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EXPERIENCES OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT
This study explored the different experiences of high school students on the use of social media. Phenomenological design was used to investigate the different experiences, challenges, coping mechanism and insights of the high school students on using social media. The participants were the 10 high school students of Katipunan Integrated School, who were selected through purposive sampling technique in academic year 2024-2025. To ensure ethical standards in data gathering, informed consent was accomplished. The participants answered the questions through the conduct of a face-to-face in-depth interview. Findings revealed that the views of high school students using social media in Katipunan Integrated School, Maragusan, Davao de Oro intended to respond the unique experiences, challenges, and behaviors of students in today's digital era. The insights shared by the students shaped by their day-to-day use of social media both inside and outside the school environment highlighted how social media can serve as both a tool for learning and a source of distraction. It is observed that early exposure of social media may influence their digital literacy, social behaviors and learning habits. Guidance and digital citizenship education can reinforce responsible behavior and help students build a strong foundation for a healthy digital habit

KEYWORDS: *Digital Age, experiences, challenges, coping mechanism,insights phenomenological research.*

INTRODUCTION
In the digital age, social media has become an integral part of students' daily lives, influencing various aspects of their academic and social development. While these platforms provide opportunities for communication, collaboration and access to educational resources, they also pose potential challenges, including distractions, reduced study time and exposure to misinformation Lee, 2020. Moreover, according to Dontre 2021, excessive use of these platforms has been linked to lower academic achievement, poor time management and decreased focus on school-related tasks. This habitual usage can result in sleep deprivation, procrastination and lower retention of academic material Boer, 2021.

In India, a study of Bhandarkar 2021 found a weak negative correlation between social media usage and academic performance, suggesting that increased time on these platforms may lead to lower grades, one contributing factor is the distraction caused by multitasking. In China, engaging with social media during study sessions or classes can lead to reduced attention and hinder learning Gordon,2024. Thus, frequent social media use is associated with decreased academic achievement among early adolescents. In the Philippines particular in Marawi City, studies have identified potential negative effects of high school students in excessive social media use which can lead to reduced productivity and academic achievement, as well as potential addiction to constant media use. In Misamis Oriental, sleep deprivation, exposure to screens and the constant notifications from social media can interfere with sleep patterns, leading to sleep deprivation and decreased academic performance Ayuban and Ferena ,2024

In Maragusan Davao De Oro where the researcher is currently teaching, problems in social media use also arise specially in high school students. The constant stream of information on social media can lead to a decrease in attention span and making it difficult for students to focus on academic tasks. In connection to the preceding statements, the researcher aims to investigate how students react to these situations and their experiences helps contribute to finding solutions of the identified issues.

Purpose of the Study
This phenomenological study aimed to investigate the views and experiences of high school students on using social media, this includes 10 high school students in different grade level of Katipunan Integrated School, Maragusan Davao De Oro. This further investigates their experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms and insights of the chosen students.

Research Questions
The study aimed to explore the experiences of high school students on using social media This was guided by the following questions.

1. What are the experiences of high school students on using social media?
2. What are the challenges of high school students 0n using social media?
3. What is the coping mechanism of high school students with the challenges that they experienced on using social media?
4. What are the insights drawn out from the experiences of high school students cope with the challenges that they experienced on using social media?

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METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes the research design, research locale, roles of the researcher, research participants, data gathering procedures, data analysis and trustworthiness and credibility of the study.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research approach specifically the phenomenological design because according to Patton 1980, it allows the observer to become immersed in a group. The researcher starts with answers, but forms questions throughout the research process. Researchers using phenomenological research design and interpret participant's views, beliefs and perception in order to understand individual's experiences. This method requires researchers to put their prejudices and preconceived notions aside and concentrate solely on the present experience. For instance, as researcher might realize that the purpose of many interview acts is to build up the reputation of the interviewee.

Thus, the researcher's job is to find out why. This could lead to further research into the theoretical strategies and purposes of doing research and interviews. Through this, I would be able to collect and gather data's that are essential to my study which is the experiences of students on using social. The design is phenomenological because the study consists of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view. Therefore, the researcher's goal was to uncover what was the actual experiences of the high school students.

Through this design, the researcher was able to collect and gather data that was be essential to this study on social media's impact on academic performance of high school students, Moreover, participants were identified using purposive sampling. There are 10 high school students participated in this study who answered the question using the face-to-face In-Depth Interview IDI. Therefore, the researcher's goal was to uncover the actual experiences of high school students using social media.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings to the research questions that gives and explored feedback mechanism from the student's point of view. The main focus of this study was on social media's impact on academic performance of high school students. The research participants were selected through purposive sampling method conducted in Katipunan Integrated School. The 10 participants, desired the number of samples through in-depth interview, which are junior high school students.

The responses were subjected to the content analysis where the themes of all the responses were drawn. In keeping the research ethics for the qualitative research, codes had been used to conceal the identities of the research participants. The presentation of the result of the study was done according to the order of specific research questions that used in the study.

What are your experiences as high school student in using social media that create an impact on your academic performance?

This section presents the results to the 1st major question; 'What are your experiences as high school student in using social media that create an impact on your academic performance?' Five specific research questions were used to gather data and information for this major research question. The questions were intended to gather information on the understanding of the research participants regarding to the phenomenological point of view on the study.

Specific Age Started Using Social Media

The theme in this section were coming from research question 1.1 'At what age did you start using social media?'. These perspectives intended to respond to the unique and compelling lens exploring the age of which participants started to explore their digital habits and navigate social media platforms, the high school students in Katipunan integrated school in Maragusan revealed six emerging themes: Around 9 or 10 Years Old, Eleven Years Old, Twelve Years Old, Ten Years Old, Fourteen Years Old.

Frequency in Checking One's Social Media in a Day

This section presents the results to the 1.2 question; 'How often do you check your social media in a day?'. High school students were checking their social media frequently, which can affect their academic performance in school. There were six emerging themes formulated based on the responses of the participants; Thrice a Day, Four to Five Times, Four to Five Times, Five Times, Five Times, More Than Five Times, One to Three Times, Maximum of Ten Times a Day, Positive Experiences Gained in Giving Feedback to Students.

Social Media Platforms Oneself Frequently Used to Help as a Student

This section presents the results to the 1.3 question; What social media platforms do you frequently use to help you as student? The responses generated four themes: Youtube, MathGod, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, and Tiktok Google.

Frequency in Using This Tools/Social Media Platform in Making One's Activities in School

The themes in this section were coming from the specific question 1.4 How often did you use this tools/social media platform in making your activities in school. The responses generated six themes: Depends on the Situation, When There are Lots of Activities, Frequent, Only When it is Necessary, When Activities Become Difficult, Very Helpful.

Positive Experience Encountered in Using Social Media

This section presents the result to the sub-question 1.5. What positive experiences did you encounter using social media? The results of this research sub-question generated five themes: Helped in My Schooling, Helped in My Communication Skills, Helped Me Gain New Ideas, Helped Me Be Informed, For School Accomplishment Purposes, Helped in Strategy Making.

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Negative Experiences Encountered in Using Social Media
This section presents the result to the sub-question 1.6; 'What are the negative experiences did you encounter in using social media? The results of this research sub-question generated eight themes None, Eye Radiation, Fake News, Lack of Focus in School, Sleep Deprivation, Cyberbullying, Psychological Problem, Becomes Addictive.

When did you learn to use any tricks or tools like editing, doing research etc. to help you in your school activities?
This section presents the results to the 2st major question; 'What are your challenges in using social media that affects your academic performance?' Four specific research questions were used to gather data and information for this major research question. The questions were intended to gather information on the understanding of the research participants regarding to the phenomenological challenges and learnings they had view on the study.

Specific Time in Learning to Use Any Trick or Tools to Help Oneself in School Activities
The theme in this section were coming from research question 2.1 'What are your challenges in using social media that affects your academic performance?'. These perspectives intended to respond to the unique challenges of high school students in today's educational landscape that would help to give idea on how social media tools affect their academic performance. In this section, the students in Katipunan Integrated School revealed eight emerging themes: through editing, through youtube, use my father's phone, using google, grade seven when i started using social media, grade six, grade eight.

Reason Behind the Difficulty to Stop Checking One's social media, Even When There are Important Task Like Homework to Focus On
This section presents the results to the specific question research question 2.2 What made it so difficult to stop checking your social media, even when you have important tasks like homework to focus on? The following themes served as the results, which were: Do Not Delete Social Media, Interesting Topics, Because of Scrolling on Social Media, Use It Properly, For Credible Information, Use Cellphone Rather Than Answering Assignment, In Order to Collaborate, Because of The Notifications.

Feelings Felt When Encountering Unnecessary Content while Scrolling Through social media
This section presents the results to the specific question research question 2.3 How do you feel when you encounter unnecessary content while strolling through social media? The following themes served as the results, Felt Curious, ignore it Felt Sad, Felt Worried, Felt Bored, Felt Annoyed.

Ways in Dealing with Misinformation or Fake News that Oneself Come Across on social media
This section presents the results to the specific question research question 2.4 How did you deal with misinformation or fake news that you come across on social media. The following themes served as the results, which were: Ignore It, Research It on Other Social Media Platform, Stop Scrolling, Check the Credibility and Reliability.

What did you do to address the difficulties that you experienced on the use of social media?
This section presents the results to the major research question 3, what is your coping mechanism out from those challenges you've encountered in using social media? under the first major research question, what did you do to address the difficulties that you experienced on the use of social media? The following themes served as results, which were: Actions Done to Address the Difficulties Experienced on the Use of Social Media, Ways in Balancing Social Media Use with Schoolwork, Hobbies, and Face-to-Face Interactions with Friends, Strategies Used to Manage One's Time in Using Social Media, Ways in Overcoming Stress in Using Social Media.

Actions Done to Address the Difficulties Experienced on the Use of Social Media
The theme in this section were coming from research question 3.1 'What did you do to address the difficulties that you experienced on the use of social media?'. Students shared various strategies they employed to overcome the challenges associated with digital platforms. Their responses revealed 7 emerging themes that reflect their adaptability and resourcefulness in navigating the demands of today's educational landscape: Contemplate, Stop Checking Social Media, Share It to Family or Friends, Manage Time, Through Research , Stop Using One's Phone , Delete Social Medias These perspectives offer valuable insights into how students manage digital obstacles and contribute to a broader understanding of effective learning behaviors in a technology-driven environment."

Ways in Balancing Social Media Use with Schoolwork, Hobbies, and Face-to-Face Interactions with Friends
The themes in this section were coming from the specific question 3.2How do you balance your social media use with schoolwork, hobbies, and face-to-face interactions with friends? The responses to the question manage to explained in today's digital age, balancing social media use with responsibilities like schoolwork, personal hobbies, and in-person interactions can be particularly challenging. With smartphones and social platforms constantly at our fingertips, it's easy to lose track of time and become absorbed in online content. The themes in this section were: Minimize Social Media Use, Listen to Music, Manage One's Time, Prioritize Household Chores, Prioritize Homeworks.

Strategies Used to Manage One's Time in Using Social Media
The themes in this section were coming from the specific question 3.3 What strategies did you use to manage your time in using social media? The responses to the question manage to explained the strategies set by the high school students in using social media. There were 6 themes generated; Limit Social Media Use, Mute Notifications, Set an Alarm, have a One to Two Hours Use of social media, have a Screen Time Limit, List the Tasks.

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Ways in Overcoming Stress in Using Social Media
In this section, it presents the specific research question 3.4. How did you overcome stress in using social media? Themes gathered were; Limit Social Media Use, Vent Out to Others, Watch Entertaining Videos, look at the Brighter Side, Relax Myself, Did Not Experience Stress, Avoid Comparing to Others.

Tell me about the insights you've gained as a high school student in using social media?
This section presents the results to the 4th major question; 'What are your insights gained from the experiences encountered in using social media?' Three specific research questions were used to gather data and information for this major research question. The questions were intended to gather information on the understanding of the research participants regarding to the phenomenological insights they've gained as a high school student in using social media.

Insights Gained as a High School Student in Using Social Media
The theme in this section were coming from research question 4.1 Tell me about the insights you've gained as a high school student in using social media?'. These perspectives intended to respond to the unique challenges of highschool students of today's educational landscape that would help to give idea on how to use social media effectively. In this section it revealed four emerging themes: Do Not Focus in social media, social media is Helpful, Learned New Vocabulary and Gain New Information.

Importance with Collaborating with Friends or Others to Create Content or Activities Using One's Skills in Social
This section presents the result to the specific question 4.2; How important to you to collaborate with friends or others to create content or activities using your skills in social media? The results of this research sub-question generated four themes: Very Important, Collaborate in TikTok, Not Very Important, Make Time to Collaborate with Others.

Values Needed to Develop in Using Social Media That Would Help One's Academic
This section presents the results to the 4.3 question; What values you need to develop in using social media that would help your academically.? The responses generated six themes: Have a Routine, Time Management, Use Social Media in One's Academic Purpose, Use Social Media Properly, Prioritize Fact Checking, Be a Responsible Student.

Implications for Future Research
In as much as the study was limited to the responses of the students in Katipunan Integrated School, Maragusan District, Division of Davao De Oro, the following implications for future research are considered:

First, future research may be conducted by selecting another group of high school students from the same institution to compare and validate findings regarding the impact of social media on the lives of high school students. Second, a similar phenomenological study may be carried out in another school or geographic location to explore whether the experiences and perceptions of students vary across different contexts. Third, a follow-up study involving the same participants could be conducted after a certain period to determine if their perceptions and usage of social media have changed over time.

Fourth, this study focused on students in a public high school setting. Further research may be conducted in private high schools to examine if school type influences the way students use social media . Finally, since this study focused on the lived experiences of students, another study may be conducted to explore the perspectives of teachers or school administrators regarding how social media usage affects students' academic behaviors and outcomes.

Concluding Remarks
This study explored the lived experiences of high school students on using social media. The findings revealed that social media plays a dual role in students' academic lives it can enhance learning through educational content and collaboration, yet it also poses significant distractions that affect focus, time management, and motivation.

The students' reflections highlighted how their daily interaction with digital platforms influences their study habits and academic priorities. These insights point to the need for a more balanced and informed understanding of social media use within the educational context. Educators and school leaders must recognize this dynamic and take proactive steps to support students in navigating their online environments wisely.

Teachers, in particular have an important role in guiding students toward responsible social media use. Beyond delivering lessons, they can promote digital discipline, critical thinking, and healthy online habits. Through consistent mentoring, teachers can help students harness the benefits of social media while minimizing its negative effects on academic performance.

The study's findings may serve as a foundation for developing policies that promote digital citizenship and responsible media use. Schools can integrate media literacy into the curriculum, conduct seminars for parents and students and strengthen the role of guidance counselors in addressing academic challenges linked to online behavior. Encouraging open dialogue among stakeholders will be essential in addressing the evolving impact of social media in today's learning environment.

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