

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE USE AMONG BTLED STUDENTS IN A PHILIPPINE STATE UNIVERSITY: ATTITUDES, SOCIAL INFLUENCE, FREQUENCY, AND PURPOSES

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ABSTRACT: Social networking sites (SNS) are widely used by university students for communication, information exchange, collaboration, and entertainment, but their educational value depends on the purposes and patterns of use. This cross-sectional descriptive survey examined the attitudes, perceived social influence, frequency of daily use, and purposes of SNS use among 359 Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLED) students at a Philippine state university. A structured five-point questionnaire was administered online. The reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .85 to .96. Students expressed a positive attitude toward SNS ($M = 3.82$), particularly regarding enjoyment ($M = 4.04$) and access to study-related information ($M = 4.02$). Perceived social influence was comparatively weaker ($M = 3.50$): university and family or peer encouragement were acknowledged, whereas instructor influence and peer-driven adoption were less certain. A total of 82.4% reported using SNS always, usually, or often. Purposes of use were diverse (overall $M = 3.88$), with high ratings for academic group discussion ($M = 4.10$), learning specialization-related skills ($M = 4.05$), watching movies ($M = 4.18$), and relief from academic stress ($M = 4.20$). The findings depict SNS as dual-purpose environments that can support learning while also competing for students' attention. Purposeful instructional integration and digital self-regulation are therefore needed; the descriptive design does not establish effects on study habits or academic performance.

Keywords: academic use; attitude; BTLED students; digital learning; social influence; social networking sites

INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites (SNS) are networked digital environments that enable users to create profiles, exchange content, maintain relationships, and participate in communities. Their affordances include identity presentation, conversation, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and group formation [1]. In higher education, these affordances can extend learning beyond scheduled classes by connecting formal coursework with informal communication, peer support, and resource exchange [2]. Facebook-related activity, for example, has been associated with selected dimensions of student engagement, although the direction and educational quality of that engagement depend on how the platform is used [3].

The educational potential of SNS is especially relevant to programs that emphasize collaboration, applied tasks, and continuing access to demonstrations or exemplars. Social media can help students construct personal learning environments, share resources, seek assistance, and regulate aspects of their learning [4]. However, high-frequency use is not inherently academic. Nonacademic use and social-media multitasking have been associated with lower academic performance [5], while excessive SNS use may produce cognitive distraction and stress that interfere with academic work [6]. Consequently, the central issue is not simply whether students use SNS, but how they evaluate these platforms, whose expectations shape their use, how frequently they access them, and what purposes dominate their activity.

Technology-acceptance perspectives provide a useful basis for examining these patterns. Perceived usefulness and ease of use influence acceptance of information technologies [7], while the Theory of Planned Behavior recognizes attitudes and subjective norms as antecedents of behavioral intention [8]. Research on student use of online social networks likewise shows that social presence, perceived usefulness, and social influence can shape participation [9]. Yet learners also require digital literacy—the capacity to evaluate

information, manage attention, communicate appropriately, and use digital tools strategically—because frequent access alone does not guarantee educational benefit [10].

Existing studies have largely examined general university populations, single platforms, or broad academic-performance outcomes. Less is known about BTLED students whose Home Economics and Industrial Arts specializations require collaboration, procedural knowledge, visual demonstrations, and sharing of practice-based resources. Moreover, few context-specific studies in Philippine teacher education have described attitude, social influence, daily frequency, and academic and nonacademic purposes within a single analytic profile. This gap limits the ability of instructors to distinguish educationally productive SNS use from routine or distracting use.

Accordingly, this study described BTLED students' SNS use in terms of: (1) attitude toward SNS; (2) perceived social influence; (3) frequency of daily use; and (4) academic, social, entertainment, and informational purposes. The study provides a baseline for designing purposeful digital-learning activities. It does not test whether SNS use causes improvements in study habits or academic performance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design and participants

A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was used to characterize SNS perceptions and usage patterns at one point in time. This design was appropriate because the research questions concerned distributions of attitudes, perceived social influence, frequency, and purposes rather than causal effects. The participants were 359 first- to fourth-year BTLED students enrolled in Home Economics and Industrial Arts at the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines–Cagayan de Oro Campus during the first semester of Academic Year 2022–2023. Criterion-based purposive sampling was used to include students who were enrolled in the identified programs during the study period. Because the sample came from one institution and was not

randomly selected, population-wide generalization is not warranted.

Instrument and data collection

Data were obtained through a structured questionnaire adapted from literature on SNS use, technology acceptance, subjective norms, and study-related digital behavior [7-9]. The instrument contained items on attitude toward SNS, social influence, frequency of use, and academic, social, entertainment, and informational purposes. Attitude, social-influence, and purpose items used a five-point scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The interpretive intervals were: 4.51–5.00, Strongly Agree; 3.51–4.50, Agree; 2.51–3.50, Undecided; 1.51–2.50, Disagree; and 1.00–1.50, Strongly Disagree.

Internal consistency was assessed through Cronbach's alpha. The coefficients were .96 for SNS Usage, .90 for Attitude, .85 for Social Influence, and .87 for Study Habit Pattern. These values indicate adequate to high consistency, although alpha should be interpreted in relation to the number and dimensionality of the items rather than as evidence of construct validity by itself [11].

Table 1. Internal consistency of the reported questionnaire constructs

Construct	Cronbach's alpha
SNS Usage	.96
Attitude	.90
Social Influence	.85
Study Habit Pattern	.87

Ethical procedures and data analysis

Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and respondents' information was treated confidentially. Data were collected through Google Forms. The procedures should be reported with the institutional ethics-review details required for publication: The ethical safeguards were consistent with principles of voluntary participation, privacy, and risk minimization [12].

Frequency and percentage summarized daily SNS use. Means and standard deviations summarized attitude, social influence, and purposes of use. No causal or predictive statistical analysis was reported; therefore, interpretations are restricted to the observed descriptive patterns.

RESULTS

Attitude toward social networking sites

Table 2. Students' attitudes toward social networking sites

Indicator	Mean (SD)	Interpretation
SNS are enjoyable to use.	4.04 (0.904)	Agree
SNS provide information related to my studies.	4.02 (0.960)	Agree
It is important to check SNS often.	3.72 (0.978)	Agree
SNS benefit my academic life.	3.76 (0.979)	Agree
SNS positively affect how others see me.	3.58 (0.983)	Agree
Overall	3.82	Agree

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

The overall attitude mean of 3.82 indicated agreement that SNS were useful and beneficial. Enjoyment ($M = 4.04$) and

study-related information ($M = 4.02$) received the highest ratings, whereas perceived social image obtained the lowest rating ($M = 3.58$). Thus, students' favorable attitude appears to be grounded more in functional and experiential value than in impression management.

Perceived social influence

Table 3. Perceived social influence on SNS use

Indicator	Mean (SD)	Interpretation
My instructors think I should use SNS for studying.	3.47 (0.927)	Undecided
Family, classmates, and friends encourage educational use.	3.60 (1.000)	Agree
I use a platform when my classmates use it.	3.31 (1.054)	Undecided
The university encourages SNS use in school activities.	3.63 (0.945)	Agree
Overall	3.50	Undecided

An overall mean of 3.50 falls within the study's Undecided interval.

The overall mean of 3.50 indicated an equivocal level of social influence. Students acknowledged encouragement from the university ($M = 3.63$) and from family, classmates, and friends ($M = 3.60$), but were uncertain that instructors explicitly expected SNS use ($M = 3.47$) or that they adopted platforms simply because classmates used them ($M = 3.31$). The pattern suggests broad social normalization of SNS without equally strong instructional direction.

Frequency of daily SNS use

Table 4. Frequency of daily social networking site use

Frequency category	n	%
Always	103	28.7
Usually	92	25.6
Often	101	28.1
Sometimes	49	13.6
Rarely	14	3.9
Total	359	100.0

A combined 82.4% of respondents reported using SNS always, usually, or often, whereas 17.5% reported sometimes or rarely. SNS were therefore embedded in the daily routines of most participants. The categories describe frequency rather than duration in hours, so the findings should not be interpreted as measures of screen time.

Purposes of SNS use

Table 5. Purposes of social networking site use

Purpose/indicator	Mean (SD)	Interpretation
Academic: solve academic problems	3.75 (1.115)	Agree
Academic: conduct research work	4.04 (1.100)	Agree
Academic: participate in online group discussions	4.10 (1.049)	Agree
Academic: prepare for examinations with friends	3.86 (1.093)	Agree
Academic: engage in collaborative learning	4.04 (1.047)	Agree
Academic: learn HE/IA specialization-related skills	4.05 (1.078)	Agree

Purpose/indicator	Mean (SD)	Interpretation
Academic: seek help from teachers	3.98 (1.046)	Agree
Social: become more sociable	3.66 (1.053)	Agree
Social: create a social identity	3.39 (1.100)	Undecided
Social: prefer SNS to social gatherings	3.25 (1.128)	Undecided
Social: keep in touch with relatives	3.47 (1.010)	Undecided
Social: strengthen interpersonal relationships	3.92 (1.082)	Agree
Social: obtain information on current events	4.01 (1.040)	Agree
Entertainment: share pictures	4.03 (1.037)	Agree
Entertainment: view humorous content	3.99 (1.065)	Agree
Entertainment: watch movies	4.18 (1.035)	Agree
Entertainment: obtain relief from academic stress	4.20 (1.045)	Agree
Information: read news	3.88 (1.022)	Agree
Information: share new ideas	3.89 (1.046)	Agree
Information: obtain job-related information	3.89 (0.992)	Agree
Overall	3.88	Agree

Approximate category means computed from the reported item means were: academic = 3.97, socialization = 3.62, entertainment = 4.10, and informativeness = 3.89.

Students agreed that they used SNS for multiple purposes (overall $M = 3.88$). Academic group discussion ($M = 4.10$), specialization-related skill learning ($M = 4.05$), research work ($M = 4.04$), and collaborative learning ($M = 4.04$) were strongly represented. Entertainment was equally prominent: relief from academic stress ($M = 4.20$) and watching movies ($M = 4.18$) were the highest-rated items in the table. The findings therefore describe a blended academic-social-entertainment environment rather than an exclusively educational platform.

DISCUSSION

The positive attitude toward SNS is consistent with technology-acceptance theory: tools perceived as useful and enjoyable are more likely to be adopted [7]. It also supports evidence that structured social-media activities can enhance participation and engagement [3, 13]. Nevertheless, attitude should not be equated with learning effectiveness. Students may value a platform because it is familiar, convenient, or entertaining even when use is not aligned with course outcomes.

The social-influence results are theoretically important. The overall response remained undecided even though university and family or peer encouragement were rated positively. This indicates that normative support may be diffuse rather than instructional. Research on students' Facebook use shows that social influence can contribute to participation [9], whereas evidence from Philippine public-university educators found that social influence did not significantly predict behavioral intention to use Web 2.0 tools [14]. The present descriptive pattern suggests that context and user role matter: students may use SNS because the platform is already embedded in everyday practice, not because instructors explicitly require it.

The high daily frequency creates both opportunity and risk. Frequent access can support rapid communication, resource sharing, and collaborative work, particularly when activities are deliberately designed [2, 15, 16]. However, frequent access also increases exposure to multitasking and distraction. Lau [5] found that nonacademic use and social-media multitasking were negatively associated with academic performance, and Masood et al. [6] explained how excessive SNS use may create cognitive distraction. More recent evidence using automated mobile-app data indicates that the relationship between SNS use and academic performance may be nonlinear: moderate use may be less harmful than very high use [17]. The 82.4% reported here therefore signals availability for learning, but not necessarily academically productive use.

Purpose-of-use findings provide the clearest explanation of this tension. Students reported substantial use for group discussion, research, collaborative learning, teacher assistance, and specialization-related skills. These patterns resemble the use of Web 2.0 tools for learning dressmaking competencies among BTLED students in Northern Mindanao [15]. At the same time, entertainment and stress relief received the highest item means. SNS thus function as dual-use spaces in which academic activity competes with leisure. Digital-literacy instruction should consequently include attention management, verification of information, respectful communication, and deliberate separation of study tasks from distracting content [10].

Educational implications

Instructors can harness the existing frequency of SNS use by assigning clearly bounded activities such as resource curation, peer critique, demonstration-video analysis, project coordination, and question-and-answer threads linked to explicit learning outcomes. Institutional guidance should clarify appropriate platforms, privacy expectations, response times, and standards for credible information. Students should also be taught self-regulation strategies, including notification control, scheduled access, goal-directed use, and reflection on whether online activity advances or interrupts academic work [4].

Limitations

The study was descriptive and cross-sectional; it cannot determine whether SNS use improves or harms study habits, engagement, grades, or competency development. The purposive sample came from one program and one university, and all measures were self-reported. The frequency categories did not measure actual duration or platform-specific behavior. The source manuscript also did not report evidence of content validation, factor structure, response rate, or inferential relationships. Future studies should use validated multidimensional scales, objective or diary-based usage measures, and correlational, longitudinal, experimental, or mixed-methods designs to examine how academic and nonacademic SNS use relates to study habits and performance.

CONCLUSION

BTLED students held a favorable attitude toward SNS and used these platforms frequently for academic, social, entertainment, and informational purposes. Social influence

was comparatively weaker and remained equivocal, suggesting that SNS use was normalized in students' routines but not consistently directed by instructors. Academic group discussion, research, collaborative learning, and specialization-related skill development coexisted with entertainment and stress-relief uses. SNS should therefore be treated neither as inherently beneficial nor inherently distracting. Their educational contribution depends on purposeful task design, digital literacy, and students' capacity to regulate attention. Because study habits and academic outcomes were not directly measured, the findings provide a descriptive foundation for future intervention and relationship-testing studies rather than evidence that SNS use improves study habits.

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