Social Media through the Lens of Campus Journalists: Considerations for Media Literacy Advancement

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Abstract: The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the lived experiences of the Campus Journalists in terms of their social media use. This study also aimed to determine the media literacy issues and challenges encountered by the students using different social media platforms, how the participants cope with the media literacy issues and to discover the insights shared by the informants to their peers and to the academe in general. This study utilized the purposive sampling technique which included the Fifth and Sixth Graders Campus Journalists. There were twelve Campus Journalists as informants and six teachers were the members of the Focus Group Discussion in this study. In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion were employed in the data collection. Utilizing thematic analysis, various themes were identified in the study. For the media literacy issues and challenges encountered by the students using different social media platforms, propagating misinformation, deliberate sharing of nonsensical items, being too public, cyberbullying, hacking and impersonation, and addiction to social media were the themes. The participants’ coping mechanism on media literacy issues included, evaluate information, appraisal of standard, source assessment, impose limitation, and observe measures. The insights shared by informants and participants were, think before click, keep private, use social media responsibly, and utilize social media for good purpose.

Keywords: Social Media, Campus Journalism, Media Literacy, Qualitative Research, Philippines

Introduction

In today’s digital age, most students access information through an interwoven system of media technologies. The advent of technological advancement gives rise to easy information acquisition and had made students digitally soaked more than ever. With this, learning, acquiring, and sharing information have drastically changed in this postmodern world. Truly, our digital age has made it easy for everyone, particularly the students, to become producers and consumers of media.

As the learning landscape has dramatically transformed over the years, students need to acquire various literacies in order for them to easily navigate their world. Educators identified media literacy as an emerging life-skill which students this digital age need to master. The concept of media and information literacy being one of the life-long learning skills has assumed immense importance in all learning institutions in recent years. With this, the education sector has designed and improved curriculum which aims at integrating this skill in order to make it as one of the main lines of attack on some of the major issues that haunt media literacy (Agarwal, Animesh, and Prasad, 2009).

Media literacy is important because it is an effective and engaging way to apply critical thinking skills to a wide range of issues. The poor media literacy competence among students affects them in adverse ways. It hampers them to critically evaluate information and sources which can lead to future problems. Hence, an ongoing call for students to develop this mastery is of paramount importance as a lifetime of learning of this essential skill is critical to assess media literacy in order to make sure that learning is taking place as much as possible (Berger, 2011).

Further, while students continue to use different media sources as source of information in their learning in this digital age, fake news proliferates instantly and the phenomenon seems to constantly grow. While the efforts of teachers to increase media literacy level among students reverberate, students are constantly plagued by hoax articles and clickbait stories. The worst is students do not have the skill to identify which articles they read online are true and which are not (Dresselhaus and Shrode, 2012).

The spread of false information has also perpetrated the international community and the phenomenon sprang to prominence. Teachers around the world can cite a number of extremely
irresponsible acts of misinformation. Among which is the fabricated quote that is attributed to the Defense Minister of Israel. The false report said that Israel has threatened Pakistan with nuclear weapons. This has resulted to retaliation on the part of the Pakistan government and warned Israel that they are a nuclear state. The incidence has brought trouble between the two nations and all is because of the fabricated quote and the spread of wrong information. If the situation was not handled properly, the international relations between the two nations could have been getting worst.

In the Philippines, fake articles also abound which aim to mislead the public who is using the social media. One concrete example of the proliferation of misinformation is the article circulating which said that researchers predict earthquake in the country between February 24 and March 8, 2017. Many students were alarmed upon reading the article. However, when the article was validated according to its reliability, there was no dependable source which the article can be attributed to. Similarly, there was no credible media outlet that carries the same story and finally, up to this date, even in the modernity of our times, there is no existing technology that can predict earthquakes.

My students were also patronizing hoax articles and fake news like anybody else from around the world. I remember one of my students who came to me with her phone and showed me a photo of a woman giving birth to multiple babies. She told that women are capable of delivering those numbers of babies in one pregnancy period. I asked her why she said so and she said it is what she read and see on the photo. The wrong information has altered the understanding of the students on the lesson about reproductive system and since then there has been doubt and conflict between what the teacher has taught and what the social media had propagated.

While the encounter with my student is just one of the instances that manifest how influential social media can be, we teachers need to be alarmed over the proliferation of the unlimited source of unreliable websites that continuously preying on the young minds of our students. This calls for educators to face the bigger challenge to address this tech problem before it can paralyze the students’ ability to think critically over many issues or the phenomenon will claim triumph that it would be too hard already for teachers to teach media literacy.

Teachers need to understand that the social media has become a battleground for people with opposing views and different ideologies or teachers need to acknowledge that the social media has become a tool for many people to propagate unsourced information in order to get attention of the public at the expense of sacrificing truth, misleading the public, propagating misinformation, and even cognitive bias. The role of teachers in educating the students in media literacy cannot be underestimated. Teachers should be quick to teach students about this skill as it is important as they utilize different media sources (Greitemeyer, 2011).

The above scenario characterized the current state of the existence of fake news and hoax articles. Every day, students are exposed to different information available in social media. The students need to be critically aware on how they can identify which information they have to believe in to or they will be getting wrong information. However, the mismatches between the number of unreliable websites and fraudulent articles on the social media and the amount of training or level of competence the students to help them identify unreliable information are justifiably viewed as a major educational issue for the advancement of media literacy among the students.

This study will be conducted at Ramon Magsaysay Central Elementary School. Students from this school are using social media when they research for their assignment and when they do other related class activities. Undeniably, these students are exposed to the different social media and are susceptible to utilizing unreliable media sources.

To date, one can rarely find readings regarding social media literacy and its impact on social media literacy advancement. The researcher has not come across of a similar study especially in the local context. This undertaking therefore can be considered as a blueprint of new knowledge and additional information to the existing ideas on the subject of this research. It is in this considerable perspective that the researcher decided to conduct the study with a hope that this may contribute to the body of knowledge in social media and its contribution to student learning. The conception of this study was more than timely so as to address the growing problems posed by media and information illiteracy.

1. Problem Statement

This study aimed to find out the following research questions:

1. What are the media literacy issues and challenges encountered by the students using different social media platforms?
2. How the participants cope with the media literacy issues?
3. What insights can the participants share to their peers and in the academe in general?

2. Methodology

This study will utilize phenomenology which aims to describe the lived experiences of students in terms of their utilization of the various social media and the issues they encountered. Further, this study
will be conducted to gain understanding of the plight of students in terms of the challenges they encountered using social media through their day-to-day experiences.

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3. Results

Media Literacy Issues and Challenges Encountered by Students in Using Different Social Media Platforms

There were several essential themes drawn from the in-depth interview. The informants expressed their ideas on the question related to the media literacy issues and challenges they encountered using different social media platforms. They were asked if they encountered reading fake news and articles and what moral and ethical behavior they think social media users should behave in the social media environments. They also shared their responses on what information they and their classmates and friends share on social media which you think they should consider censorship.

Propagating Misinformation. This is one of the six essential themes generated for the research question number 1. The informants stated that some of their classmates share news articles which were published over years ago with the intention of bringing confusion to others. This news article includes proclamation of no classes and declaration of special holidays. The informants also revealed that they often read fake news articles which have political color.

According to Alessandra when asked what does like of sharing misinformation, she bared:

I don’t like the practice of some of my classmates when they post about no classes on a particular date but the declaration was over years ago. It creates confusion to many students. (Archive##101)

Deliberate Sharing of Bias News and Nonsensical Items. Another essential theme which emerged in response to question number 1 is Deliberate Sharing of Nonsensical Items. The informants confessed that they see many unworthy sharing and posts in social media like constant update of the friend’s whereabouts or what they currently do and using too many unnecessary hashtags.

When Jean was asked what examples of unworthy items she reads on social media, she responded in a soft voice:

I have many friends in different social media and they do the same in common. In a regular basis, they post updates on what they currently do and write too many unnecessary hashtags. It is annoying. (Archive##103)

Being Too Public. Another essential theme that emerged in question number 1 is Being Too Public. The informants revealed that they read many posts about sharing online the supposed to be private matters like family troubles, conflict of parents, and other personal issue. The informants also observed that there are some who comment cuss words and other profanity in the comment section.

When asked if she read about too personal matters on social media, Maia shyly answered:

There are many things one can read on social media but what I do not like most are those hate messages and the use of expletives. I think they are too unbecoming to include profanity words, they have to be censored. (Archive##105)

Cyberbullying. One essential theme for research question number 1 is Cyberbullying. The informants affirmed that they were bullied online. They confessed that the act weakens their confidence and have considered deactivating their social media account.

Even young, Al did not escape from cyber bullies and once fell as victim, he said:

I have tried being bullied online. One classmate posted my photo and made it as meme. I look so silly, I have considered deactivating my social media account. (Archive##107)

Hacking and Impersonation. Another important essential theme that emerged for research question number 1 is Hacking and Impersonation. The informants shared by least they know one friend who whose social media account was hacked. Other informants also revealed that they know someone who open a social media account in disguise of other photo.

According to Ken, he did not hesitate to tell her friend to stop hacking other social media account, he shared:

When I realized that my friend hacked someone else’s social media account and posted awful thoughts, I reprimand him to stop it because it is not good to intrude into the property of other people. (Archive##109)

Coping Mechanism of Participants against Media Literacy Issues

Several sub-questions were asked to participants to elicit concepts with regards to their coping
mechanism against media literacy issues. The informants how important to evaluate information one can get in social media and they were also asked how do they evaluate critically and competently the information they read from social media. Questions about how social media users should apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of media was also asked.

Evaluate Information. There are five essential themes generated for research question number 2 and Evaluate Information is one of the essential themes generated after conducting the In-Depth interview. This essential theme was manifested when the informants affirmed that they have difficulty in evaluating the information they read online considering that there is a proliferation of fake news, hoax articles, and satirical writing.

They also stressed that they find it difficult to distinguish articles as to their purpose and the veracity of their content. Nevertheless, they ask help from teachers and parents when they find the article difficult to understand its content.

In the interview, the informants were asked how they deal with evaluating information they read online. Clair Ann shared that:

In reading articles from different media sources, I always check if the story is closed enough to reality. I don’t easily believe on what I read especially there are many fraudulent articles that are posted online in different social media. (Archive##111)

Appraisal of Standard. One of the essential themes generated from question number 2 was appraisal of standard. The informants stressed that they assess the standard of grammar used in the stories or in the articles they read in checking the authenticity of the material.

Dan shared during the interview that he employs mechanism in checking the credibility of the articles he read before he believes on them. He added that:

I am looking into the grammar and the standard of writing the article. Mostly, articles which are poorly written are produced by unreliable sources and we should not use them as reference in our subjects. (Archive#104)

Source Assessment. Another essential theme that emerged from question number 2 is Source Assessment. The informants believed that social media users today should learn how to assess the source of the articles. This is of importance in knowing the veracity of the articles.

According to Brent, there are many fictitious stories online and they shared in different social media for the purpose they are created. It is important for students to identify the source of the information before using them as reference. He said:

It always pays to determine the source of the reading materials to identify its legitimacy. Students must be keen in identifying the URL of the source of the article to know if it is in the guise of other familiar websites. Usually, those websites that have blinking ads are unreliable source of information. (Archival##107)

Impose Self-Limitation. The research question number 2 generated themes such as Impose Self-Limitation. The participants shared that imposing self-limitation is one of the coping mechanisms to counter social media issues today.

Jennie shared that she used to come across with fake news and other unbelievable stuff on social media but she has her ways of getting rid of them: She said:

I used to read fake articles and I am exasperated that I easily believed on them and realized later that what I read are not true. Learning from the experience, I no longer read articles that are unreliable. I also refrain myself from sharing them. (Archive##117)

Observe Measures. Another essential theme generated from question number 2 was Observe Measures. Students revealed that they developed mechanism to get away from getting trouble with media issues.

According to Ken when asked how he competently managed his social media life, he answered:

When I got the chance to ask my teachers or parents, I always do it so that I can be guided. I also filter sites or ads that are sources of misinformation so they will not appear on my feed or I see less from them. (Archive ##109).

Insights shared by Informants and Participants

The in-depth interview provided themes for this question. Table 4 pointed out essential themes which were generated from the informant’s responses. The question number 3 generated 4 essential themes.

Think Before Click. Research question number 3 generated this as one of the essential themes. The informants provided suggestions about using social media and among which is being cautious on what to post and what to comment and share online.

In the interview, Alessandra shared her insights about why she has to think of what she will post, she revealed that:

It is difficult to be in trouble with other people in social media, that is why I am cautious on posting and in giving comment so that I will not be bashed or misinterpreted. (Archive##101)

Keep Private. This emerged as one of the essential themes from question number 3. The informants suggested that one should not post online personal or family problems so that it will not attract criticism and become an object of fun in social media. Keeping private matters can be a good way of maintaining a good social media image.
Jan shared that he knew some friends on Facebook who post their family troubles and their petty quarrel with friends in social media. She emphasized that:

I have some friends who post family matters online. I think family concerns must be kept private to avoid being the subject of criticisms. Some of my friends also brought their misunderstanding with our classmates online and it makes them look dull. I hope they will realize that it is not good. (Archive##110)

Use Social Media Responsibly. The informants suggested that as a student, there should be limitations in using the social media in order to maximize its use on good point only. Being young and curious, students must use social media in the right way.

During the interview, Dan shared that it pays to be aware of specific limitations social media users must observe and he said:

It is important that students should be aware of the limitations they have to self-impose in using social media and this should include using social media only in good ways like healthy conversations or posting wholesome photos and discuss school-related activities. There should be no bashing and cyberbullying in social media. (Archive##104)

Utilize Social Media for Good Purpose. Another theme that emerged from question number 3 is Utilize Social Media for Good Purpose. The informants suggested that social media will be used in good purposes such as in sharing educational articles and in posting videos and stories that can inspire people to do better. They believe that when good things are posted online and when social media are used properly, students can learn many valuable information and the communication flow will be easy.

Dan has good thoughts about the wise use of social media as a student and he shared that:

Students should use social media in proper way. One example is sharing only educational and wholesome articles and stories. It will also be good if the students will use to disseminate important information to other classmates. (Archive##104)

4. Implications for Educational Practice

The notion of media literacy issues and challenges, regardless of its specific conceptualization, whether it is cognitive, affective, or behavioral, is one that has received considerable attention within the educational and social psychological literature, especially with regard to advancing media literacy skills among the students.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to highlight the experiences of campus journalists in terms of their consumption of the various social media. The informants are social media users and are actively engaged in different social media in daily basis with varying number of hours and purpose.

These campus journalists were invited to share their experiences and were asked of the challenges and their coping mechanisms regarding the issues on media literacy they have encountered while using social media. The influences of the social media to these campus journalists are in varied form and in different aspects and these posed challenges to teachers in terms of helping students develop a sound judgment on the use of different social media.

It is in this context that the participants were invited to share their experiences, recount various classroom-related life experiences in terms of their usage of social media. Meanwhile, the Focus Group Discussion composed of six students triangulated the answers of the informants in the interview in order to validate the responses of the informants.

Media Literacy Issues and Challenges Encountered by Campus Journalists in Using Different Social Media Platforms

There were six essential themes emerged out from the analysis of data for research question number one. The first essential theme as one of the media literacy issues and challenges is Propagating Misinformation. The informants revealed that a number of their social media friends are sharing wrong information online.

This practice poses big challenge among teachers. In this case, teachers may orient students on the proper behavior in social media emphasizing on the need to observe reflective thinking at all times. Teachers may also request students to report those who are sharing wrong information and when proven that the students habitually propagate them, they may be subjected to monitoring of their social media activity and be guided.

Propagating Misinformation according to Cole and Griffiths (2007) is a threat to democracy as it alters truth and as a responsible media consumer, each has to learn to filter the information shared as what one is sharing in social media defines the beliefs one is associated with.

Another theme emerged in question number 1 is Deliberate Sharing of Nonsensical Items. While deliberate sharing of nonsense items on social media may not be directly related to educational discussions, however, informants confessed that this behavior violates the proper internet decorum which can be annoying or may appear unkind to others. Although, everyone has freedom to post what one thinks is worth sharing; however, putting limitations may not cause any harm. This bad social media practice also posed challenge to the advancement of social media literacy issues.

In this context, teachers may ask students to keep records of what they post online for at least in a
span of one week. After which, the students will collect the comments and reactions about their post. The teacher may guide students to make reflections of what they have posted and let them write their realizations. According to Charlton and Danforth (2010) social media consumer should refrain from too much sharing of nonsense items online as this not only look annoying but may also lead to sharing of other items that may cause harm in the future.

One of the media literacy issues and challenges emerged from this research is **Being Too Public**. Similar to Deliberate Sharing of Nonsensical Items, this social media practice does not appeal to academic discussions however it also flouts proper netiquette. Teachers may help students who constantly share supposedly private matters like serious issues and concern by talking to them and asking them their concern. Sometimes, students go to the internet and post issues publicly maybe because they have no one to talk to. Teachers may give counseling to these students so that they can reflect that being too public can cause them harm in many different ways.

Meanwhile, Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2012) stressed that social media users must reprimand themselves from posting personal and family matters online to avoid other people from knowing private affairs and this can damage personal and family image. There are many good things when personal and family issues are kept private.

Another important theme that emerged from question number 1 is **Cyberbullying**. Many students today become victims of cyberbullying and these students suffer psychologically as they feel like the world is against them. Their esteem shrinks as they are treated cruelly. In this case, teachers must be quick in giving the help these students need. The teacher may talk to the victim and remind not to retaliate because the bullies are eager to see that their victims are reacting and this gives them power over these poor students. The teacher may also remind the students that retaliating can also turn the act into a chain reaction.

The teacher may also remind students to keep the social media a safe space where students can live in a virtual community where everyone feels safe and given high regard regardless of their social background and this can only happen if one respects other people and do not engage in cyberbullying. According to Greitemeyer (2011) cyberbullying has created damage to the well-being of the victims and has to be stopped as its effect is lasting and devastating.

Another theme that emerged from research question number 1 is **Addiction to Social Media**. The informants know somebody or confessed that they developed addiction to social media which has negative impact in their student life. The teacher may advise the students to join school activities which will help them to develop their skills. Participation in school activities may help students to get busy and harnessed their skills. Similarly, this will also lessen the time of the students to spend in social media. For Lenhart (2012) the addiction to social media among the students is one of the factors to the change of behavior of social media users particularly the students. Parents and teachers are encouraged to provide mechanism to help students with social media addiction by giving them tasks that help develop their skills.

### Coping Mechanism of Participants on Media Literacy Issues

The informants shared their responses on how they cope with media literacy challenges and issues which resulted to generating five essential themes. One of the themes is **Evaluate Information**. The participants believed that social media consumer should learn to evaluate the information they read in various social media. This can be done by looking for the attribution of the story to establish the credibility of the website and using critical thinking in the assessment of the validity of the article.

Teachers may help improve the students to evaluate information through many ways. One of which is inculcating the value of critical thinking to students. This can be done when teachers ask higher order thinking skills questions which requires students to think competently on how to answer them. If students are constantly exposed to higher order thinking questions, they will learn to develop sound judgment which is helpful in their daily life. Students can use their critical thinking ability even in evaluating the information they read online.

From the point of view of Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner, (2009) social media users can help themselves from not becoming a consumer of fake news and hoax articles when they practice evaluating the information they read online. This will help them to identify articles which are credible and trustworthy.

Another important theme that emerged based from the interview is **Appraisal of Standard**. The campus journalists suggested that in order to identify whether what they read online are legitimate or not, evaluating the article truly helps. One hallmark of an authentic article is the observance of ethical standard in writing. This means that the piece is following a high standard of writing may it be in academic form or in literary.

Teachers can help students appraise standard of a reading material by introducing to students the different emerging writing genre. If students get
acquainted with the various forms of writing, this will help them able to identify whether or not the article they read is hoax or fake or belonging to any of the writing forms. According to Kushin and Yamamoto (2010) it will also be beneficial when teachers may explain to students how bogus articles are written by showing them examples which are in the circulation online. More so, it will be of great help should teachers show to students the adversorial pattern of article.

Another important essential theme that emerged during the interview is Source Assessment as one of the coping mechanisms of the participants on media literacy challenges and issues. The campus journalists suggested that social media users must learn to check the source of the story in order to help identify if it is legitimate or fake. Stories that have blinking advertisement usually comes from unreliable source and need not be read. As pointed out by Gordon, Juang, and Syed (2007) the teacher may help the students to train in the assessment of the article in order to indentify which websites or online sources advocate misinformation. Teachers may also list down common website, pages, and account that generally produce untrustworthy articles and post it in the class so that students can be thoroughly guided.

Another essential theme that emerged from the interview is Impose Self-Limitation. The informants believed that fake news and hoax articles will not spread if they will not be shared by social media users. The best way to stop the proliferation of these untrustworthy articles according to Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe, (2007) is to exercise self-limitation when it comes to sharing, liking, and commenting on the thread in which these articles are visible. Teachers may help students impose self-limitation to students by reprimanding them from clicking unreliable links and restraining them from liking or commenting on the malicious articles.

Another essential theme generated in the coping mechanism on media literacy issues and challenges is Observe Measures. The informants offer suggestions to social media users to seek assistance from teachers and parents whenever they read untrustworthy articles in social media. They suggested filtering pages to monitor what appears on the newsfeed and never follow pages that promote unhealthy topics. As stressed by Coyne, Padilla-Walker, Stockdale, and Day (2011) teachers may help students to observe measures by letting them get acquainted with special features of the privacy setting of the different social media. Teachers may give orientation to students on how to use the privacy setting.

Insights Shared by Informants and Participants

There are four essential themes the campus journalists revealed as their insights they can share to their peers and to the academe in general. One of the themes is Think Before Click. This means that social media users will reflect first and examine the content of the post before sharing them online. This can be manifested when social media users learn to respect others by not commenting words that can harm them and by not engaging in bashing and cyberbullying.

From the point of view of Bushman, and Huesmann (2006) teachers may help students to take ownership of their action in social media by instilling in them their responsibility on whatever they post online and by reminding them their obligation to maintain proper netiquette online. This can make students evaluate the content of their post and will also make them personally undergo censorship on their own posts.

Another essential theme emerged under the insights shared by the participants is Keep Private. The informants believe that limiting the reach of the post by sharing them only to friends will help them from troubles associated with social media. They also advise to avoid talking to stranger online and not to post online private matters especially relating personal and family concerns.

Teachers may help the students on how to keep their social media account be limited to only friends and family. Teachers may also emphasize in the class to value privacy so that the students will be reminded not to post publicly everything. As suggested by Bushman and Anderson (2009) teachers together with the students may agree together by listing examples of concerns, activities, personal and family matters that not need to be kept by themselves alone and not to post on social media. In this way, the teachers may help the students to identify which topics they can share and this will keep the students from concerns that may happen.

One of the essential themes under the insights shared by the informants is Use Social Media Responsibly. This means that social media consumers will know their limitations in social media. Knowing limitations include understanding that everyone in the virtual community has rights and students must respect this by not involving in cyberbullying, online shaming, and making fun of others. Teachers may help students to use social media responsibly according to Choney (2010) by identifying social media netiquette and post them in the corner of the classroom and let students understand the value of observing the proper social media behavior and monitor students who violate them so that they will be guided and be given counseling.

Finally, the informants revealed that social media users must Utilize Social Media for Good Purpose. This essential theme is always a proper
way observe regardless of what age bracket or purpose of being in the social media. There are many ways to utilize social media for good purpose. One of which according to Carr and Czerniewicz (2011) is making the social media to propagate inspirational stories that will help everyone develop the sense of humanity. This can be done by post stories and share videos that give inspiration to others. This may touch other people and inspire them to succeed in their endeavors and inspire others to utilize social media for good purpose.

Another way to utilize social media for good purpose is by inviting people to participate in civic work. Many people today are spending time online and the best way to reach them to participate in civic work is through social media. This makes people easy to access and allows the organizer to reach many people in an instant. As pointed out by Ellison (2007) another way to utilize media in good purpose is by increasing awareness on social issues through propagating educational articles that help students to keep informed on matters of relevance to them.

Teachers may help students to use social media in good purpose by indoctrinating them the power of social media and instilling in them the magnitude of what social media can do to develop the sense of awareness of the people on many relevant issues. Teachers may help students to develop understanding on the importance of utilizing social media for good purpose and how social media influence people by showing to students the examples of stories and lives that change, and stories of successful causes through the use of social media. In this way, the students will appreciate the power of social media when it is used for good purpose.

5. Recommendation for Future Research

Clearly, what I have written are not the last words on this topic and there is much more that needs to be done in this field. From the onset, I recognized that this research lacks the level of generalizability that researchers and scholars hope to see. But for topics such as this, the social media through the lens of the campus journalists’ experiences may be far different from other group of students. I believe that smaller-scaled, micro studies are needed to fully understand all the nuances of experience that the participants of the study endure.

I also believe that there is a room for a greater variety of perspectives concerning the utilization of social media among the research participants. I choose to write from the perspectives of the campus journalists, but another study could examine the influence of the use of social media to the academic life of these participants through the lens of the teachers.

There are also other research opportunities to consider in terms of the research participant’s use of social media. My study is only limited to the experiences of campus journalists in consuming social media, the issue on related topic regarding utilization of social media sources like demographics, variety of social media and number of hours in utilizing these social media might warrant a separate research endeavor.

Beyond the issue of location, level, and perspective, I also believe that there are larger issues that require future research concerning media literacy among different groups of students in this age of technology advancement. Many students in different locations, cultural affiliations across the region and the country continue to be influenced by social media. Hence, more researches need to be done so that media literacy issues will be addressed on the different perspective and levels in order for the students to acquire this essential literacy.

Concluding Remarks

Based upon the result of this academic inquiry, I opted to point out several remarks.

First, varied life experiences of campus journalists contributed to their utilization and behavior in social media. Those experiences varying from personal, social, and even familial and parental can be connected to making these students experience issues in advancing media literacy.

Second, six issues are pointed out by the participants about the media literacy issues and challenges. These issues include propagating misinformation, deliberate sharing of nonsensical items, being too public, cyberbullying, hacking and impersonation, and addiction so social media.

Third, the coping mechanism that the research participants employed in overcoming the media literacy issues and challenges and these include evaluate information, appraisal of standard, source assessment, impose limitation, and observe measures. These practices could either help or hinder the campus journalists to advance their media literacy skills.

Finally, as regards to my study, I could say that the research participants experience social media literacy issues. This is manifested in their inability to distinguish genre of writing and understanding the nature of the articles they read. I personally believe that these concerns may be addressed should the teachers will uphold institutional design media literacy orientation and practices and integrate them in the lessons with closed supervision from teachers and parents. This can greatly advance media literacy of the students.

6. Reference


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