

Facebook Platform Use and the Academic Writing Skills of Senior High School Students

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Facebook usage on the academic writing skills of senior high school students at Pagbilao National High School. It examines the relationship between students' Facebook use, in terms of frequency, activities, group discussions, and content preferences, and their academic writing proficiency in coherence, organization, vocabulary, grammar, adherence to conventions, and argumentation. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing a stratified random sampling method. Data collection involved a survey on Facebook usage and a multiple-choice academic writing test. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used to determine significant relationships between the variables. Findings indicate that students frequently use Facebook for communication, entertainment, and news updates but engage less in structured academic discussions. While Facebook offers opportunities for informal writing practice, excessive use may hinder academic writing, particularly in maintaining formality, coherence, and adherence to conventions. A moderate correlation was found between specific Facebook activities and students' writing proficiency, suggesting that structured engagement on the platform could enhance writing skills. The study highlights the importance of integrating digital literacy and academic writing strategies in education. Teachers and policymakers may leverage Facebook's interactive features for guided writing activities. Further research is recommended to explore long-term effects and interventions to enhance students' writing skills in digital learning environments.

Keywords: Facebook, Digital Learning, Academic Writing, Senior High School Student

1. Introduction

Writing is an indispensable skill in academic and professional settings. It is not only a fundamental form of communication but also a critical tool for thinking, reasoning, and self-expression. In the context of Philippine senior high school education, where courses such as Practical Research and English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) are core components of the curriculum, proficiency in academic writing is considered essential for students' holistic development and future academic pursuits. However, despite institutional efforts and curriculum reforms, many students continue to struggle with producing coherent, organized, and grammatically sound academic texts. This persistent gap has raised questions about the external influences that shape or disrupt writing development—chief among them, social media use.

Among the various platforms, **Facebook remains the most dominant** and widely used social network among students in the Philippines. Its popularity is attributed to its accessibility, functionality, and social appeal. Students use Facebook not only for social interaction but also for academic collaboration, entertainment, and access to information. This pervasive engagement offers opportunities for authentic communication and informal writing practice. However, it also exposes students to informal language conventions, abbreviated writing styles, and distractions that may compromise their academic writing performance. While Facebook's potential in education has been explored in studies highlighting its collaborative and motivational benefits, there is limited research specifically examining its impact on **academic writing skills among senior high school students**, especially within the Philippine setting. This study addresses that gap by investigating the relationship between Facebook usage and the academic writing skills of students at Pagbilao National High School.

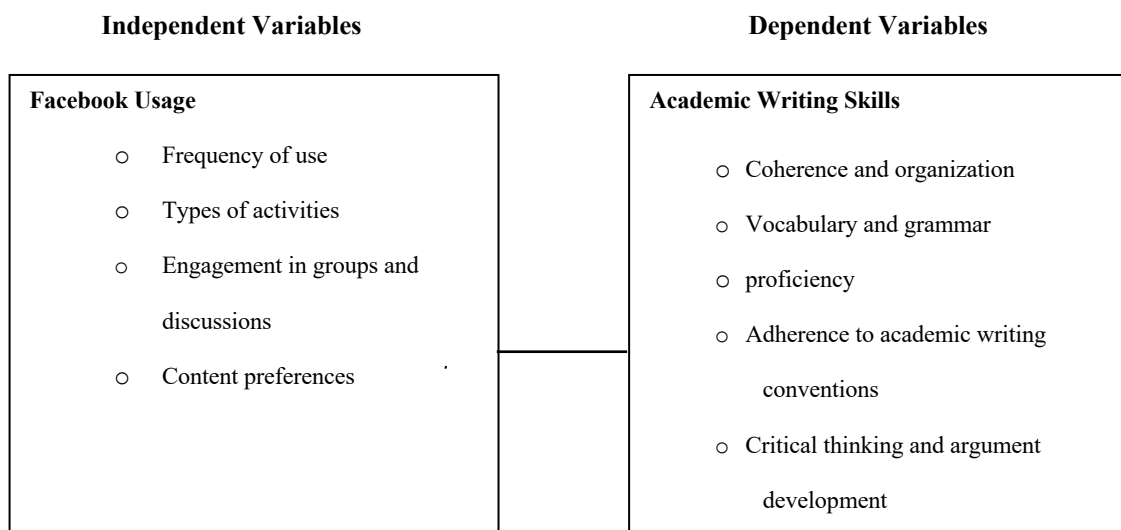
1.1. Research Questions

This study attempts to determine the use of the Facebook platform and the academic writing skills of senior high school students academic writing skills. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the Facebook usage of the students in terms of:
 - 1.1. Frequency of Facebook Use;
 - 1.2. Types of Activities
 - 1.3. Engagement in Group Discussions
 - 1.4. Content Preferences on Facebook.
2. What is the level of academic writing skills among senior high school students as to their:
 - 2.1. Coherence and Organization
 - 2.2. Vocabulary and Grammar Proficiency
 - 2.3. Adherence to Academic Conventions
 - 2.4. Critical Thinking and Argument Development.
3. Is there a significant relationship between the use of the Facebook platform and the students' academic writing skills?

1.2. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. The Research Paradigm



The research paradigm examines the link between Facebook usage and academic writing skills among senior high school students. It identifies independent variables like frequency, activities, group engagement, and content preferences, which are hypothesized to correlate with dependent variables like coherence, organization, vocabulary, grammar proficiency, adherence to conventions, and critical thinking. The study aims to understand the impact of Facebook on academic writing and contribute to the understanding of social media's role in education.

2. Method

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to explore whether and how Facebook use correlates with students' academic writing performance. A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure a representative sample across different academic tracks: Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Home Economics (HE), and Shielded Metal Arc Welding (SMAW). A total of 137 Grade 11 students participated in the study.

Two research instruments were utilized: (1) a validated survey questionnaire measuring various dimensions of Facebook usage—including frequency of use, types of activities (e.g., posting, messaging, liking), engagement in group discussions, and content preferences—and (2) a multiple-choice academic writing test assessing students across four key dimensions of academic writing: (a) coherence and organization, (b) vocabulary and grammar proficiency, (c) adherence to academic writing conventions, and (d) critical thinking and argument development.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize patterns of Facebook usage and levels of academic writing proficiency, and Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent (Facebook usage) and dependent (writing skills) variables.

3. Results

The results revealed several noteworthy trends. First, in terms of Facebook usage, students frequently used the platform, primarily for social interaction and entertainment. Activities like scrolling through newsfeeds, reacting to posts, and chatting with friends were common. However, engagement in academic or topic-focused group discussions was less frequent, and educational content was not a primary content preference for most respondents.

In terms of writing proficiency, students demonstrated moderate competence across the assessed dimensions. The highest scores were recorded in vocabulary and grammar, while the lowest were in adherence to academic conventions and argument development. Students generally struggled with formality, structure, and logical coherence in their written responses.

The correlational analysis showed a moderate but statistically significant relationship between certain aspects of Facebook usage—particularly group discussion participation and content-related interaction—and writing proficiency in specific areas such as vocabulary use and argument development. Conversely, high frequency of unstructured or purely entertainment-focused Facebook use was negatively associated with aspects requiring formal structure and adherence to conventions. For instance, students who spent more time browsing memes, entertainment content, or casual chats exhibited a tendency to carry over informal writing habits into their academic work, often resulting in the use of slang, emojis, inconsistent grammar, and casual tone in formal writing tasks.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study contribute to the growing discourse on the intersection of digital media and education, particularly regarding how informal digital writing practices influence formal academic skillsets. Facebook, when used with intention and guidance, can serve as a supplementary platform for language development. Its capacity to support collaborative writing, enable peer feedback, and encourage reflective interaction mirrors many of the pedagogical strategies employed in writing classrooms. Group discussions on Facebook, for example, can foster argumentative reasoning, vocabulary expansion, and sustained engagement with topical issues—all critical elements of academic writing.

However, the platform's informal nature also presents distinct challenges. Without structured guidance or awareness, students may internalize lax language norms that hinder their ability to conform to academic writing standards. The tendency to prioritize speed over accuracy, brevity over depth, and entertainment over reflection can erode the disciplined habits required in formal academic contexts. The study's results affirm this duality, showing both the educational potential and risks of Facebook in relation to academic writing development.

The implications are clear: educators and policymakers should not seek to ban or demonize social media, but rather, find innovative ways to integrate it into the classroom in meaningful, pedagogically sound ways. Digital literacy programs should go beyond technical navigation skills to include training in digital communication etiquette, evaluation of sources, and adaptation of tone and style for various contexts. English teachers might consider incorporating Facebook-based writing tasks—such as debates, reflective posts, or peer critiques—into EAPP and research subjects, with rubrics that stress academic rigor.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the complex but impactful relationship between Facebook use and students' academic writing skills. While excessive, unstructured use can detract from writing proficiency, strategic and educationally framed use has the potential to reinforce key writing competencies. Future research could explore longitudinal effects, cross-platform comparisons (e.g., TikTok, Reddit), and experimental interventions to further clarify and expand on these findings. For now, the study offers valuable insights for those seeking to bridge the gap between students' digital lives and their academic growth.

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