The Lived Experiences of Social Studies Majors in Using Facebook as a Coping Mechanism

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Abstract

Facebook has had a significant role in encouraging social transformation. Its effect extends to politics, economics, health, and even psychology, among other things. Humans currently spend more time on social media sites like Facebook than in past decades when they spent more time reading books and newspapers. Facebook usage was already high prior to the pandemic, but it skyrocketed during the Covid-19 pandemic. People use Facebook to learn about the pandemic, which may help them protect themselves, as well as to seek assurance and cope with fear. Young people, particularly students who were affected by the pandemic, consume a lot of Facebook material. They utilize the site to cope with the stress of online education as well as to briefly divert their focus to something other. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate why Facebook is preferred as a coping mechanism over other social media sites. This qualitative study aims to explore the lived experiences of Leyte Normal University Social Studies students in using Facebook as a coping strategy or self-regulation used to cope with stress during online learning.

This transcendental phenomenology has 4 participants – 3 females and 1 male. According to the findings of the interview, students are frequent Facebook users, and the impacts of online learning emerge in the respondents in both physical and mental ways. Respondents also stated that they utilize the platforms because of the features that make it more pleasant and relevant to their interests. They also hold Facebook in high esteem as an effective forum for dealing with stress. According to the findings, viewing videos on Facebook is the most preferred technique for respondents to cope with stress. As a result, the study made recommendations to students and teachers.

Keywords: Facebook; Coping Mechanism; Social Studies Majors; Online Learning; Lived Experiences

1. Introduction

When Facebook was launched on February 4, 2004, in a Harvard dorm room, nobody could have predicted how successful it would become (Economist, 2019). Few companies have had such tremendous

impact on society, changing people's communication habits, reconciling lost contacts, shaping their perception of global events, and redefining the meaning of the word "friend" (Economist, 2019). In 2019, Facebook celebrated its 15th anniversary.

Since its debut in 2004, (Natanson, 2018), Facebook has experienced consistent growth and increased market and social importance. No one could have predicted that reading books, newspapers, and periodicals as a leisure activity would be replaced by scrolling a screen four decades later. Stewart (2016) observed that the average time spent on Facebook by an American user is 50 minutes, and that users, in theory, use Facebook for leisure, socializing, and messaging. Furthermore, despite the popular belief that using Facebook and other social media platforms causes anxiety and sadness, a Pew Research Center study refuted this claim. According to Revathy et al. (2018), Facebook users, particularly women, talked about stress and depression in relation to their physical health and their relationships. Using Facebook, they talk about ways to deal with stress such as doing yoga and other physical exercises. According to Naslund, in a survey of social media users with mental illnesses, respondents said that sharing personal stories about living with mental illness and opportunities to learn about coping strategies from others were major reasons for using social media (as cited in Naslund, 2020, p. 248). According to Nabi et al. (2017), media consumption is a main coping technique for those experiencing health or academic stress, and individuals experiencing severe stress are more likely to turn to media for relaxation and recuperation (Anderson et al., 1996; Reinecke and Eden, 2016, p. 3).

The COVID-19 pandemic has made Facebook more influential in times of crisis. Statt (2021) reported that during the COVID-19 pandemic, Facebook usage increased, with more than 2.6 billion individuals checking one of Facebook's applications every day (up 15% from 2019), and more than 3.3 billion checking one of the apps at least once a month (up 14 percent). It was observed that throughout the pandemic, people used Facebook to obtain information and insights into what was going on. Media consumption such as Facebook increases among its consumers, as a means of seeking assurance and coping with the anxiety and uncertainty that the pandemic brings Eden, Johnson, Reinecke, and Grady (2020, p. 1-4).

Lockee (2021) reported that the pandemic has exacerbated the merging of traditional and distance education (p. 6). Schools have switched to online schooling in response to the pandemic, utilizing Google Meet, Zoom, and other systems that support online instruction which in turn was a double-edged sword that resulted in intensified stress experienced by students. A study, conducted by Eden et al. (2020), supported the idea that this rise in media use, such as Facebook, could be attributed to the use of media as a coping technique to deal with stress and anxiety encountered during the initial social distance period (p. 2).

Only a few researches have studied how mankind utilizes social media as a coping method (e.g., Hurley, 2018; Caubergeh et al., 2021). Other studies tend to lump together all social media platforms under the umbrella term "social media" in order to generalize about how these platforms are utilized as a coping technique.

The association between Facebook and coping mechanisms has been studied in a limited way. This study examines why Facebook is favored as a coping method over other social media platforms. Moreover, the purpose of this study is to describe the lived experiences particularly by the Social Studies students of Leyte Normal University in utilizing Facebook as a coping mechanism or self-regulation employed to cope with stress during online learning.

2. Statement of the Problem

As a result of the emergence of COVID-19, countries worldwide enacted lockdowns, suspending outdoor activities and human interaction in places such as schools, malls, and offices. The shutdown and confinement of people extended the communication and activity over the internet. As a result, internet

services and Facebook users grew in popularity as a way to be entertained and keep connected with family, friends, and school activities. Moreover, as educational institutions increasingly adopt and implement online learning, learners also face the challenge in accomplishing the tasks assigned to them. Azmiyyah and Lianawati (2021) assert that online education fosters a shift in perception. There are some positive perceptions, such as it is unique and interesting, yet there are many who disagree. According to Fawaz et al. (2021), who evaluated the influence of COVID-19 on the mental health and coping mechanisms of Lebanese college students, indicates that it had a detrimental effect on students' emotional and behavioral functioning (p. 1- 8). Due to the enormous task loads, technical challenges, and confinement, this abrupt change in academic instruction generated academic stress for students. Furthermore, to prevent the spread of the disease, numerous academic institutions in the Philippines have turned to online instruction, and schools in Tacloban City have implemented online learning and utilized a variety of platforms to offer educational materials. Thus, in this study, we investigated the following topics among Leyte Normal University students major in Social Studies: (1) Online learning as a push factor to additional time usage of college students in using Facebook. and (2) How effective is Facebook as coping mechanism of college students in online learning?
In addressing these, the study sought to answer the following questions:

2.1. What are the effects of online learning to the students?

2.2. Why do students use Facebook?

2.3. Does using Facebook help students in coping-up?

3. Theoretical Framework

This study's groundwork is established and theoretically supported by Cognitive Dissonance Theory and The Stress and Coping models of Lazarus and Folkman. The detailed discussion of these theories are the following:

On 1950, Leon Festinger first proposed the theory of cognitive dissonance which is centered on how people try to reach internal consistency. He suggested that people have an inner need to ensure that their beliefs and behaviors are consistent. Inconsistent or conflicting beliefs lead to disharmony, which people strive to avoid Festinger (1957). This underlying tension then motivates an individual to make an attitude change that would produce consistency between thoughts and behaviors. Research has shown that when an individual engages in behaviors that are inconsistent with their attitude or belief (e.g., arguing a counter-attitudinal position on a topic), a change in attitude is produced that is consistent in the direction of his or her behavior. This mechanism of thought or attitude change is the same mechanism used to produce changes in negative, irrational thoughts that are involved in the maintenance of depression and related disorders. Thompson et. al (2012). It is clear that COVID-19 has induced cognitive dissonance because our beliefs about education have been shaken, and vast disparities within our educational system have been reinforced, making online learning more difficult and stressful to the participants.

In addition, coping skills is be used as a guide on this study. The Stress and Coping models of Lazarus and Folkman correlates to Facebook as the coping mechanism on online learning. The Facebook as coping mechanism falls in problem focused coping because it tries to alter the distress caused by stressors, which is effective in warding off the stressors.

4. Scope and Delimitation

This study entitled The Lived Experiences of Social Studies Majors in Using Facebook as a Coping Mechanism During Online Learning was done within the Academic Year 2021-2022. The intention of this study is to find out the use of social media, particularly Facebook as a coping mechanism during online learning. There are varied functions of Facebook, but the focus of this study is to limit the function of Facebook to coping mechanism among college students. Moreover, it delimited that the study is not inclusive to all students of Leyte Normal University. Rather, it specifies to one (1) participant from each of the four-year level of Social Studies students during the Academic Year 2021-2022, who can provide information related to the study being conducted.

5. Significance of the Study

This study was conducted to know and describe the positive effects brought by Facebook as coping mechanism during online learning. The research findings are not only significant to the researchers but as well to the following;

5.1. To the Students

The significance of this study is to give them insights on why other students indulge in using Facebook and on how does Facebook serves as a means of coping up with the stress brought by online learning. They can use the research findings in understanding what others are going through and that each of them faces different battles. In addition, with this study others students especially the college one's can examine their selves whether or not they are also experiencing the same and can use the research findings and recommendations in coping up with the stress they are in. They can let other students be informed with the findings by sharing it on Facebook school pages and can be used for future studies.

5.2. To the Teachers

The study is significant to the teachers for they are also one of those who were affected greatly as learning shifts to online. With the results and findings, they can apply it in their daily lives as they also experience stress in preparing various learning materials for the students. With the use of Facebook, it can entertain them by watching online videos and shared posts. In addition, they can benefit from the study for they can learn significant information about Facebook as coping mechanism that might help them in coping up with the stress they also experience as teachers.

6. Definition of Terms

Facebook – According to its founder, Mark Zuckerberg (2008, 2017), Facebook is about helping people share information and share themselves. Its mission is to give people the power to build communities, and get closer together. In this study, Facebook is a social media application wherein you can use its features to call and chat

with other people, post your pictures, share inspirational quotes and funny memes, watch different kinds of videos, date virtually, shop, and even play games. Moreover, this social media application is used as a coping mechanism by the participants.

Coping Mechanism – According to APA Dictionary of Psychology (n.d.), Coping Mechanism is the act of adjusting or adapting to a stressful experience or situation in a conscious or unconscious way that decreases tension and anxiety. In this study, Coping Mechanism pertains to using Facebook as a way to battle/lessen stress brought by online learning.

Social Studies Majors – According to Social Studies (2021), Social Studies Majors are those who studies the degree that provides a broad exposure to the different fields of the social sciences such as History, Political Science, Psychology, Economics, Sociology, and Geography. In this study, Social Studies Majors pertains to the student-participants who are enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies at Leyte Normal University in the Academic Year 2021 - 2022.

Online Learning – According to Enicola (2021), Online classes are courses offered through the internet, which is a popular form of flexible learning in the Philippines today. To continue learning during the pandemic, mobile learning is the best option. Students can either take online classes or modular classes. In this study, pertains to the new normal way of learning in the Philippines after the world has devastated by the pandemic. It is a kind of learning in which students are not allowed to go to school campuses. Moreover, student-participants and teachers meet through online means such as google classroom, google meet, zoom etc. to have classes, give activities, and exams.

Lived Experiences – According to Oxford Reference (n.d.), Lived Experience is an understanding of the world gained through direct, firsthand participation in everyday events, instead of through representations constructed by others. Alternatively, it can refer to acquiring knowledge of people through direct face-to-face contact rather than by using technology. In this study, Lived Experiences pertains to the first-hand experiences of the participants on online learning and how they used Facebook as a coping mechanism.

7. Review of Related Literature

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2, formerly known as 2019-nCoV, which was discovered amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. It was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019. A global health emergency was declared by the WHO on January 30, 2020. COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020, its first such designation since H1N1 influenza was declared a pandemic in 2009 (Cennimo, 2021). Meanwhile, the first suspected case in the Philippines was investigated on January 22, 2020, and 633 suspected cases were reported as of March 1 (Edrada et al., 2020). As days and months passed, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Philippines grew bigger and bigger. For this reason, the Philippine government had to impose lockdowns which forced establishments such as those in business industries, and even schools to close down. As a result, people had no choice but to stay in their house, confined.

For the reason of the closures of establishments including schools, plus the high risk of the outside world caused by the pandemic, the Philippine education system had to shift from face-to-face learning to

blended learning, which online learning belongs, just to avoid compromising the education of the students. Online education has traditionally been viewed as an alternative pathway, one that is particularly well suited to adult learners seeking higher education opportunities. However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has required educators and students across all levels of education to adapt quickly to virtual courses. As a result, teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms and students can attend online. (Lockee, 2021)

Students, on the other hand, have a disadvantage in an online class. There are a variety of elements that contribute to university students experiencing distinct difficulties and limits as a result of e-learning, putting them in a stressful learning environment. University students are predisposed to developing stress disorder, and the risk of such consequences is projected to increase throughout the COVID-19 quarantine period due to the mentally challenging conditions they confront on a daily basis. Such students will be deprived of crucial motivation to advance in their school or careers. (Fawaz & Simaha 2020).

According to the study of Irawan., et al (2020), the burden of online lecture tasks is one of the contributing factors to students' stress levels, which requires them to use online media that they have just learned and must immediately understand. In relation to the study, inclination with online media will be one reason to find ways in coping up with stress. Facebook will be used as a specific tool to mitigate the negative impacts of online learning, such as stress, boredom, and a sense of burden as a result of academic tasks, assignments, and so on. Moreover, the study will focus to the positive effects that Facebook offer as a coping mechanism during online learning.

Human beings are social creatures. We need the companionship of others to thrive in life, and the strength of our connections has a huge impact on our mental health and happiness. Being socially connected to others can ease stress, anxiety, and depression, boost self-worth, provide comfort and joy, prevent loneliness, and even add years to your life. On the flip side, lacking strong social connections can pose a serious risk to your mental and emotional health (Robinson & Smith, 2021). While virtual interaction on social media doesn't have the same psychological benefits as face-to-face contact, there are still many positive ways in which it can help you stay connected and support your wellbeing.

Facebook, for instance, helps you to stay connected with your loved ones who lives miles away from you. Through this, you are able to update and communicate anytime. The said social media platform also helps you to find new friends or acquaintance who shares same interest as you. Moreover, you can post online, date virtually, shop virtually, and watch funny and relaxing videos to release tension. The entire concept of social media, specifically Facebook is centered around community-building, and with millions of members in the community, there are many positive opportunities to engage with other users, and to vent out your stress.

According to Johnston et al. (2013), there are seven motives that explain the purpose of using Facebook. Specifically, individuals use Facebook to maintain relationships, meet new friends, for enjoyment, gain popularity, express oneself, for learning purposes, and to voice opinions. Mainly, the reasons for using Facebook were to maintain existing relationships as well as developing new relationships online. That was before pandemic. During the pandemic where government lockdowns were imposed, people, specially students had a bigger amount of time to be exposed in Facebook. For this reason, students, specifically, found out that Facebook is not just about for communicating anymore, it is more than that. There are other features that was yet to be discovered by many and there are functions of Facebook that these students just found out recently, all thanks to the luxury of time brought by our confinement in our houses.

On the study conducted by Eden., et al (2020) entitled "Media for Coping During COVID-19 Social Distancing: Stress, Anxiety, and Psychological Well-being", media use for coping strategy resulted to the increase of media consumption, as well as increased consumption of certain categories or content. Their study investigates the relationship between university students' stress and anxiety and their strategic use of media,

which includes social media, for coping during the first social distancing periods in March-April 2020. In relation to the study being conducted, the participants are also college students who experienced online learning and this aims to determine on how Facebook helps them in coping up with the stress brought by online learning. In addition, their research study suggests that acute stress and anxiety caused by the Covid-19 pandemic were linked to a greater proclivity to use media, including social media as a coping tool, and some coping media techniques were linked to positive effect, good mental health and flourishing.

Moreover, according to Nabi el al., (2017), people facing health or academic stress uses media, including social media, as their primary coping strategy, and people with high level of stress turn to media for relaxation and recovery (Anderson et al., 1996; Reinecke and Eden, 2016, as cited in Eden et al, 2020). Furthermore, due to the imposed stay-at-home orders because of the Covid-19 pandemic, media was the one used in coping up with negative or unpleasant emotions experienced. Lastly, in relation to the study Facebook was the one used over other social media platforms since it is more user-friendly and accessible compared to other platforms and to know the positive effect of using Facebook in releasing tension because of online learning.

8. Methodology

8.1. Research Design

Transcendental Phenomenology was be used in this study. Transcendental Phenomenology was discussed in the multivolume work titled Husserl's studies, a forum for the presentation, discussion, criticism, and development of Husserl's philosophy on an international scale (Springer, 2021). Similarly, the book The Paradox of Subjectivity expands on the discussion of phenomenology by delving deeper into the subjectivity theme. Additionally, the book Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology sheds light on transcendental phenomenology through the lens of phenomenology's founder, Edmund Husserl.

Edmund Husserl introduced Transcendental Phenomenology in the first decade of the twentieth century. His approach was used in research on cognition, logic, and reason. According to Husserl, transcendental phenomenology employs intentionality to elicit information about the sources of that world's (the one actual world) meaning and validity for us, the sources that constitute the true meaning of its being (as cited in Hopkins, 2001, Volume 17, p. 10). Additionally, "the characteristics of transcendental phenomenology express the methodological precedence of the first-person perspective" (Heinamaa, et. al., 2014, p. 25).

Our study focused on personal experiences in using Facebook as a coping mechanism during online learning, with the Social Studies major as our core participants. We believe that despite the adjustments to online education that the students have made, it will always be associated with stress and negative experiences. We've noticed a trend among students, with an increasing number of them turning to Facebook to cope with stress and other negative encounters. This investigation makes use of Transcendental Phenomenology. We believe that Transcendental Phenomenology is appropriate for this study because our study aims to elicit the participant's personal experiences. Because transcendental phenomenology emphasized the first-person perspective, which refers to the participant's own viewpoint, we believe that this research design is appropriate for this study. As we proceed with this study, we can employ Transcendental Phenomenology as a guiding principle to avoid the researcher's subjective assumptions as much as feasible. We believe that by introducing bracketing, a commonly used procedure in research, we can avoid making subjective assumptions and so protect the integrity of our data.

8.2. Research Locale

The study was conducted at various municipalities in Leyte, specifically where the participants are residing. The researchers chose the participants residence for the following reasons: (1) For the participants to be comfortable with the setting, (2) describing the home setting of the participants accurately is crucial to the interpretation of the results and (3) the researchers are also residing near, or within Leyte, making the research location more accessible not only to the participants, but also to the researchers, for the data to be collected practically.

8.3. Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 4 students, 1 student coming from each year level from the first year to fourth year who are taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies in Leyte Normal University. These students will stand as the representative of their year level to share their different experiences in connection study to the researchers. Moreover, we used convenience sampling as the method of selecting participants for this study. Convenience sampling is a non-probability method of selecting people for studies that is dependent on participants being available, close to the study location and willing to participate in the study.

8.4. Data Collection Method

The research utilized semi-structured interviews as a collection method. This study will be conducted through an interview and there will be a set of questions that will be provided to the participants. This data-gathering technique will make you obtain information or facts about the subject or object of your research through questionnaires as the data gathering instrument. According to (DeJonckheere, 2019), this is an effective method for data collection when the researcher wanted: (1) to collect qualitative, open-ended data; (2) to explore participant thoughts, feelings and beliefs about a particular topic; and (3) to delve deeply into personal and sometimes sensitive issues. Moreover, researchers was able to ask unplanned questions during a semi-structured interview and to follow up on unclarified issues until the topic has already saturated and enough information has been gathered.

8.5. Ethical Consideration

Research studies involving human participants require ethical approval prior to the commencement of the proposed study. This is to ensure that participant's right, dignity and privacy are protected and to minimize potential risks to the participants. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005)

Letters for the participants were made to ask for their approval to conduct questionnaires. The letters contain permission requests and statements to follow the COVID19 health protocol set by the authorities.
The researchers orientated the participants about the objectives of the study. The researchers were aware that the experiences described by the participants were not analogous with the researchers' own code of practice. As a result, it was critical that the researchers remain non-judgmental throughout the interview and coding process.

8.6. Reflexivity

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, people's lives were greatly affected. Along with these effects are the students suffering from mental breakdown such as depression, anxiety, and stress brought by online learning. On the other hand, this study aimed to determine the positive effects of Facebook as a coping mechanism towards online learning. The data was collected through survey questionnaires that were given to the participants, who are the students of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies at Leyte Normal University. Through the study, it enabled the students to express and share their experiences as college students who are struggling due to online learning and how they used Facebook in coping up. However, since the researchers are also college students who are experiencing the same struggles, to avoid being biased, the responses were analyzed and interpreted based only on the perspective of the participants. The researcher's personal experiences did not affect the interpretation of the responses no matter what the results were.

8.7. Data Analysis

In order to interpret the result for the semi-structured interview, the Colaizzi's method was utilized. Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis is rigorous and robust, and therefore a qualitative method that ensures the credibility and reliability of its results. It allows researchers to reveal emergent themes and their interwoven relationships. The researchers utilized this method since the study deals with the description of the coping mechanisms of the participants under investigation.

There were seven (7) distinctive steps that the researchers followed in order to provide a rigorous analysis while staying close to the data and to make sure that the results would be a concise yet all-encompassing description of the phenomenon under study, validated by the participants that created it. The steps in the analysis process that the researchers followed were the following; First, familiarization, wherein the researchers familiarize themselves with the data, by reading through all the transcripts from the accounts of the participants, who are the social studies students, several times. Second, the researchers identified all statements in the accounts that are of direct relevance to the phenomenon under study. Then, the researchers identified meanings relevant to the experiences of the participants that arose from the careful consideration of the significant statements. At this stage, the researchers reflexively bracket their presumptions to stick closely to the phenomenon as experienced. After formulating the meanings, the researchers then clustered the identified meanings into themes that are common across all accounts. Again, bracketing of presuppositions will be carefully considered by the researchers to avoid any potential influence on the existing theory presented in the study.

Moreover, the researchers wrote a full and inclusive description of Facebook as a coping mechanism, on the lived experiences of the students of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies of Leyte Normal University during online learning, the researchers incorporated all the themes produced from the cluster of themes. Next, the exhaustive description was condensed down to a short, dense statement that captured those aspects deemed essential to the structure of the phenomenon. Finally, the researchers returned to the fundamental structure statement to all the participants and ask whether the produced themes captured their coping mechanism during online learning. The last step of the analysis was used to validate the results of the analysis. Colaizzi's method offered a clear and systematic approach in analyzing the data of the study.

9. Presentation and Data Analysis

From the data analysis, two themes emerged: (1) Struggles in Online Learning and (2) Facebook Features' Role in Coping Stress. The two themes and sub-themes that emerged suggested that being a student in online learning in the middle of the pandemic is not easy to bear. Yet, they managed to find ways to cope-up. The following sections present the major themes and sub-themes.

9.1. Theme 1. Struggles in Online Learning: Its Effects

Theme 1 can be best explained by two sub-themes including mental effects and physical effects. It can be understood that the demanding responsibilities as a student, son or daughter, unstable internet connection, not to mention the sudden shift of education from traditional to online learning, can be very overwhelming and stressing which can lead to various unwanted effects.

Sub-theme A: Mental Effects

Unpredicted problems cause the feeling of being stressed, rattled, and drained. The mental effects are illustrated in the statements below:

(1) "…mentally, it was very draining because I tend to overthink a lot about the classes that I need to attend because as I've said earlier we have unstable internet connection."

(2) "…in the mental aspect. Due to numerous activities, modules, and performance task in different subject coming from different professor. I was bombarded with the activities to the extent I easily get tired and experience pressure – because I cannot easily ask my classmates regarding on the activities, stress – because the focus is on compliance rather than learning itself from the learning task."

(3) "…affected my mental health for example there are modules that my professor uploaded and it is followed by another upload. I find it stressful and I kept on overthinking, what if I can't finish all of those because I also have responsibility at home. I haven't also adjusted my time management."

(4) "…mentally… I felt rattled most of the time in fear that my teachers would call me and I might not be able to answer the questions that were thrown at me."

Sub-theme B: Physical Effects

Because of internal stress that the body is feeling, physical effects cannot be avoided. The physical effects are illustrated in the statements below:

(1) "…physically it affected me because I get sick because of these activities."

(2) "…I'm also in my computer/laptop doing the activities that resulted to back pain, fatigue and my eyes hurts because of radiation."

(3) "In terms of physical, if before I have time to work-out and exercise, now I don't have time and I even forget to eat properly. The only real challenge here is sleep and sometimes the readings also that needs to be done."

(4) "…physically…as my eyesight became poorer."

9.2. *Theme 2. Facebook Features' Role in Coping Stress*

Theme 2 can be best explained by two sub-themes including Watch (Video) and Story. Facebook is a social media application/site that offers variety of features for their consumers to use. With the stress that the students have experienced, they found Facebook's features to be helpful in coping-up.

Sub-theme A: Newsfeed

The Newsfeed is a feature of Facebook where you can consume videos, pictures, and other information. Here, you can watch different kinds of videos including funny, educational, dramas, and others. Memes are also a big part of Facebook Newsfeed now. Facebook features' role in coping stress are illustrated in the statements below:

(1)   "So, the feature in Facebook…was the video, (it) help(s) me or is one of my coping mechanisms because, I get to unwind and relax for a while and become happy watching videos, so even just for a while, I became relax and sometimes I won't overthink and I would be happy watching all of these videos that I like…"

(2)   "When I have leisure time I spent it mostly on Facebook newsfeed, watching videos especially tiktok videos found in FB…watching funny videos it makes me happy or laugh that in short period of time I forgot the stress that I'm experiencing. Also, I find it entertaining."

(3)   "The one with the video part. I find it enjoyable because of the suggested videos especially mine because the videos that come out to my newsfeed me are the stress relieving videos and also the memes. It helps to cope with stress in case for the meantime, you forget the activities at school that you should do. So, it serves as leisure time."

(4)   "The features of Facebook that I find enjoyable are the news feed (as it consists of funny memes and videos), where I usually stay longer, and the group page, which has a link to Korean and Chinese dramas, which I also find enjoyable. To cope with stress, I watch Korean and Chinese dramas. These features serve as my means of de-stressing from school work, especially when I cannot answer my modules. I spend my free time on Facebook, and then after that I go back to my schoolwork."

Sub-theme B: Story

A feature of Facebook also known as "My Day" enable users to view what their friends and favorite artists are up-to for a limited period of time which is 24 hours. Facebook feature's role in coping stress is illustrated in the statements below:

(1)   "…and viewing/watching the My Day stories of my friends about their happenings in life."

10. Results

10.1. Profile of Respondents

RESPONDENT NUMBER	GENDER	COURSE/ YEAR/ SECTION
1	FEMALE	BSED SS1-1
2	FEMALE	BSED SS2-1
3	MALE	BSED SS3-1
4	FEMALE	BSED SS 4-1

10.2. Effect of Online Learning to The Mental and Physical State of Students

For respondent number 1, online learning has negative and positive impact to her. The positive side is that she gets to multitask household chores and attend her classes. While the negative side is it affected her mentally and physically as her eyesight becomes poorer and she felt rattled most of the time in fear that her teachers would call her and she might not able to answer the questions thrown to her.

For respondent number 2, online learning affected her mental health because she sometimes gets bombarded with modules uploaded by her teachers. She finds it stressful and she kept on overthinking because of possibilities that she might not finish her school works as she also has responsibility at home. In terms of physical health, she does not have enough time to do work-out exercise and she cannot even eat properly.

For respondent number 3, it affected him drastically in his mental aspect because of numerous activities, modules and performance task in different subjects, from different teacher. He also experiences tiredness and pressure. While also working with his activities, he also experiences back pain, fatigue and hurting of the eye because of radiation.

Lastly, for respondent number 4, online learning is mentally draining because she intends to overthink a lot about classes because of her unstable internet connection. Also, to her, it was very stressful because she gets conscious about her grades and her academic performance. She also lacks sleep because she works her activities during midnight because it is the time where her internet connection becomes fast.

10.3. Enjoyable Features of Facebook

For respondent number 1, the specific features of Facebook that she finds enjoyable are the news feed because of its funny memes and videos where she stays longer because it has link to Korean and Chinese drama. To cope with stress, she watches Korean and Chinese drama.

For respondent number 2, the one with video part is the specific feature of Facebook that she finds enjoyable because of the suggested video especially the videos that comes out from her news feed are the stress relieving videos and also the memes.

For respondent number 3, when he has leisure time he mostly spend it on Facebook news feed by watching videos, especially TikTok videos found in Facebook, and through viewing/watching the myday stories of his friends about their happenings in life.

Lastly, for respondent number 4, the specific features of Facebook that she personally like and finds it enjoyable is the video feature because she can search as many videos as she can; music video that she personally like because she is a K-Pop fan and she can also watch K-Drama for free in Facebook.

10.4. Effectiveness of Facebook Features in Coping Up with Stress

For respondent number 1, it brings her to another dimension which she finds enjoyable and distressing.

For respondent number 2, she believes that the features of Facebook slightly help her cope up with stress as there may be times that those on Facebook are toxic, increasing her stress and anxiety especially she watches relatable or sad videos.

As for respondent number 3, he said that yes, features of Facebook is effective in helping him cope with stress.

Lastly, for respondent number 4, she also said yes that features of Facebook helps her cope up with stress.

10.5. Ways of How Features of Facebook Help in Coping-up with Stress

For respondent number 1, features of Facebook serve as a means of distressing herself from school works, especially when she cannot answer her modules. She spends her free time on Facebook, and then go back to school works after being entertained.

For respondent number 2, features of Facebook somehow relieve her stress but not totally because there are certain parts where it cannot help to relieve the stress.

Next, for respondent number 3, by watching funny videos, it makes him happy or laugh at it that in a short period of time, he forgot the stress that he's experiencing. It offers him entertainment,

For respondent number 4, a specific feature of Facebook that is one of her coping mechanisms and help her in relieving her stress is videos. She gets to unwind and relax for a while and become happy while watching videos, making her away from overthinking.

10.6. Personal Use of Facebook

For respondent number 1, yes, of course, she uses Facebook. She has to use it because some of her teachers post their announcements on group pages.

For respondent number 2, yes, she personally uses Facebook,

As for respondent number 3, yes, he uses Facebook too.

Lastly, for respondent number 4, yes, she uses Facebook.

11. Discussion

The abovementioned themes describe the lived experiences of Social Studies Majors in using Facebook as a coping mechanism. These are (1) Struggles in Online Learning: Its Effects; (2) Facebook Features' Role in Coping Stress.

Theme 1 refers to Struggles in Online Learning: Its Effects. Online learning has been proven as the best method to cater the educational demand of humanity during the pandemic. Yet, physical and mental side effects emerged as a result to shift to online learning. The swift sharing of modules or posting it to the class portal allows teacher to distribute task in a record speed. But this also facilitates stress among students as they felt like teachers shovel them with tons of load works. Mental stress frequently occurred among the students and it disrupts their well-being. Some of them gets stressed when the signal is unstable which before the pandemic, before online learning, was taken for granted only. Online learning has also take a toll on student's physical attributes. Unlike the face to face setting, online learning allows student to stay idle for hours. Being an idle individual has a lot of risk to the body such as an increase of body weight and accumulation of radiation due to the use of gadgets in long hours. Some claim it takes a toll on their sleeping pattern which is very alarming since sleep is very crucial in human development.

Theme 2 pertains to Facebooks Roles in Coping Stress. Every human reacts differently to stress. Before the advent of social media, people tend to read books or play sports frequently to unwind stress. Today unwinding means scrolling in Facebook feed and reacting to post or memes. This ease of access enabled humanity to shift how they react to stress. Facebook was designed to be addictive. As years go by, Facebook keeps on updating its features to increase screen time of its users. It aims to keep you glued on your gadget as much as possible. That is alarming. But it seems that humanity can't let go of its influence. Facebook became more creative; humans also became more addicted. As mention earlier, Facebook constantly evolves such as

improving its ease of access to medias especially videos. Ease of access are one of Facebook's strongest arsenal of influence to it users. Humans love convenience, Facebook has it. Facebook has also exploited humanity's love to express itself and the craving of recognition and attention. By allowing to upload one's photo on their profile or in their Story and adding reaction buttons it allows them to feed those users a sense of recognition and attention they get from their reactors, encouraging them to upload more and more which lead to more screen time. In theory, most users do not know this. It's very efficient psychological manipulation.

12. Summary

As a result of COVID-19, countries worldwide enacted lockdowns, suspending outdoor activities and human interaction in places such as schools, malls, and offices. The shutdown and confinement of people extended the communication and activity over the internet. As a result, internet services and Facebook users grew in popularity.

The focus of this study was to understand how social studies major use Facebook as a coping mechanism during online learning. A Pew Research Center study refuted the popular belief that using Facebook and other social media platforms causes anxiety and sadness. Since its debut in 2004, Facebook has experienced consistent growth and increased market and social importance.

Study's groundwork is established and theoretically supported by Cognitive Dissonance Theory and The Stress and Coping models of Lazarus and Folkman. Facebook as coping mechanism falls in problem focused coping because it tries to alter the distress caused by stressors. Study entitled The Lived Experiences of Social Studies Majors in Using Facebook as a Coping Mechanism During Online Learning shall be done within the Academic Year 2021-2022. This study limits the function of Facebook to coping mechanism among college students, specifically Social Studies majors from Leyte Normal University. Moreover, the study investigated the relationship between university students' stress and anxiety. The study was conducted at Tacloban City, Leyte with the aim to determine the positive effects of Facebook as a coping mechanism towards online learning. The data were collected through semi-structured interview questionnaires that enabled the students to express and share their experiences.

The research approach used in this study was qualitative study and the design that was used was transcendental phenomenology to gain information on how student use Facebook as a coping mechanism.

The participants of this study are four students, one student coming from each year level from the first year to fourth year who are taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social Studies in Leyte Normal University. These students stood as the representative of their year level to share their different experiences in connection to the study. The sampling method used in this study was convenience sampling, which is a non-probability method of selecting people for studies that is dependent on participants being available, close to the study.

The findings of the results were seen during the analysis of the gathered data and was observed that some of the participants have almost the same answer to the questions provided by the researchers.

13. Conclusion

Based on the findings derived from this study and generation of results, it can be inferred that online learning has a detrimental effect to students, mentally and physically. These aspects contribute much in their endeavor to comply the educational outputs assigned to them.

Likewise, from the lens of students' experience, it can be deduced that using Facebook is an effective tool as a coping mechanism to students. As mentioned by one of the respondents, she said that features in Facebook helps her in relieving stress. Facebook is her way to relax, unwind and be happy.

Therefore, online learning cannot ensure better learning outcome among all the students. We cannot guarantee a quality learning outcome if the students themselves are facing numerous struggles. The experiences and problems that the students delve with in an online learning setup are determinants of the appropriate adjustments that the institutions and teachers should consider.

14. Recommendations

The study's findings indicate that online learning has a negative effect on students, both mentally and physically. Despite the difficulties they had because of online learning, they were able to overcome it with the support of Facebook. The following recommendation suggest to help students who struggles from the said situation.

To the University, provide a program that can help the students to choose what type of distant learning that they desire. Whether a modular type of learning or online.

To the Teachers, they should give instructional resources that do not require a strong internet connection and should not compel students to participate in online discussions.

To the Students continue to pursue their studies regardless of the situation that we are currently facing off without forgetting to remind ourselves to pause and rest for a while.

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