educators to reach out the youth and establish rapport as Jankauskate (2015) also asserted that social media can be used for improving teaching and learning experience.

Since this generation was born into a world where technology is ever-present. Students now are digitally literate. They will never know a world without smartphones and computers (Philips & Trainor, 2014). Salazar (2016) says that they are constantly connected through mobile technology and social media, and are used to instant access to information. The literature on millennials uniformly suggests that as educators we must understand this new generation of learners in order to educate them effectively. It has become increasingly clear that this unique generation of students requires and expects a different approach to learning.

In 2020, there were nearly 76 million Facebook users in the Philippines. The number of Facebook users in the country was forecast to decline in the succeeding years, with an estimated figure of 69.6 million in 2026(Statista Research Department, 2020).

3. Student Engagement

Student engagement, which refers to the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and academic aspects (Appleton et al., 2008) is affected by various influential factors as what many previous researches corroborate.

In a number of studies, student engagement is viewed to be one of the vital indicators in the educational success of the individual student. In their study, the definition for class engagement was operationalized to demonstrate how "engaged" students are specifically in the classroom. The attributes of their engagement were gauged on their responses - how interested, involved, and inquisitive they are in the classroom.

According to Humber, (2018) the process of collaborating with their teacher and classmates makes learning more engaging for students, thus making them more interested in what they are learning. Similarly, Abubakar & Dimitrova (2016) have observed during their study that social connectedness contributes to positive youth development. In a study that included Roma adolescents from an ethnic minority group in Europe, connectedness has a direct association with school engagement and life satisfaction. The study also showed that familial connectedness is an additional factor and may of great relevance that enhances school engagement especially in a society with strong family-oriented cultural values.

RESEARCH METHOD

Respondents

There were 25 teacher-respondents who were selected purposively for this study. They were those which the students identified to be on their Facebook (Fb) friends' lists. However, only 22

of them had completed the survey. The other 3 teachers were attending a meeting on the day the survey was conducted. The teacher participants were teaching different learning areas and grade levels respectively. The researcher chose five of them through simple random sampling to participate in the interview.From the total population of eligible participating students, a percentage of them was sampled as the final student-respondents for this study. When the final 258 respondents had been determined through Slovin's formula, the researcher then used simple random sampling to get the final names of participating students. On the actual survey, only 253 student-respondents were able to participate. The other five students were absent. On the same day, the SESQ was administered to a sample of 253 pupils. The students who agreed to participate in this research were required to fill out a consent/assent form.

Instruments

To get the data regarding how teachers connect with their students via Facebook, a questionnaire was administered to every teacher-respondent. The questionnaire consisted 20 items that were statements of different activities done on Facebook. There were five items for each Fb activity conceptualized in this study. The statements were examined and validated by a panel of experts to ensure that they would contain the necessary and accurate information to be able to get the data needed.

A face-to-face interview with the teachers was also done. The interview utilized a set of pre-determined questions that were adapted from Plew's (2011) survey questions on college/university faculty use of Facebook.

In order to understand the variable on student engagement, student-participants were asked to rate how frequent they perceived, felt and did the statements on a five-point scale, with 1 being "never", 2 being "rarely", 3 being "sometimes", 4 being "most of the time" and 5 being "always". The questionnaire was a Student Engagement in Schools Questionnaire or SESQ. Scholars from more than 19 countries collaborated in the development of the SESQ. This was a 109-item, paper-and-pencil, Likert-type, self-report questionnaire focused on the comprehensive assessment of the construct of student engagement. The SESQ used in this current study was modified to better serve its purpose. The items representing only the indicators of engagement (i.e., Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive) were included. For the academic domain, questions from The Academic Self-Efficacy, Achievement Motivation, and Engagement (AME) Online Survey was adapted.

Procedures

After accomplishing the preliminaries such as seeking endorsement from the Division Superintendent of the Department of Education (DepEd) Pagadian City and asking consent from the school principal. The process was completed in four days. Two days for the survey and another 2 days for the interview. On the first day of the survey, the researcher went from room to room, seeking for qualified student-respondents. Those students who had the said requisite were asked to write on a piece of paper their names, grade levels and the name of their teachers who were their Fb friends. The following day, all the 25 teachers identified by the students were surveyed through a questionnaire. However, 3 teachers refused to participate in the survey due to a meeting they were attending that time. Simultaneously, the 258 sample of students were surveyed with the SESQ that day. They were oriented on how to answer the questionnaire including the meaning of some unfamiliar words. Five students didn't participate in the survey for being absent from school.

Data analysis

Using IBM-SPSS software, the gathered data on teacher-student connectedness via Facebook was calculated, analyzed and interpreted with a statistician. Teachers' responses on the 20-item survey questionnaire were categorized according to Fb activities. Four Facebook activities were identified in this research wherewith, each activity had 5 statements. For every statement, the number of responses under each response rating was calculated to get the percentage and the mean rating.

The summaries of these data were presented in tables. The first-hand information gotten from the interview with the teachers, however, wasn't interpreted using any statistical procedure. They were used to make triangulations with the results found in the survey.

The students' responses for Student Engagement Survey Questionnaire were treated with the same statistical process. The raw data was calculated to get the percentage and the mean rating. For this variable, the responses were also summarized into four according to the domain of student engagement conceptualized in this research.Moreover, Pearson's correlation was used to analyse the relationship between the two variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

How do Teachers Use Facebook in Establishing Connections with Junior High School Students?

The teacher-participats, however mundane their Facebook interactions with their students may have been, have had a psychological impact on the students by fostering in them the sense

that they are being recognized. In general, students in the current study felt a sense of social belonging and contribution as a result of the virtual connections they experienced with their teachers.

Table 1. *Teacher-Student Connectedness via Facebook (Being on the Friends' List)*

Item	Response Rating					Mean Rating	Description
	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ I open and check my Facebook account.	-	2 (9.1%)	2 (9.1%)	12 (54.5%	6 (27.3 %	4.00	*Most of the Time*
2/ I send friend request to students.	11 (50%)	6 (27.3%)	3 (13.6%)	2 (9.1%)	-	1.82	Never
3/ I accept/confirm friend request from students.	-	5 (22.75)	8 (36.4%)	7 (31.8%)	2 (9.1%)	3.27	Always
4/ I notice students on Facebook	-	5 (22.7%)	5 (22.7%)	9 (40.9%)	3 (13.6 %)	4.45	*Most of the Time*
5/ I'm not interested about connecting with students through Facebook.	3 (13.6%	5 (22.7%)	12 (54.5%)	-	2 (9.1%)	2.68	Some times
					Grand Mean	3.24	Sometimes

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely : 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Results revealed that eighteen out of twenty-two teacher-participants were on Facebook most of the time which implied that teachers spent a considerable amount of time being on-line, on Facebook.When it comes to sending friend request to students, eleven teacher-participants said that they never do such request. Six teacher-participants admitted to do it rarely while three of them said that they sent friend requests sometimes. Only two teacher-participants did the said friend request most of the time. On the other hand, when students sent friend request to teachers, five teacher-participants said that they rarely accept students' friend requests, eight said that they did it sometimes, while seven participants said that they did it most of the time and two of them said that they always accept students' friend requests.

These responses indicate that teachers were not always the ones to initiate online friendships with their students. None of the teacher-respondents declined or rejected students' friend requests in Facebook. This indicated that, despite their reluctance to begin friendships, teachers were warm when students approached them online.

All of the teacher-participants noticed their students online. Five of them experienced it rarely, five experienced it sometimes, while nine of them said to notice students most of time.

There were only three participants who said that they always notice students on Facebook when they are on-line. The teacher-participants were asked explicitly, if they were not interested to connect with the students on Facebook. Three of them said that they never feel such indifference towards on-line friendship with students. Five said that they rarely were uninterested of this friendship while twelve said that they were feeling the indifference sometimes and the other two revealed that they were always not interested in making friends with students through Facebook.We could see that half of the participants were opened about being not interested in connecting with students through Facebook. In an interview with the teacher-participants, one of them said that they checked their Facebook habitually on their free time or beyond classroom environment and what they shared on Facebook were more about personal affairs than work-related stuffs. This participant said in an interview that Facebooking had become their pastime and that although they were friends with their students on Facebook, they would not use it for them all the time. Facebook was a sort of recreation since it could refresh their minds and forget the pressures of work (Teacher 4, personal communication).

Although the teacher-participants did not have a very high interest in Facebook friendship with their students, they still did it anyway. When asked about their reasons for friending students on Facebook, the most common answer given by the participants was to connect with students (Teacher 4, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 5, personal communications) and include them to their audience (Teacher 2, Teacher 3, personal communications)

Table 2. *Teacher-Student Connectedness via Facebook (Reacting and Commenting on Posts)*

Item	Response Rating					Mean Rating	Description
	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ I like or react on something the students have posted on their walls.	1 (4.5%)	8 (36.4%)	12 (54.5%)	1 (4.5%)	-	2.59	Rarely
2/ I comment on something the students have posted on their wall (e.g. status updates, link shared, photos, videos, etc.)	1 (4.5%)	6 (27.3%)	15 (68.2%)	-	-	2.64	Some times
3/ My students hit like or make reactions on something I have posted on my wall.	3 (13.6%)	1 (4.5%)	6 (27.3%)	10 (45.5%)	2 (9.1%	3.32	Some times
4/ Students comment on something I have posted on my wall.	1 (4.5%)	1 (4.5%)	10 (45.5%)	10 (45.5%)	-	3.32	Some times
5/ I don't make reaction nor comment on my students' Fb posts.	4 (18.2%)	-	12 (54.5%)	6 (27.3%)	-	2.91	Some times
					Grand Mean	2.95	Some times

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely : 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 2 shows the extent to which the participating teachers react or comment on students' Fb posts. They were also asked about how often their students did the said activities.

Moreover, there were fifteen teacher-participants who responded that they sometimes commented on students' Fb posts. Six teacher-participants reported to do it sometimes and one participant said that he never did such action. These results showed that the participants were not so interested to students' activities on Facebook. Only 54.5% of participating teachers were liking and reacting on students Fb posts and 68.2% were commenting on their students Fb statuses. Such number did the said Fb activity sometimes. No single teacher-participant said to have done the liking, reacting and commenting of students' Fb posts all the time.There were twelve teacher-participants who said that sometimes, they didn't want to react or comment on their students' Fb posts while six participants said that they felt such disinterest most of the time and there were four who said that they never felt that way.

Contrarywise, when the teacher-participants were asked how often their students hit like or made reactions on their Fb posts, 3 participants said that he never had such responses from the students. One participant said that he rarely was being liked or reacted upon, ten said that most of the time their Fb posts were being liked or reacted by the students and two teachers had been liked or reacted by the students always.

The results showed that there were more movements of connectedness from the students to their teachers and not the other way around. Based upon the principles of Uses and Gratifications theory, the participants in this study that included teachers and students have been using Facebook to fulfill their social needs. In this case, the need for social connectedness seemed to be much stronger among the youth than that of the teachers.

This finding could substantiate the claims made by Arslan (2018) that adolescents had given much significance to social acceptance and social connectedness. If we look at it through Abraham Maslow's perspective, the teachers had already passed the level where social needs were their priority. They might had already reached the level of self-actualization given their age, as well as their attainments in life. In contrast, students were in their crucial years of fulfilling their social needs by trying to connect with the people around them.

Table 3. *Teacher-Student Connectedness via Facebook (Tagging and Sharing Posts)*

Item	Response Rating					Mean Rating	Description
	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ I upload photos/ videos with the students on them.	1 (4.5%)	2 (9.1%)	13 (59.1%)	6 (27.3%)	-	3.09	Sometimes

2/ I tag students with the photos/videos that I post on my wall.	5 (22.7%)	4 (18.2%)	7 (31.8%)	6 (27.3%)	-	2.64	Some times
3/ Students tag me with their status updates or uploaded photos/videos.	2 (9.1%)	3 (13.6%)	9 (40.9%)	6 (27.3%)	2 (9.1%)	3.14	Some times
4/ I do not tag students in any of my Fb posts.	1 (4.5%)	2 (9.1%)	9 (40.9%)	7 (31.8%)	3 (13.6%	3.41	Most of theTime
5/ I don't post any photo/video of/with my students on my Facebook wall.	1 (4.5%)	4 (18.2%)	10 (45.5%)	6 (27.3%)	1 (4.5%)	3.09	Some times
					Grand Mean	3.07	Some times

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely : 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 3 shows the result of the survey on how often teachers and students tag or share with each other their Fb contents which include photos, videos, and status updates.

The teacher-participants were asked whether they tag students with the photos/videos they had posted on their walls. There were six participants who said that they did such activity most of the time, seven said they did it sometimes, while four participants said that they did it rarely and five of them said that they never tag students with their Fb contents. Theteacher-participants were also asked if they were being tagged in their students' Fb statuses including uploaded photos or videos. Among the twenty-two teacher-participants, two said they were never tagged, three said that it rarely happened to them, while nine of them said that they had been tagged sometimes and six participants said most of the time. There were two teacher-participants who revealed that they have been tagged in their students' posts always.

The results revealed that teacher-participants did not have many Fb contents shared with the students. They were not engrossed to tagging the students with their Fb statuses neither. This had drawn parallel with the claims of Jankauste and Dovile (2015) that said both the teachers and the students did not want to share all of their data with each other, because Facebook was used by people primarily for socializing (Sarapin & Morris, 2015).When asked about their reasons for friending students on Facebook, the most common answer given by the teacher-participants was to connect with students and include them to their Fb audience.

Table 4. *Teacher-Student Connectedness via Facebook (Messaging/Chatting)*

Item	Response Rating					Mean Rating	Description
	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ I send messages to my students through Fb messenger.	2 (9.1%)	-	5 (22.7%)	5 (22.7%)	10 (45.5%	3.95	Most of the Time

2/ I communicate with my students through a group chat.	1 (4.5%)	1 (4.5%)	7 (31.8%)	3 (13.6%)	10 (45.5%	3.91	Most of the Time
3/ I talk to students about their studies through Fb messenger.	2 (9.1%)	2 (9.1%)	7 (31.8%)	3 (13.6%)	8 (36.4%	3.59	Most of the Time
4/ We talk about personal matters through Fb messenger.	4 (18.2%)	6 (27.3%)	6 (27.3%)	2 (9.1%)	4 (18.2%	2.82	Some times
5/ I don't communicate with my students through Fb messenger.	8 (36.4%)	9 (40.9%)	2 (9.1%)	3 (13.6%)	-	2.00	Rarely
					Grand Mean	3.25	Some times

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 4 presents the raw data on how frequent the teacher-participants utilize Fb messaging in communicating with students. Two teachers never sent messages to their students through Fb messenger while five sent messages sometimes only and five teachers said to have sent messages to students most of the time. Majority of the teachers always sent messages to students through Fb chat.

Fb messenger also features a group chat that allows Fb users to send and read messages to and from each other mostly for a common interest or intention. When asked whether they are in a group chat with students, only one teacher-participant said that he never joined one. Another participant said that he rarely joined a group chat with students and there were seven who communicated students through group chat sometimes only. Three teacher-participants did the said activity most of the time while there were ten of them who always communicated students through a group chat.

When it comes to the topics that teachers and students talked about through Fb messenger, two teachers never talked about school stuffs and two said that they rarely talked to student about their studies through Fb chat. Seven teacher-participants sometimes did the said activity while three did it most of the time. There were eight teachers who always talked to students about their studies through Fb messenger.

Talking about personal matters was never done by the four teacher-participants. Six of them did talk to students about personal stuffs rarely while another six did it sometimes only. Two teachers said that they talked to students about personal stuffs through Facebook most of the time and four said that they always did the said activity.

Moreover, majority of the teacher-participants said that it was rare to not communicate with students through Fb messenger. Eight teachers never missed to communicate with the students while nine sometimes did not communicate with students and three did not communicate

with students most of the time.

Fb messaging or chatting with the students was done continually by the participating teachers not only in a one-on-one chat or personal message, but also in a group chat where school stuffs were mostly their topics. Communicating with the students through Facebook messenger had a greater frequency than the other Fb activities cited, based on result. This may be because of how efficient Facebook can be a tool for communicating. One teacher-participant said in an interview that from the start that she only communicated with the students by sending messages through Fb messenger and vice-versa because the Fb app was very easy to use and free of charge (Teacher 1). This way, the participants did not need to exchange mobile numbers and did not need cellphone load to contact each other.Salazar (2016) claimed that today, people's dependability of connection relies on mobile technology and social media because undeniably, the use of social media for communication saves money.

Table 5. *Teacher-Student Connectedness via Facebook*

Facebook Activities	Mean Rating	Description
1. Being on the friends' list	3.24	Sometimes
2. Reacting/ commenting on posts	2.95	Sometimes
3. Tagging/ sharing posts	3.07	Sometimes
4. Messaging/ Chatting	3.25	Sometimes
Grand Mean	3.127	Sometimes

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

The survey on how teachers use Facebook in connecting with students revealed that teachers were willing to have students on their friends' list sometimes only. Teachers reacting or commenting on students' posts and vice versa also happened sometimes only as well as tagging or sharing each other's posts and messaging or chatting. The frequency of the different Fb activities done by the teacher-participants in establishing connectedness with the students was not high as shown in the data. Having the grand mean of 3.127 which can be described as "sometimes", teacher-student connectedness via Facebook did exist in a regular, typical and average degree.

How often are the Student-Teacher Engagements done through Facebook Affectively, Behaviorally, Cognitively and Academically?

Affective Engagement

Table 6 shows the result of the survey on the affective engagement of junior high school students whose teachers are their Facebook friends.

Table 6. *Engagement of Junior High School Students(Affective Domain)*

Item	Response Rating						Mean Rating	Description
	No response	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ I think what we are learning in school is interesting.	4(1.6)	2 (0.8)	7 (2.8)	50 (19.8)	59 (23.3)	131 (51.8)	4.25	Always
2/ I like what we are learning in the class.	2 (0.8)	1 (0.4)	3 (1.2)	46 (18.2)	65 (25.7)	136 (53.8)	4.32	Always
3/ I enjoy attending and participating in our class.	-	1 (0.4)	18 (7.1)	44 (17.4)	55 (21.7)	135 (53.4)	4.21	Always
4/ I think learning is boring.	-	111 (43.9	49 (19.4	73 (28.9)	14 (5.5)	6 (2.4)	2.03	Rarely
5/ Most mornings, I look forward to going to school.	3 (1.2)	8 (3.2)	15 (5.9)	39 (15.4)	71 (28.1)	117 (46.2)	4.10	Most of the Time
						Grand Mean	3.78	Most of the Time

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

One hundred thirty-one student-participants always thought that learning in school was interesting, while fifty nine thought most of the time that learning in school was interesting. Fifty student-participants thought about this sometimes only, while there were seven who rarely thought that school was interesting and two student-participants never thought that what they were learning in school was interesting.Almost 54% that was comprised of one hundred thirty-five student-participants said that they always enjoy attending and participating in their class. Fifty-six participants said that most of the time they did enjoy attending and participating while forty-four of them enjoyed attending and participating in their class sometimes only.

The over-all results revealed that majority of the student-participants always thought that what they were learning in school was interesting. They always liked what they were learning in the class and always enjoyed attending and participating in the class. Most of the time, they looked forward to going to school and rarely think that learning was boring.

Behavioral Engagement

Table 7 shows the result of the survey on the behavioral engagement of student-participants whose teachers are their Facebook friends. Data shows that one hundred forty-one student-participants always participated in class activities while sixty-four of them participated in class activities most of the time. There were thirty-six students who said that they participated in

the class sometimes only, while ten said that they rarely did it and two respondents did not respond to the statement.

Table 7. *Engagement of Junior High School Students (Behavioral Domain)*

Item	Response Rating						Mean Rating	Description
	No response	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%		
1/ When I'm in class, I participate in class activities	2 (0.8)	-	10 (4.0)	36 (14.2)	64 (25.3)	141 (55.7	4.34	Always
2/ I pay attention in class.	1 (0.4)	7 (2.8)	13 (5.1)	43 (17.0)	56 (22.1)	133 (52.6	4.17	Always
3/ I take an active role as a member in the group I belong during our class.	-	8 (3.2)	14 (5.5)	65 (25.7)	52 (20.6)	114 (45.1	3.99	Most of the Time
4/ When I'm in class, my mind wanders.	1 (0.4)	49 (19.4	26 (10.3	76 (30)	62 (24.5)	39 (15.4	3.06	Sometimes
5/ I volunteer to lead the group I belong in our class.	2 (0.8)	31 (12.3	35 (13.8	88 (34.8)	46 (18.2)	51 (20.2	3.20	Sometimes
						Grand Mean	3.75	Most of the Time

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

When it comes to paying attention, one hundred thirty-three student-participants said that they always paid attention during classes. Fifty-six paid attention most of the time while forty-three said that they did it sometimes and there were thirteen participants who said that they rarely paid attention in the class. Seven never paid attention in the class.The survey also revealed that thirty-nine participants had their minds wandering during classes. Sixty-two experienced absent-mindedness most of the time while seventy-six said that they experienced it sometimes. There were twenty-six who said that they rarely had their minds wandering during classes and forty-nine never experienced such absent-mindedness.

Cognitive Engagement

Table 8 shows the result for the survey on the cognitive engagement of student-participants whose teachers are their Facebook friends. Eighty-eight student-participants always tried to understand the material better by relating it to things they already know. Eighty-one students did this most of the time while sixty-two did this sometimes only. There were eleven students who said that they rarely related the material being taught to them to the things they already know and another eleven also said that they never did such approach for learning.

The survey on the cognitive domain of student engagement revealed that the student-

participants had done most of the time, different cognitive processes that would help them better understand the concepts, information, materials, etc. which were being taught to them in the class. It was apparent that the students had the will to relate the current lesson to things they already knew in order to better understand it. They made up their own examples most of the time to help them understand important concepts. Also, when learning new information, students willingly tried to put the ideas in their own words.

Table 8. *Engagement of Junior High School Students (Cognitive Domain)*

Item	Response Rating						Mean Rating	Description
	No response	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
1/ When I study, I try to understand the material better by relating it to things I already know.	-	11 (4.3)	11 (4.3)	62 (24.5)	81 (32.0)	88 (34.8)	3.89	Most of the Time
2/ I make up my own examples to help me understand the important concepts I learn from the class.	4 (1.6)	7 (2.8)	22 (8.7)	71 (28.1)	71 (28.1)	78 (30.8)	3.77	Most of the Time
3/ When learning new information, I try to put the ideas in my own words.	-	8 (3.2)	16 (6.3)	99 (39.1)	55 (21.7)	75 (29.6)	3.68	Most of the Time
4/ When I study, I cannot connect what I am learning with my own experiences.	1 (0.4)	26 (10.3)	53 (20.9)	109 (43.1)	42 (16.6)	22 (8.7)	2.92	Sometimes
5/ I try to match what I already know with the things I am trying to learn for our class.	6 (2.4)	-	22 (8.7)	85 (33.6)	66 (26.1)	74 (29.2)	3.78	Most of the Time
						Grand Mean	3.60	Most of the Time

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Academic Engagement

Table 9 shows the result for the survey on the academic engagement of student-participants whose teachers are their Facebook friends.

Table 9. *Engagement of Junior High School Students (Academic Domain)*

Item	Response Rating						Mean Rating	Description
	No response	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)		
6/ When I study, I figure out how the information might be useful in the real world.	-	4 (1.6)	26 (10.3	83 (32.8)	64 (25.3)	76 (30.0	3.72	Most of the Time

7/ If I have trouble understanding a problem, I go over it again until I understand it.	2 (0.8)	5 (2.0)	14 (5.5)	86 (34.0)	60 (23.7)	86 (34.0	3.83	Most of the Time
8/ I can manage time efficiently for learning.	2 (0.8)	14 (5.5)	27 (10.7	84 (33.2)	54 (21.3)	72 (28.5	3.57	Most of the Time
9/ I can't accomplish challenging tasks and problems in my study.	2 (0.8)	29 (11.5	43 (17)	102 (40.3)	34 (17.0)	43 (17.0	3.08	Sometimes
10/ I can accomplish my aims in learning.	2 (0.8)	11 (4.3)	19 (7.5)	83 (32.8)	66 (26.1)	72 (28.5	3.67	Most of the Time
						Grand Mean	3.57	Most of the Time

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Seventy-six students always figured out how the information they got from studying might be useful in the real world. Sixty-four said that most of the time they figured out how their learning might be useful in the real world while eighty-three did the deciphering thing sometimes only. There were twenty-six student-participants who said that they rarely figured out the usefulness of what they are learning and four participants revealed that they never did such action.

When it comes to managing time for learning, seventy-two students said that they could always manage their time efficiently for learning. Fifty-four said that they could manage their time efficiently most of the time while eighty-four said that they could manage their time efficiently sometimes. There were twenty-seven who rarely managed their time and there were fourteen of them who never managed their time efficiently for learning.

Looking at the results of the survey on the academic engagement of the student-participants who had some Fb connection with their teachers, it can be understood that most of the time, they were willing to figure out how the information which they got from studying might be useful in the real world. If they have trouble understanding a problem, most of the time, they go over it again until they understand it. They have also reported to have efficiency in managing their time for learning. Although sometimes, there are challenging tasks and problems in their study which they struggle with, most of the time, they have accomplished their aims in learning. The survey on academic engagement reveals that most of the time students have a positive effort for learning.

Table 10. *Summary of Engagement of Junior High School Students whose teachers are their Facebook Friends*

Domain	Mean Rating	Description
1. Affective Engagement	3.78	Most of the Time
2. Behavioral Engagement	3.75	Most of the Time
3. Cognitive Engagement	3.60	Most of the Time
4. Academic Engagement	3.57	Most of the Time

	Grand Mean	3.67	Most of the Time

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Never: 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely: 2.61 – 3.40 Sometimes: 3.41 – 4.20 Most of the time: 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Each of the four domains of student engagement had appeared high enough to see that the respondents were indeed engaged in the class sessions of their teachers who were their Fb friends. Among the four domains, the dominant was affective engagement having 3.78 mean rating followed by behavioral engagement with 3.75 mean rating. Cognitive engagement came third with 3.60 mean rating, then the last was academic engagement with 3.57. This shows that the respondents had a positive emotional state , positive conduct, were thoughtful and focused to their learning process and very keen to finish their tasks.

Is there a Significant Relationship Between Teacher-Student Connectedness Through Facebook and Student Engagement of Junior High School Students?

Table 11 shows the result of the correlation test between teacher-student connectedness through Facebook and the student engagement of junior high school students. Upon analysis, the two variables have the following correlation coefficient values: r-value of 0.127 which means that there is a slight positive relationship between them and p-value of 0.044

Table 11. *Correlation between Teacher-Student connectedness through Facebook and Student Engagement in Junior High School.*

Correlated Variables	r-value	p-value	Decision on Ha	Interpretation
Teacher-Student connectedness through Facebook and Student Engagement	0.127	0.044	Accept Ha	Slight Positive Correlation and Significant Relationship

Since the probability value is less than the alpha value of 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the teacher-student connectedness via Facebook and student engagement in junior high school.

CONCLUSION

We may think that this generation of learners have already gotten to a time when they have been learning independently. We may think that the old days are gone, when young learners looked up to their teachers as their model, the only example they can see and a strong influencer that could help them accomplish things in school. In fact, the curriculum we have now in the junior high school, encourages teachers to give the students an autonomy over their educational achievement by acting as facilitators of learning inside the classroom. With the efficacy of technology, the young millennials are made to believe that they can accomplish things on their own. However, technology has not yet replaced human relation from its rightful position. The

relationship that students have with their teachers is still playing a big role to students' academic success.

Evidences from this research clearly suggest that teachers indeed have some control over student engagement which is essential to determine the educational success of the individual learner. When teachers establish some form of social connection to their students especially utilizing digital technology, it makes an impact so significant in the lives of today's young generation. If then this Fb friendship can therefore impact student engagement, the problems on student' failure, dropout, and other more, which have budded from student disengagement may be alleviated.

The yielded result of this study may encourage high school teachers and school administrators to pave a new way in offering students the opportunities for communication, interaction, motivation and education using Facebook. Moreover, through this, junior high school students may see the benefit of Facebook as an educational tool, thus, utilize its full potential for their educational advantage while their parents come to understand the revolution in technology that can provide various opportunities for their children's active learning.

The readers, however, must be reminded that the current study has some limitations. It is found that teachers in the junior high school either have not widely embraced or have not fully learnt the potentials of Facebook connection in the lives of their students. Teachers and students both use Facebook as a personal sphere. There is, but an average degree only of Facebook connectedness between the teachers and the junior high school students.

Nevertheless, such little interaction on Facebook has made a remarkably high impact on the student engagement of the participants, as the evidence supported. If this is so, it can be further assumed that greater impact will be made to the student engagement in junior high school if teachers will cultivate a much stronger Facebook friendship with the students.

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This study is dedicated to all teachers who continue to explore innovative ways of fostering student engagement and connectedness in the evolving landscape of digital learning.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

This research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for studies involving human participants as prescribed by J.H. Cerilles State College and the general ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed about the research purpose, procedures, voluntary nature of participation, and confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent either written or digital was obtained from both students and teachers. No identifying personal information was collected, and all responses were treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. Participants retained the right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequence.

The author declares that no external funding, financial interest, or institutional influence affected the objectivity and impartiality of the research. Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the Research Ethics Committee of J.H. Cerilles State College. The research upholds the principles of integrity, respect for participants' rights, and responsible academic conduct.

CRediT AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

- **Frederick P. Grengia:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Data collection, Formal analysis, Writing original draft, Writing review & editing.

The author affirms that all aspects of the research from design and data interpretation to manuscript refinement were completed independently. The final version of the manuscript has been read and approved by the author.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article. No personal, financial, or institutional relationships have inappropriately influenced the conduct or reporting of this research. The study was carried out independently, and all conclusions were derived based on empirical data and scholarly analysis.

DATA AVAILABILITY

All data supporting the findings of this study are included within the published article or are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. To protect the anonymity of student and teacher participants, raw datasets containing identifiable information are not

publicly shared. The anonymized data, research instruments (including the Student Engagement in Schools Questionnaire and interview guide), and coding framework may be accessed upon written request for academic and non-commercial research purposes by contacting the corresponding author at fredgrenz@yahoo.com

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