BEYOND THE NEWS FEED: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ENHANCES PHILIPPINE HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG THE FUTURE SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS

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Abstract

Social media platforms serve as convenient tools for students to learn, share, and exchange information about Philippine history, providing tangible information that is beneficial to their learning progress. However, online circulation of fake news, misinformation, and biased interpretations continuously increases, threatening students' learning. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand the role of social media platforms in enhancing the historical consciousness of future Social Studies educators at Immaculate Conception College of Balayan Inc. Within the framework of the qualitative method, the researchers utilized a descriptive design to explore students' preferred social media platforms, how they enhance their Philippine historical consciousness, and how they address these challenges through the use of self-created and open-ended questions. Using a purposive sampling technique, which falls under the non-probability sampling method, the researchers selected ten (10) participants from each grade level. Additionally, thematic analysis revealed challenges faced by the students while using social media platforms, including difficulties in verifying sources, a lack of critical thinking development, and the influence of biased interpretations. The study identifies strategies to overcome the negative roles of social media, including media literacy education using fact-checking tools and collaborative efforts. In conclusion, it can facilitate the creation of social media pages 'Journey through Time' located in Facebook application that serve as reliable source of factual historical information while minimizing the spread of misinformation.

Keywords: challenges, fact-checking tools, historical consciousness, role, social media platforms, students

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, people use social media platforms to learn, share, and exchange information through images, videos, and blogs related to their experiences and interests. It is now a convenient tool, particularly in education, to easily browse e-books and e-journals online that provide concrete educational information for students essential to their learning progress. However, this also affects the spreading of misinformation by incorrect interpretation of data and information on different social media platforms (Manecksha et al., 2022).

In connection with this, Dharun et al. (2024) asserted that social media platforms have emerged as superior trending networks, surpassing traditional methods such as television viewing and radio listening, which have become outdated in the digital age. Social media platforms are one of the major sources of increasing numbers of misinformation and hoaxes, which block students from absorbing accurate, relevant, and factual information provided by content writers to worsen their capacity to learn history. Despite these challenges, social media platforms have a greater influence on students' lives by facilitating positive and friendly communication between teachers, classmates, and friends.

Through these platforms, students find relevant and meaningful solutions to their questions and problems related to history if they have proper practice and enough guidance in identifying fake news around the internet (Borhan-Eddine et al., 2020). Furthermore, it also plays a significant role in spreading relevant current issues, topics, and information related to Philippine history where relevant social issues are included in students' learning competencies that help to enhance their historical consciousness. Besides, when it comes to education, teachers are assigned to spread factual information that improves students' learning processes and builds them to become more nationalist and better Filipinos while learning.

A recent episode of the game show Rainbow Rumble highlighted the historical ignorance of Filipino youth when a contestant incorrectly answered "Sasa" instead of "Sisa" regarding the mother of Crispin and Basilio from Rizal's Noli Me Tangere. Similarly, contestants on "Pinoy Big Brother" failed to identify the Gomburza priests, sparking concerns about the educational system's neglect of cultural and historical education among students. Moreover, these two incidents appeared on different social media platforms nationwide and alarmed many Filipino youths about the value of studying Philippine history to preserve their historical legacy for the next generation.

With that, this study identifies a significant research gap in understanding how social media platforms specifically enhance students' historical consciousness, particularly in the context of preserving Philippine historical information and fostering national camaraderie. Therefore, this study aims to know and understand the role of social media platforms in enhancing the Philippine historical consciousness among future Social Studies educators at Immaculate Conception College of Balayan Inc. The results of this study offer a deeper understanding and improved ideas, helping teachers to develop essential and effective strategies to enhance students' historical consciousness. This output, which is the created social media page, can be used as an educational integration to enhance the historical knowledge of the students and emphasize the significant role of social media platforms in enhancing student Philippine historical consciousness.

Objectives

This study aims to know and understand the role of social media platforms in enhancing the Philippine historical consciousness among future social studies educators at Immaculate Conception College of Balayan Inc. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What social media platforms are commonly used by the students as a source of their Philippine historical consciousness?
2. How social media platforms enhance the Philippine historical consciousness of the students?
3. What challenges are faced by students in using social media platforms in enhancing their Philippine historical consciousness?
4. How do students address the challenges of using social media platforms in enhancing their Philippine historical consciousness?
5. Based on the findings, the researchers will create a social media page that could provide factual information in enhancing the Philippine historical consciousness of the students.

METHODS

Methodology and Design

To accomplish the objectives of the study, the researchers employed a descriptive design under qualitative method of research. As stated by Sirisilla (2023), descriptive Research design helps researchers to gather data and information about a group or phenomenon that provides an accurate picture of characteristics and behavior. This will provide a deep understanding of student's knowledge, experiences, and perspectives about the role of social media platforms in enhancing Philippine historical consciousness that is relevant in today's generation.

Population and Sampling

This researcher employed a purposive sampling technique, which falls under the non-probability sampling method to select participants that are most relevant to the study, it ensures that the data is aligned with the study and its objectives (Stewart 2024). In this study, the participants were selected based on these three (3) relevant criteria to ensure the sample aligns with the focus of the study. The following are the 3 criteria for selecting the participants; first, must join online discussions related to history; second, must already have experience using fact-checking tools; third, must be interested in historical and cultural activities.

Instrumentations

The researchers conducted a pre-survey interview to select study participants based on three criteria and utilized a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to gather data. They created a self-constructed, three-question interview guide to explore which social media platforms enhance historical consciousness about the Philippines, how these platforms can aid future educators, the challenges faced by these educators, and their strategies for overcoming these challenges. According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), participant responses reflect their individual experiences and perspectives, allowing the researchers to collect in-depth, open-ended data on the subject.

Data Collection

Researchers at Immaculate Conception College of Balayan Inc. seek approval from the Dean and Principal to conduct interviews on how social media enhances historical consciousness among future social studies educators. After obtaining permission, they explain the study's purpose to participants and teachers and then conduct face-to-face interviews using self-constructed questionnaires. Data is carefully analyzed, and participant confidentiality is strictly maintained, ensuring personal information is securely stored and accessible only to researchers.

Data Analysis

Researchers employed thematic analysis to evaluate transcribed interview data, organizing it into themes and sub-themes to identify common perspectives and filter out repetitive responses. This approach revealed key themes reflecting participants' experiences and views on how social media platforms enhance their historical consciousness in the Philippines, relevant to today's generation.

Ethical Considerations

The study involves securing approval from the administration to use participants, who are provided with a consent form and oriented about its content. Participants have the freedom to choose their involvement and are not required to provide identifying information. Researchers ensure confidentiality by assigning alpha-numeric codes, securely storing data, and maintaining privacy unless legally required to disclose information. Participants can withdraw without harm to their relationship with researchers, and their information remains confidential post-study.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Social media platforms commonly used by the participants

Theme 1: Facebook

The theme "Facebook" highlights its role in enhancing students' awareness of Philippine history through accessible information and continuous learning, as noted by Participants 1, 4, 5, and 8. Participant 2 emphasizes the importance of preserving historical content authentically. Participants 3 and 7 mention that videos on the platform boost viewers' interest in history. Duraisingh (2022) supports this by stating that Facebook effectively promotes historical consciousness. Overall, Facebook is recognized as a valuable and relevant source for historical information and current issues, including the West Philippine Sea controversy and political matters.

Theme 2: *YouTube*

Participants noted that "YouTube" is the second most common platform for learning about Philippine history. Participant 6 emphasized that watching historical videos enhances understanding of the sacrifices made by Philippine heroes. Participant 9 shared an empathetic response to a video about Bamban's Mayor, which prompted further investigation into her identity, linking to historical themes of rightful citizenship in Philippine history. According to Werner and Gralik (2021), YouTube influences public perceptions of history and national identity, raising concerns about the accuracy of documentaries. The platform also highlights current events, particularly regarding the West Philippine Sea, fostering public awareness and support for government actions. In conclusion, YouTube aids students

in acquiring applicable knowledge and encourages critical evaluation of information, enhancing awareness of historical events.

Theme 3: TikTok

The final theme discusses the social media platform most frequently used by students, with Participant 10 highlighting TikTok as a source of Philippine history, referencing the Gomborza movie. This film emphasizes the importance of preserving history amidst change and encourages students to learn and confront challenges for their nation. TikTok enhances empathy and learning among students. Additionally, Adriaansen, R. (2022) notes that TikTok promotes meaningful communication about historical eras through video analysis and utilizes a multi-modal approach with text, audio, and videos to deepen understanding of the past.

The role of social media platforms in shaping the knowledge, experiences, and perspectives of the participants

Theme 1: Exposure to Diverse Historical Content

The statement "Exposure of the Students to Diverse Historical Content" highlights social media's role in enhancing students' knowledge of Philippine history. Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 reported gaining insights and a deeper understanding of historical facts through platforms like Facebook, such as the origin of the name "Philippines" during Spanish colonization. In contrast, Participants 5 and 9 felt they were not exposed to diverse historical content. This aligns with Omar and Ondimu (2024), who noted that social media influences connectivity, social behavior, political engagement, and cultural norms, suggesting that participants encounter a variety of historical information that can impact their behavior and perspectives.

Theme 2: *Validation of Historical Knowledge*

The theme of 'Validation of Historical Knowledge' emerged from participants' experiences with social media, enhancing their understanding of Philippine history. Participant 1 noted that social media aids in verifying historical information shared by teachers, reducing confusion. Participants 3 and 8 highlighted that platforms like Facebook helped them confirm their knowledge about the West Philippine Sea and Philippine discovery, improving their historical consciousness. They expressed confidence in teaching factual information as future history teachers. Geels et al. (2024) emphasized that verified sources enable users to confirm information accuracy and reduce misinformation spread. Participants 1, 3, and 8 utilized social media to validate their teachers' content, fostering trust and a solid understanding.

Theme 3: Stimulation of Interest and Engagement

The theme "Stimulation of Interest and Engagement" highlights the role of social media in enhancing students' historical consciousness about Philippine History. Participants 2, 6, and 7 noted that social media platforms fostered their interest and engagement in seeking historical information. Participant 8 shared that social media transformed their initial cluelessness into motivation to engage with current national issues, such as the West Philippine Sea.

Participant 10 emphasized that social media shaped their understanding of Philippine History, prompting them to seek more information. Hood and Reid (2018) noted that effective social media use enhances user engagement with local history by making it more accessible and interactive. Participants 2, 6, 7, 8, and 10 affirmed that social media sparks their interest in Philippine history, motivating them to learn more about historical events and figures.

Theme 4: *Awareness of Contemporary Relevance*

The theme "Awareness of Contemporary Relevance" emerged from participant responses on social media's role in enhancing Philippine historical consciousness. Participants 5 and 8 noted that social media exposes them to current events that deepen their historical awareness. Participant 10 highlighted the need for relevant information to share with others. As Decenilla and Apolinario (2022) state, TikTok can enhance students' historical consciousness and understanding of contemporary issues. Participants emphasized the importance of social and historical awareness for effective problem-solving.

The challenges faced by the participants when using social media platforms

Theme 1: Encountering Misinformation

The theme "Encountering Misinformation" addresses the challenges faced by future Social Studies educators in using social media to understand Philippine history. Participant 1 discussed the debate over the national hero status of Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio, revealing that Executive Order No. 75 does not designate an official national hero. Participant 9 highlighted misinformation regarding Emilio Aguinaldo as the first president, reflecting the realities for many Filipinos during his era. Participant 5 noted issues with misinformation stemming from compromised author credibility, while Participants 8 and 10 shared experiences of false information about political candidates and historical figures during the 2022 national election. They stressed the importance of providing factual clarifications and engaging in discussions about misinformation. According to Carlson (2018), misinformation is a significant issue on social media due to the rapid spread of user-generated content without proper editorial oversight. Participants 1, 5, 8, 9, and 10 underscored the necessity of verifying information and sources, especially in discussions of political and historical topics in the Philippines.

Theme 2: *Difficulty in Source Verification*

Participants face challenges in "Difficulty in Source Verification" on social media, leading to uncertainty about the relevance and accuracy of information. Participant 2 actively searches for facts to ensure accuracy, while Participants 3 and 6 conduct comparative research using multiple sources, including textbooks, to cross-check information from Facebook. Keshavarz, H. (2020) notes that evaluating sources on social media can be difficult, but the strategies employed by Participants 2, 3, and 6 demonstrate that diligent fact-checking with diverse sources is effective against misinformation.

Theme 3: Overwhelmed by Information

The theme reveals that participants, particularly Participants 4 and 10, feel "Overwhelmed by Information" while using social media to enhance their understanding of Philippine history. They experienced misunderstandings and biases during the 2022 elections, engaging in constructive criticism and sharing resources to clarify information. This underscores the importance of accurate information dissemination in historical discourse. Social overload, defined as the stress from managing excessive social interactions, contributes to this issue (Mosunic, 2024). In summary, their experiences emphasize the need to combat misinformation and biases online.

Theme 4: *Lack of Critical Thinking Development*

The theme addresses the "Lack of Critical Thinking Development" among Social Studies students, who struggle to use social media to understand Philippine history. Participant 1 is confused about the true national hero, while Participant 7 questions the identity of Magellan's killer, highlighting the need for fact-checking due to prevalent misinformation. Participant 10 notes the acceptance of fake news during the 2022 elections, indicating a lack of critical evaluation. Domínguez et al. (2024) suggest that students lacking critical thinking skills struggle to assess information reliability. Participants' experiences reveal a broader issue of inadequate fact-checking skills among their peers.

Theme 5: *Influence of Biased Interpretations*

Participants' narratives reveal the "Influence of Biased Interpretations" on their challenges in using social media to enhance Philippine historical consciousness. Participants 8 and 10 note biases in information regarding the West Philippine Sea and the 2022 presidential elections, highlighting the lack of proper information filtering. They suggest that verification methods, such as reliable authors and fact-checking tools, can help reduce confusion among users, especially students. Sewall and Parry (2024) indicate that simplistic narratives on social media lead to biased interpretations, affecting youth and contributing to misinformation and polarization. Participants 8 and 10 experienced misleading narratives about national heroes and key political issues, which shaped public opinion and increased divisions.

Ways to address the challenges faced by the participants

Theme 1: *Digital Literacy Comprehension*

The theme "Digital Literacy Comprehension" highlights participants' skills in critically evaluating historical information on social media. Participants 1 and 10 stressed the need to assess and verify information from multiple sources to prevent misinformation, while Participant 9 emphasized the importance of analyzing statements from textbooks to identify historical inaccuracies. Schulte (2022) found a correlation between social media use and digital literacy, indicating that frequent users, especially adolescents, can better discern false information. In conclusion, Participants 1, 9, and 10 demonstrate digital awareness to effectively categorize misinformation on social media.

Theme 2: *Fact-checking Resources and Tools*

The theme "Fact-checking Resources and Tools" reveals participants' strategies for validating historical information on social media. Participants 1, 2, 3, 7, and 9 actively sought factual content, while Participant 6 compared references across multiple platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Participant 5 focused on verifying the authors' reliability, and Participants 4 and 10 shared experiences fact-checking misinformation about the 2022 national elections. Sittmann (2020) highlights the importance of accessible online fact-checking resources to combat misinformation. Overall, participants demonstrated critical analysis of online content, emphasizing media literacy's role in addressing misinformation in the context of Philippine history and politics.

Theme 3: *Collaborative Effort*

The theme "Collaborative Effort" highlights the challenges participants faced in using social media to understand Philippine history, emphasizing the need for collaboration to combat bias and misinformation in historical and political content. Participant 8 suggested discussing biases in social media with future generations, particularly regarding issues like the West Philippine Sea, while Participant 10 noted the importance of sharing diverse perspectives. This underscores how misinformation can confuse users, a challenge that can be mitigated through collaboration. Lee et al. (2022) found that fostering community and shared purpose enhances resilience against misinformation. Participants advocated for public discussions and teamwork across generations to address these issues. In conclusion, collaboration is essential for sharing knowledge and engaging in discussions to combat misinformation and promote accurate understanding.

The created social media page

link: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567013192751

The social media page can be found on Facebook. The gathered responses suggest that students commonly use this social media platform to provide factual Philippine historical information. It can be accessed by searching 'Journey Through Time' in the search tab. It refers to a process where important events can be found across time. The researchers published it on October 11, 2024.

Therefore, this output aims to provide factual and relevant information to enhance students' Philippine historical consciousness, engage them in collaborative efforts, and utilize fact-checking resources and tools to deepen their understanding of the importance of preserving history. This also enhances students' historical consciousness by regularly posting historical context and providing links to the sources.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the study, most of the students utilize Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok to enhance historical consciousness, with Facebook being the most influential for educational content, YouTube offering substantial historical information, and TikTok having limited use for Philippine history. Social media platforms expose students to diverse historical content, verify information, stimulate interest, and raise contemporary awareness, but challenges include misinformation, source verification difficulties, and information overload, which can hinder critical thinking. Students are increasingly aware of the need for critical evaluation of historical information. Therefore, to address these challenges Future social studies educators must strengthen digital literacy, use fact-checking tools, and collaborate to combat misinformation and enhance students' historical consciousness. This study suggests the integration of social media platforms into students' historical learning, by a Facebook page that contains factual information attached with a link to verify its contents.

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