

THE Interplay of Spirituality and Social Media Behavior: Basis for an Intervention PLAN

Rey Jhonson L. Pelonita¹, Rhodora S. Gamboa²

¹Academic Coordinator, Assumption Polytechnic College of Southern Mindanao Inc.
rpelonita_210000002019@uic.edu.ph

²Faculty, University of the Immaculate Conception, Davao City, Philippines
rgamboa@uic.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

The growing concern about problematic social media behavior among adolescents demands a deeper exploration of its underlying factors. This quantitative study, using a descriptive correlational design, examined the relationship between spirituality and social media behavior among Grade 10 learners in three selected Catholic schools in Davao City. In addition, the study employed adapted questionnaires to assess the extent of learners' spirituality and the status of their social media behavior. Stratified quota sampling was used to select respondents for this study. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation were utilized to interpret and analyze the data. The findings revealed that the extent of spirituality of Grade 10 learners was rated moderate and described as sometimes manifested. In contrast, the status of their social media behavior was observed to be low, with it seldom being demonstrated. Likewise, this study found no significant relationship between spirituality and social media behavior. Consequently, the results of the study were consolidated as a baseline for crafting an intervention plan to foster positive online behavior and nurture spiritual growth.

KEYWORDS: *Values education, spirituality, social media behavior, correlation, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Social media behavior refers to how individuals interact with, communicate on, and engage with content on social media platforms, influencing their social connections and overall well-being (Andreassen et al., 2017). However, the current state of social media behavior among adolescents is increasingly discouraging and challenging, as excessive and problematic use has led to various adverse consequences. Alarming, Griffiths and Kruss (2017) and Thivanka (2016) revealed that a high percentage of users suffer from addiction

with social media behavior, resulting in negative effects such as neglect of real-life responsibilities, difficulty in adapting to change, and interpersonal conflicts, including diminished emotional well-being.

Further, Banyai et al. (2017) presented that around 4.5 percent of adolescents have shown problematic social media behavior, exhibiting signs of low self-esteem, depressive symptoms, and uncontrollable addictive social media behavior. Furthermore, individuals who have manifested problematic social media behavior were observed to develop mental health issues, particularly anxiety and depression (Shannon et al., 2022). Consequently, Paakkari (2021) underscored that this growing concern poses a significant challenge in values education, necessitating well-structured intervention strategies to mitigate its harmful effects.

In Sri Lanka, Wickramanayake (2021) reported data on problematic social media behavior among adolescents, which raised significant concerns: over 70 percent of individuals were reported to be seriously victimized by aggressive social media behavior. Also, in Finland, Paakkari et al. (2021) reported that 9.4 percent of individuals exhibited problematic social media behavior, which was significantly correlated with academic struggles and insufficient parental guidance. Moreover, in the Netherlands, Hawk et al. (2019) observed that learners who have manifested excessive and problematic social media behavior were observed to have attention-seeking tendencies, leading to self-defeating patterns such as cyberbullying involvement, low self-esteem, and increased emotional distress.

In the Philippines, the increasing prevalence of problematic social media behavior remains a growing concern. In Cagayan Valley, learners with addictive social media behavior are found to demonstrate academic procrastination, problematic time management, and unfocused goal setting as presented by Caratiquit and Caratiquit (2023). Similarly, Tadena et al. (2020) found that Filipino adolescents who have demonstrated problematic social media behavior were found to exhibit unhealthy lifestyle habits, wherein 89.5 percent were discovered to be at high risk of developing eating disorders.

In a study by Duyo et al. (2022) among college students in Davao City, it was found that social media behaviors and engagement negatively influence academic performance, meaning that the more students engage with social media, the more academically incompetent they become.

Existing studies have examined the relationship between spirituality and social media behavior, with some indicating a significant association. According to Paakkari et al. (2021), individuals with strong spirituality tend to exhibit more controlled social media behavior, minimizing their risk of excessive use. In addition, Wood et al. (2016) suggested that higher levels of spirituality may discourage the development of compulsive social media behavior. However, despite these findings, the literature remains inconclusive regarding the direct influence of spirituality on social media behavior among adolescents, particularly Grade 10 learners, leaving a gap in understanding how spirituality affects their social media behavior.

The findings of this study are highly relevant to Catholic schools and organizations, as they provide a foundation for addressing the growing concerns about problematic social media behavior among learners related to their spirituality. Specifically, these insights may assist values educators and school practitioners in raising awareness of problematic social media behavior related to their spirituality, particularly in promoting responsible, mindful social media use among learners. Therefore, the study aimed to determine the significance of the relationship between spirituality and social media behavior among the Grade 10 learners, and to craft an intervention plan based on the findings.

Statement of the Problem

1. What is the extent of spirituality of Grade 10 learners in terms of: self-efficacy; and life scheme?
2. What is the status of social media behavior of Grade 10 learners in terms of: connectedness; prosocial behavior; avoidance; antibully; and political behavior?
3. Is there a significant relationship between: spirituality and social media behavior?
4. Based on the findings, what intervention plan can be formulated?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. The study employed a quantitative research approach, specifically a descriptive correlational design, to examine the relationship between spirituality and social media behavior among Grade 10 learners. This method allowed for the collection and analysis of numerical data through surveys to identify trends and associations.

Research Respondents. The study involved 150 Grade 10 learners from selected private Catholic schools in Davao City, chosen through stratified quota sampling, with 38 respondents from School A, 55 from School B, and 57 from School C. Only Grade 10 learners from private Catholic schools were included, while students from Grades 7, 8, and 9, senior high school, and public schools were excluded from the study.

Research Locale. The study was conducted in three selected Catholic schools in Davao City. These schools were selected for their sufficient number of respondents, ensuring the study's reliability, while Davao City's rising social media behavior concerns made it a relevant research setting. The researcher adapted two research questionnaires.

Research Instruments. To measure learners' spirituality, the Spirituality Index of Well-Being (Daaleman and Frey, 2004) was used. Meanwhile, the Social Media Behavior Scale (Cissel, 2018) was used to assess social media behavior. The study utilized mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to interpret and analyze the data. Approval was first sought from the Dean of the Graduate School of UIC, followed by submission to the UIC Research Ethics Committee for ethical clearance. Upon approval, permission was requested from the school presidents or heads, and a brief in-person orientation was conducted for respondents, emphasizing voluntary participation. Parental consent and signed assent forms were obtained, ensuring trust and ethical compliance.

Ethical Considerations. This investigation was guided and monitored by the UIC-REC to ensure its ethical soundness. Thus, the following ethical dimensions were validated: social value, informed consent, vulnerability of the research participants, risks, benefits and safety, privacy and confidentiality of the information, justice, transparency, qualification of the researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Extent of Spirituality of Grade 10 Learners

Table 1 showed the level of spirituality of Grade 10 learners, using self-efficacy and life schemes as indicators. The result yields an overall mean score of 3.27, which is described as moderate, indicating that spirituality among

learners is sometimes manifested. This means that while they possess a sense of purpose, meaning, and the ability to navigate life challenges, such manifestations are not consistently strong. Their spirituality appears to surface only in particular situations and is not yet deeply ingrained in their daily lives. Further, the respondents' responses are homogeneous, as evidenced by the standard deviation of 0.87.

Table 1
The Extent of Spirituality of Grade 10 Learners

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Self-Efficacy	3.29	0.88	Moderate
Life Scheme	3.24	1.02	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.27	0.87	Moderate

The mean score for self-efficacy is 3.29, indicating a moderate level where spirituality in terms of self-efficacy is sometimes manifested. While they demonstrate confidence in making life decisions and finding direction, their self-efficacy tends to waver in more challenging situations. Similarly, the category mean for life scheme is 3.24, also moderate, suggesting that their sense of purpose and identity is sometimes reflected but remains inconsistent. Scores indicate that while they occasionally contemplate their purpose and direction, uncertainties persist, implying that their spiritual and personal framework is still developing as they navigate life’s challenges.

This finding on the extent of spirituality of Grade 10 learners aligns with the study by Verma and Gupta (2019) wherein they emphasized that learners often experience changing levels of spirituality, where they possess a fair sense of self efficacy in making life decisions but struggle with a consistent and profound manifestation of this. Similarly, the result of this study corroborates with the findings of Sousa-Poza and Altamirano (2021), posited that students with moderate spirituality often show signs of purposeful reflection yet struggle to sustain consistent spiritual habits.

The spirituality of Grade 10 learners in terms of self-efficacy aligns with the study by Johnson et al. (2021), where they posited that spirituality provides individuals with a sense of direction and resilience, reinforcing their confidence when circumstances are supportive. Similarly, the result of this study corroborates with the findings of Smith and Brown (2020) wherein they emphasized that individuals who integrate spirituality into their daily lives often

report higher self efficacy in situations where their perceptions in life serve as a source of motivation and guidance. Likewise, this result confirms the findings of Garcia and Lee (2018), what that individuals with moderate spirituality may struggle with self-doubt in unfamiliar or challenging circumstances, as their faith-based coping strategies may not always translate into a stable sense of confidence.

Further, Robinson and Patel (2017) argue that while spirituality may provide a sense of purpose, it does not necessarily translate into a stronger perception in one's capabilities. Additionally, Carter (2020) posits that in certain cases, excessive reliance on spirituality may lead to passivity, thereby diminishing their self-efficacy.

This finding on the sense of direction and purpose in life aligns with the study by Harrison and Clarke (2021), where it emphasized that individuals often experience fluctuations in their sense of purpose, particularly when faced with changing life circumstances. Similarly, this result supports the findings of Dawson et al. (2020), reported that the search for meaning is an evolving process, where individuals occasionally question their direction and struggle to establish a stable personal framework. In the same sense, this result confirms the study of Miller and Evans (2019), who reported that individuals who actively engage in reflection are more likely to navigate uncertainties with confidence, reinforcing their confidence in their ability to overcome challenges.

Conversely, Roberts and Hayes (2018) argue that an over-reliance on spirituality without active personal engagement can lead to confusion rather than clarity, particularly when individuals expect external forces to determine their purpose. Similarly, Green and Foster (2017) found that individuals with moderate spirituality often experience higher existential anxiety, as they struggle to reconcile their perspective with real-world challenges, limiting their self-efficacy.

The Status of Social Media Behavior of Grade 10 Learners

Table 2 shows the status of social media behavior among Grade 10 learners, using connectedness, prosocial behavior, avoidance, antibullying, and political behavior as indicators. Computations yield an overall mean score of 2.18, which is low, indicating that social media behavior among learners is rarely observed. This means that learners engage with social media selectively and thoughtfully, indicating a mindful approach to their online activities. This limited

social media behavior suggests they may prioritize other aspects of their personal, academic, or social lives, fostering a more balanced, intentional use of social media platforms. Further, the respondents' responses are homogeneous, as evidenced by an overall standard deviation of 0.49.

Table 2
The Status of Social Media Behavior of Grade 10 Learners

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
Connectedness	1.97	0.52	Low
Pro-Social Behavior	2.19	0.82	Low
Avoidance	2.69	0.86	Moderate
Antibully	2.27	0.72	Moderate
Political Behavior	1.79	0.91	Low
Overall Mean	2.18	0.49	Low

The study revealed varying levels of social media behaviors among learners.

This social media behavior of the learners aligns with the study by Carter and Jennings (2021), which noted that individuals with lower social media behavior often exhibit higher self-regulation and a more focused approach to personal and academic development. Similarly, this result corroborates with the findings of Thompson et al. (2020), highlighted that limited social media behavior allows individuals to cultivate deeper self-awareness, which can contribute to a more profound connection and greater self-efficacy in decision-making. Likewise, this result confirms the findings of Richardson and Blake (2019) that individuals with minimal social media behavior are more likely to develop resilience and self efficacy through real-world interactions rather than online validation.

Added on, Lewis and Harmon (2018) argue that restricted engagement may limit access to supportive networks that reinforce self-efficacy. Similarly, Matthews and Cole (2017) claim that social media, when used constructively, provides opportunities for self-expression and learning, which can strengthen one’s sense of purpose and direction.

Significance of the Relationship between Spirituality and Social Media Behavior of Grade 10 Learners

Table 3 presents the results of the test of significance for the relationship

between spirituality and social media behavior among Grade 10 learners. The findings revealed no significant relationship between spirituality and social media behavior, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.127 and an r-value of -0.125. This means that there is no strong evidence that spirituality affects social media behavior.

Table 3
Significance of the Relationship between Spirituality and Social Media Behavior of Grade 10 Learners

Variable paired with Social Media Behavior	r	p-value	Description
Spirituality	-0.125	0.127	Not Significant

This finding aligns with the study by Johnson and White (2020), and, Brown and Gray (2019), which posited that spirituality and social media behavior show no significant correlation. Conversely, the finding of this study contradicts the study by Williams et al. (2014), and, Smith and Thomas (2017), which noted that higher levels of spirituality were associated with more careful and intentional social media use.

Further, this finding does not validate the Symbolic Interactionism Theory which suggests that individuals shape their identities through social interactions. The result of this study challenges this notion by indicating that spirituality does not significantly shape social media behavior, suggesting that online interactions may not always be guided by deeply held spirituality.

Furthermore, this finding also challenges the notions of Dramaturgical Theory, particularly on the idea of front-stage and back-stage behavior, where people adjust their self-presentation based on social settings. This study argues that while self-presentation remains a key aspect of social media use, spirituality does not necessarily dictate how users navigate their front-stage and back-stage behaviors online.

Intervention Plan

Based on the findings of the study, a comprehensive intervention plan was developed. This plan aims to address the identified correlations and patterns observed within the data. The comprehensive intervention plan is outlined below:

I. RATIONALE

This intervention plan is designed to foster responsible social media behavior among learners in Catholic schools. It aims to equip learners with the necessary skills and values to navigate social media positively while fostering personal and social responsibility. The plan is structured to be integrated into the homeroom period, ensuring a continuous and progressive approach to behavior modification through reflective, educational, and experiential strategies.

II. OBJECTIVES

Enhance learners' responsible social media behavior through a structured intervention program.

1. Increase learners’ self-awareness regarding their social media usage and its impact on their well-being.
2. Develop positive online behavior through guided activities.
3. Assess learners’ progress and ensure the sustainability of responsible digital habits among learners.

III. ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION

Time Frame	
MAY	
Strategies	Preparation & Planning
Description	Plan out the implementation of the intervention program
Budget	Php 3000
Facilities/ Venue	Audio Visual Room
Materials and Equipment	Projector
Person In-Charge	Guidance Office, Principal, Area Coordinators
JUNE	
Strategies	Orientation & Self-Assessment
Description	<i>1st to 2nd Week:</i> Conduct an initial survey to gauge learners’ social media behavior <i>3rd to 4th Week:</i> Conduct orientation about the program and set expectations.
Budget	Php 300
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Self-assessment forms, Projector
Person In-Charge	Guidance Facilitator and Homeroom Adviser
JULY	

Strategies	Digital Footprint Awareness
Description	<i>1st to 4th Week:</i> Conduct interactive workshop on responsible digital footprints and online identity formation with weekly activities and reflections
Budget	PHP 500
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Videos, Handouts, Activity worksheets, Case Studies, Journals
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and CLVED Teacher
AUGUST	
Strategies	Ethical and Respectful Online Communication
Description	<i>1st Week:</i> Conduct discussion on netiquette, digital citizenship, and avoiding cyber conflicts. <i>3rd to 4th Week:</i> Engage learners in activities on netiquette, digital citizenship, and avoiding cyber conflicts with weekly reflections.
Budget	None
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Posters, Scenarios for role-play, Activity Sheets, Handouts, Journals
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser
SEPTEMBER	
Strategies	Volunteerism and Advocacy Campaigns
Description	<i>1st to 4th Week:</i> Encourage learners to participate in online volunteerism, advocacy campaigns, and kindness challenges with weekly reflections.
Budget	None
Facilities/ Venue	Computer Lab and Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Activity Sheets and Journals
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and Social Studies Teacher
OCTOBER	
Strategies	Political Awareness and Responsible Digital Advocacy

Description	<i>1st to 2nd Week:</i> Conduct Session on digital activism and on how to engage in meaningful discussions <i>3rd to 4th Week:</i> Provide meaningful activities with weekly reflections
Budget	None
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Slide presentation, Infographic, Case Studies, Scenarios, Journals
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and Social Studies Teacher
NOVEMBER	
Strategies	Anti-Cyberbullying Seminar
Description	<i>1st Week:</i> Conduct a seminar featuring experts on the effects of cyberbullying and how to prevent it <i>2nd to 4th Week:</i> Engage learners in scenario-driven activities with weekly reflections
Budget	Php 5000
Facilities/ Venue	Auditorium
Materials and Equipment	Speaker fees, Multimedia tools, and Journals
Person In-Charge	Guidance Counselor
DECEMBER	
Strategies	Avoidance of Harmful Social Media Behavior
Description	<i>1st Week:</i> Conduct session on the importance of promoting healthy social media engagement <i>2nd to 3rd Week:</i> Provide mindfulness activities on responsible social media behavior <i>4th Week:</i> Help learners set online boundaries for digital well-being
Budget	Php 200
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom
Materials and Equipment	Journals and Reflection worksheets
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser
JANUARY	

Strategies	Enhancing Critical Thinking in Social Media Use
Description	<i>1st to 4th Week:</i> Provide activities that help learners analyze misinformation and demonstrate responsible sharing online with weekly reflections
Budget	Php 300
Facilities/ Venue	Computer Lab
Materials and Equipment	Activity Sheets, Fact-checking tools, Online Articles, Journals
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and ICT Coordinator
FEBRUARY	
Strategies	Social Media Detox and Balance
Description	<i>1st to 4th Week:</i> Encourage learners to limit online activities for a month. -Engage learners in physical activities weekly during homeroom period. -Ask learners to write weekly reflections.
Budget	None
Facilities/ Venue	School Ground
Materials and Equipment	Activity sheets, Journals, Materials for Larong Pinoy
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and PE Teacher
MARCH	
Strategies	Final Assessment and Reflection
Description	<i>1st to 2nd Week:</i> Conduct a post-intervention survey and Interviews <i>3rd Week:</i> Engage learners in a 3-day retreat <i>4th Week:</i> Awarding Ceremony
Budget	Php 30,000 – Php 40, 000
Facilities/ Venue	Classroom (IDI, Survey), m.a. Retreat House (Retreat), Audio Visual Room (Awarding Ceremony)
Materials and Equipment	Evaluation forms, Certificates
Person In-Charge	Homeroom Adviser and CLVED Teacher
APRIL	
Strategies	Strategic Assessment

Description	Assess the implemented intervention program
Budget	Php 3,000
Facilities/ Venue	Audio Visual Room
Materials and Equipment	Projector and Evaluation Forms
Person In-Charge	Guidance Office, Principal, Area Coordinators, Homeroom Adviser, and Subject Teachers

IV. EVALUATION & MONITORING MECHANISM

MECHANISM	DESCRIPTION	Monitoring
Progress Monitoring Surveys (Quarterly)	Students will complete self-assessment forms measuring self-efficacy, sense of purpose, and responsible social media use.	Every 3 months
Teacher-Learner Feedback Conference	Teachers and mentors will provide qualitative feedback on observed changes in student behavior and engagement.	Weekly
Parent Observations & Home Reports	Parents report noticeable changes in their child's screen time habits, attitudes, and emotional well-being.	Monthly
Student Journals & Reflection Papers	Journals will be reviewed to assess students' growth in self-awareness and personal development.	Weekly
Attendance & Participation Tracking	Participation in workshops, mentoring, and volunteer programs will be monitored to ensure student engagement.	Daily
Strategic Assessment and Planning	Conduct an end-of-year assessment to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the intervention and identify areas for future improvement.	End of the Program

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