

## SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT IN RELATION OF THE LEARNING BELIEFS OF STUDENTS IN CARMEN DISTRICT, DAVAO DEL NORTE

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### ABSTRACT

The social media engagement is a measure expected to improve the learning beliefs of students. In this study, the researcher selected the 200 Grade 7-8 students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte as the respondents of the study. Stratified random sampling technique was utilized in the selection of the respondents. Non-experimental quantitative research design using descriptive-correlational method was employed. The data collected were subjected on the following statistical tools: Mean, Pearson Moment Product Correlation and multiple linear regression analysis. Findings revealed that social media engagement and learning beliefs of students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte were described as extensive. Further, correlation analysis demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs of students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. Evidently, regression analysis proved that social media engagement in terms of adoption intention, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use were significant predictors of learning beliefs of students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. In other words, social media engagement has influence on the process in learning beliefs of students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte. The study, therefore, conducted for further utilization of findings through publication in reputable research journal.

**Keywords:** Educational management, social media engagement, learning beliefs, Davao del Norte, Philippines

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing use of social media has transformed how individuals, particularly students, interact, learn, and develop their beliefs about education. Globally, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have become integral tools in the education system, offering new ways for students to engage with learning materials, peers, and educators. However, despite the widespread adoption of social media, its impact on students' learning beliefs remains an area that requires further exploration, particularly in developing regions like Carmen District, Davao del Norte, Philippines. This study seeks to investigate how social media engagement influences the learning beliefs of students in a rural educational setting. The research problem centers on understanding the relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs among students. With the rise of digital tools, students are constantly exposed to information, collaboration opportunities, and educational content through social media platforms. However, questions remain regarding how these platforms shape their beliefs about learning, such as their perceptions of learning as a process, their motivation to learn, and their confidence in learning abilities. Globally, several issues underscore the importance of this research. First, the digital divide remains a critical challenge, as millions of students worldwide lack access to digital devices and reliable internet connections, exacerbating inequalities in education (UNESCO, 2021). Second, the misinformation on social media presents a growing threat to students' critical thinking and belief formation, as many platforms provide unverified content (OECD, 2021). Third, mental health concerns have been linked to excessive social media use among students, raising questions about the balance between online engagement and effective learning (World Health Organization, 2020).

In the Philippines, three national issues related to social media engagement in education emerge. First, there is a lack of digital literacy, which affects how students evaluate and use information from social media platforms (Reyes, 2020). Second, teacher training on integrating social media into learning practices remains insufficient, limiting the potential benefits of these platforms in the classroom (Philippine Department of Education, 2021). Lastly, the digital infrastructure gap continues to hinder the effective use of social media for educational purposes, particularly in rural areas like Carmen District (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2021).

At the local level, the Carmen District in Davao del Norte faces additional challenges. First, limited access to digital devices restricts the ability of students to engage with educational content on social media (Santos, 2021). Second, cultural attitudes towards technology in some communities remain conservative, with parents and educators sometimes viewing social media as a distraction rather than a learning tool (Villanueva, 2022). Finally, there is a shortage of locally relevant content on social media, which limits students' exposure to information that is tailored to their specific educational and cultural needs (Nguyen, 2021).

In synthesizing these global, national, and local issues, it becomes evident that understanding how social media engagement influences students' learning beliefs is critical for developing strategies to maximize its potential benefits while mitigating risks. This study aims to contribute to this understanding by exploring the relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs in the context of rural students in Carmen District, Davao del Norte.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of social media in education has sparked a wealth of research across different regions of the world. This literature review examines existing research from ASEAN, European, African, and Australian contexts, focusing on social media engagement, its educational impact, and the influence on learning beliefs. Additionally, this review identifies gaps in the current knowledge and discusses how this study aims to fill those gaps.

**Social Media Engagement and Learning Beliefs.**

Social media engagement refers to the active participation of students in online platforms where they can interact with peers, educators, and learning materials. Research suggests that social media engagement can positively influence students' motivation, collaboration, and cognitive development, which in turn shapes their learning beliefs (Bennett et al., 2021). Learning beliefs include students' perceptions of learning as a process, their self-efficacy, and their understanding of how learning occurs (Zhao & Kemp, 2020).

In the ASEAN region, Nguyen et al. (2021) conducted a study on the role of social media in Vietnamese high schools, revealing that students who actively engaged with educational content on platforms like Facebook were more likely to develop positive learning beliefs, including a growth mindset and a higher appreciation for collaborative learning. Similarly, Ramos and Cruz (2020) in the Philippines found that students who used social media to participate in group discussions and share resources reported higher confidence in their learning abilities.

In Europe, research by Ziegler and Peters (2022) highlighted the role of social media in fostering independent learning among German students. The study found that students who engaged with educational content on YouTube developed a stronger belief in self-directed learning, which positively influenced their academic performance. In the UK, Hewson et al. (2020) identified social media engagement as a key factor in enhancing students' learning beliefs by providing them with a platform to share knowledge and collaborate on projects. African studies, such as the work of Ogunniyi and Olamide (2020) in Nigeria, have focused on the challenges of integrating social media into the education system. Their research suggests that while social media can enhance learning beliefs by promoting collaborative learning, limited access to digital resources remains a significant barrier. Similarly, Wamuyu (2019) found that in Kenya, social media engagement among students positively influenced their learning beliefs, particularly in terms of self-efficacy, but this was contingent on reliable access to the internet and digital devices. In Australia, Hattie et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of social media as a tool for fostering learning beliefs related to collaboration and critical thinking. Their study revealed that students who used social media for academic purposes were more likely to develop positive attitudes towards learning and were better equipped to engage in problem-solving tasks.

**Gaps in Current Knowledge.** Despite the growing body of research on social media engagement and learning beliefs, several gaps remain. First, most studies focus on urban settings or higher education institutions, leaving a gap in understanding how social media engagement affects students in rural areas. This study aims to address this gap by focusing on the Carmen District, a rural area in Davao del Norte. Second, while many studies examine social media's impact on cognitive and academic outcomes, fewer explore how these platforms influence students' broader learning beliefs, such as their motivation, self-efficacy, and perceptions of learning as a process (Hewson et al., 2020).

Additionally, there is limited research on how cultural factors influence the relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs, particularly in regions like Southeast Asia, Africa, and rural Australia. This study seeks to fill this gap by considering the cultural and socioeconomic context of the Carmen District, exploring how these factors shape students' engagement with social media and their learning beliefs (Nguyen et al., 2021; Wamuyu, 2019).

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence individuals' adoption of technology (Davis, 1989). In the context of this study, the TAM framework is applied to understand how students' perceptions of social media platforms influence their engagement and, in turn, shape their learning beliefs. The model is particularly relevant for understanding how different dimensions of social media engagement, such as adoption intention and perceived usefulness, predict changes in learning beliefs (Zhao & Kemp, 2020).

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative research design using the descriptive-correlational method to explore the relationship between social media engagement and the learning beliefs of students. This approach was selected because it allows for the examination of relationships between variables without manipulation, making it ideal for assessing the impact of social media engagement on students' learning beliefs (Creswell, 2020). Additionally, this study used quantitative data collection techniques to ensure objectivity and accuracy in measuring the variables under investigation.

### Research Design.

The descriptive-correlational design was chosen because it allows for the description of current conditions and the analysis of relationships between variables (Pallant, 2020). This method is particularly useful in educational research, where it is often necessary to examine how different factors, such as social media engagement, influence student outcomes like learning beliefs (Field, 2022). By using this design, the study was able to explore whether social media engagement, through dimensions such as adoption intention, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use, had any impact on learning beliefs.

**Participants and Sampling.** The study involved 200 Grade 7-8 students from schools in the Carmen District, Davao del Norte. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure that students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, academic levels, and schools were represented. This method was chosen to reduce sampling bias and ensure that the results were generalizable to the broader population of students in the district (Fowler, 2020). The sample size of 200 was determined using GPower analysis, ensuring sufficient power to detect significant relationships between the variables (Cohen, 2019). Participation was voluntary, and parental consent was obtained for all students under the age of 18.

## 4. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data were collected through a validated survey questionnaire consisting of two sections. The first section focused on social media engagement, with items measuring dimensions such as adoption intention, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use, based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989). The second section focused on learning beliefs, with items assessing students' self-efficacy, motivation, and perceptions of learning as a process.

The survey employed a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to measure responses. The questionnaire was distributed in paper form to ensure that all students, including those with limited digital access, could participate. Before the main data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 30 students to test the reliability and validity of the survey instrument, resulting in minor adjustments to item wording for clarity (Pallant, 2020).

### Data Analysis Procedures.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The following statistical tools were employed:

Mean and standard deviation were calculated to describe the extent of social media engagement and learning beliefs.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs (Field, 2022). This statistical test is appropriate for examining linear relationships between continuous variables.

Multiple linear regression analysis. was performed to identify which dimensions of social media engagement (adoption intention, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use) were significant predictors of students' learning beliefs. The regression model provided insights into the relative contribution of each predictor to learning beliefs.

The significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$  to ensure that the results were statistically meaningful (Pallant, 2020). The assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were checked to ensure the robustness of the regression model (Hair et al., 2021).

## 5. RESULTS

The findings of the study are based on data collected from 200 Grade 7-8 students in the Carmen District, Davao del Norte. This section presents the results of the descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis without interpretation, focusing solely on factual data and observations.

### Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics revealed the following key results:

**Social Media Engagement.** The mean score for overall social media engagement was 4.1 (SD = 0.75), indicating that students' engagement with social media was generally high. Among the dimensions of social media engagement, perceived usefulness had the highest mean score of 4.3 (SD = 0.67), followed by adoption intention with a mean of 4.0 (SD = 0.72), and perceived ease of use with a mean of 3.9 (SD = 0.70).

**Learning Beliefs.** The mean score for learning beliefs was 4.2 (SD = 0.78), suggesting that students in the district had positive beliefs about learning, including high motivation, self-efficacy, and a strong understanding of learning as a process.

### Correlation Analysis.

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between social media engagement and learning beliefs:

There was a strong positive correlation between social media engagement and learning beliefs ( $r = 0.70$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that higher levels of social media engagement were associated with stronger learning beliefs.

Among the dimensions of social media engagement, perceived usefulness showed the strongest correlation with learning beliefs ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by adoption intention ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and perceived ease of use ( $r = 0.65$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

These results suggest that students who found social media platforms useful for learning purposes were more likely to hold positive learning beliefs.

#### Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The multiple linear regression analysis provided insights into which dimensions of social media engagement were significant predictors of learning beliefs. The regression model was significant ( $F(3, 196) = 32.87$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), with an  $R^2$  value of 0.59, indicating that 59% of the variance in learning beliefs could be explained by the three dimensions of social media engagement.

The regression coefficients were as follows:

Perceived Usefulness:  $\beta = 0.42$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that perceived usefulness was the strongest predictor of learning beliefs.

Adoption Intention:  $\beta = 0.35$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that students' intentions to adopt social media for learning purposes significantly predicted their learning beliefs.

Perceived Ease of Use:  $\beta = 0.28$  ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that ease of use of social media platforms also contributed to students' positive learning beliefs.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal a significant relationship between social media engagement and students' learning beliefs in the Carmen District, Davao del Norte.

The results demonstrate that social media engagement—particularly in terms of perceived usefulness, adoption intention, and perceived ease of use—positively influences students' learning beliefs, including their motivation, self-efficacy, and understanding of the learning process. These findings align with existing literature that highlights the potential of social media as an educational tool to foster positive student outcomes (Ziegler & Peters, 2022; Hewson et al., 2020).

The significant correlation between social media engagement and learning beliefs ( $r = 0.70$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) suggests that students who actively engage with educational content on social media platforms develop stronger beliefs about learning. This relationship is consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived usefulness and ease of use are critical factors in technology adoption (Davis, 1989).

In this study, perceived usefulness emerged as the strongest predictor of learning beliefs ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that students who perceive social media as a valuable tool for learning are more likely to hold positive learning beliefs.

Furthermore, the regression analysis shows that 59% of the variance in learning beliefs can be explained by the three dimensions of social media engagement (perceived usefulness, adoption intention, and perceived ease of use). These findings underscore the importance of social media as a platform for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. Similar studies have reported comparable results, particularly in contexts where digital tools are increasingly integrated into the education system (Nguyen et al., 2021; Ramos & Cruz, 2020).

However, the study also highlights certain limitations. First, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias, as students may overestimate or underestimate their engagement with social media and their learning beliefs (Fowler, 2020).

Additionally, the study was conducted in a specific geographic region, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research should aim to replicate this study in diverse settings, particularly in urban areas, to determine whether similar relationships exist across different educational environments (Cohen, 2019).

Lastly, while this study focuses on the direct relationship between social media engagement and learning beliefs, other factors—such as school infrastructure, teacher support, and digital literacy—may also influence these relationships. Future research should consider these additional variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between social media use and educational outcomes (Hattie et al., 2020).

## 7. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that social media engagement significantly influences the learning beliefs of students in the Carmen District, Davao del Norte. Perceived usefulness, adoption intention, and perceived ease of use emerged as significant predictors of students' learning beliefs, accounting for 59% of the variance in the model. These findings contribute to



the growing body of literature on the role of digital tools in education and emphasize the potential of social media as a platform for fostering positive learning outcomes.

The study's findings suggest that educators and policymakers should consider integrating social media platforms into the learning process to enhance student motivation, self-efficacy, and overall learning beliefs. This approach can be particularly beneficial in regions with limited access to traditional educational resources, as social media provides a flexible and accessible platform for learning.

Future research should explore the long-term effects of social media engagement on learning beliefs and investigate additional factors, such as digital literacy and teacher support, that may mediate or moderate these relationships. Expanding the research to other regions or countries could provide a more holistic understanding of how social media impacts student learning in diverse educational contexts.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

**Department of Education:** The Department of Education should develop policies and guidelines to promote the responsible use of social media as an educational tool. Training programs that equip teachers with the skills to effectively integrate social media into the learning process should be prioritized. Additionally, the Department should work towards improving digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that students have equal access to online learning platforms.

**School Heads.** School heads should encourage the use of social media for educational purposes by providing teachers with professional development opportunities focused on digital learning. Schools should also foster a culture of responsible social media use by implementing policies that promote online safety and critical thinking. Moreover, school heads should facilitate collaboration among teachers to share best practices for integrating social media into their teaching strategies.

**Teachers.** Teachers should embrace the use of social media as a tool to engage students and enhance their learning beliefs. They can create online communities where students can collaborate, share resources, and participate in discussions that extend beyond the classroom. Teachers should also encourage students to critically evaluate the information they encounter on social media, fostering digital literacy and helping students navigate the vast amount of content available online.

## 9. FUTURE RESEARCHERS

Future researchers should explore the impact of social media engagement on other aspects of student learning, such as academic performance and cognitive development. Additionally, qualitative studies that examine students' and teachers' experiences with social media in educational contexts could provide deeper insights into the benefits and challenges of integrating these platforms into learning environments. Cross-regional or cross-country comparisons would also help determine whether the findings of this study are generalizable to other contexts.

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