



A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY ON THE BEHAVIOR OF ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA DISTRACTIONS

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Abstract:

Online educational platforms and social media applications play a vital role in the learning process of students during the rise of the pandemic since knowledge acquisition and delivering instructions were done through virtual interactions. Hence, this study was designed to explore the behavior of the English major students in UM Digos College towards social media distractions that aimed to determine the influences of these diversions on students' academic learning perceptions. Moreover, this qualitative study utilized a descriptive study where eight (8) participants were purposively chosen to respond to the different research questions. Collaizi's method was used in order to provide a significant thematic analysis. As a result, the major findings revealed that the influence of social media distractions on the behavior of the students were students' loss of eagerness, behavioral interruptions and self-improvement barriers whilst classroom interactivensness, flash notifications and students' personal interests were found to be the main causes of these social media interferences in which multifaceted strategies such as traditional strategies and multiple digital strategies were asserted as coping mechanisms in overcoming social media distractions. Meanwhile, the study ended up with three implications namely: implication to the learning process, implication to the teaching process and implication to learners' performance.

Keywords: social media distractions, qualitative inquiry, thematic analysis, UM Digos

1. Introduction

Social media platforms became one of the primary sources of distraction during the integration of blended learning education into students' lives (Koessmeier & Büttner,

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2021). In line with that, Siebers (2022) posited that the inability to stay fixated was a widespread problem in the community due to the continuous distractions from social media platforms. Eventually, these interruptions impeded the learners from concentrating on the assigned tasks given by their online educators, which affected their learning abilities (Ayeni, 2021). Hence, to determine how social media distractions took place during the virtual learning operations at UM Digos College, particularly among primary English students, this study was conducted since, in some other institutions, social media disturbances prohibited students from effectively acquiring academic instructions (Purvis et al., 2016).

Accordingly, Sifat (2021) stated that distractions created by social media platforms disrupt students' cognitive processes and deteriorate learners' critical ability to study. Likewise, Mensah and Nizam (2016) asserted in their study that social media networks greatly affected students' academic performance in Malaysian tertiary institutions due to a lack of time management. Consequently, learners admitted that utilizing social media entertainment and trends could have provided more excellent learning; instead, it only led to their virtual class interruptions (Emerick et al., 2019).

Across the nation, Espiritu et al. (2021) posited that navigating social media negatively influences students' performances because as learners increase their time manipulating online leisure platforms, their fixed schedule for working on academic tasks becomes neglected and ignored. In relation, Cordovilla et al. (2019) revealed that the use of social media affected the performance tasks, written works, and quarterly assessments of the students at Bestlink College of the Philippines since using these entertainment programs became a routine for students, which made them spent their time on chatting rather than focusing on their virtual discussion (Abrenica, De Torres & Vargas, 2021). Hence, Cabral et al. (2016) claimed that a gradual decrease in learning occurred when social media distractions were uncontrolled.

Meanwhile, Tan et al. (2021) locally cited that learners were perceived to have lost their eagerness to study since they were tempted by social media while listening to online instructions. Similarly, students encountered difficulties in accomplishing academic tasks due to social media over usage (Lacida & Murcia, 2015). On the other hand, Kulidtod and Pasagui (2017) mentioned that students often visited social media sites for active social networking, sharing, and online learning. Thus, utilizing social media wisely and with more awareness about its influence on academic performance was vital for students (Poblete, Castillon & Castano, 2019).

Correspondingly, Distraction-Conflict Theory by Zajonc (1965), as cited by Ukezono et al. (2015), has been used to support this quest. To be specific, this theory elaborates on the role of other things (second task or distractor) in pivotally affecting the focus of the subject toward its primary task (Sanders, Baron, & Moore, 1978; Baron, 1986; Leung, 2015; Brooks, Longstreet, & Califf, 2017). Through this theory, the distractions from other social media platforms like Facebook (a social network), YouTube (a community content), mobile legend (an online game), and many more when there was an interruption, just like the flashing of notifications during virtual classes of the students

were found controversial since the attention of the students into listening to the lecture or opening the notification were prompted (Brooks, 2015). Finally, it was essential to identify the influence of social media on the student's behavior to elaborate on immediate remedies and solutions for its influences on the student's learning process to beat distractions from social media sites and applications. On top of everything else, this study was significant because this could benefit many individuals such as students, teachers, school heads, and even future researchers since this focused more on how to combat social media distractions during the conducted online classes.

2. Research Objectives

This research study emphasized the behavior of the students in terms of social media distractions with this new blended learning education in UM Digos College where it specifically seeks to answer the following:

- 1) What is the influence of social media distractions on students' behavior in online class discussions?
- 2) What causes social media distractions in the blended learning education of the students?
- 3) What are the common ways students use to overcome social media distractions?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Participants

The researchers selected eight (8) participants from English Major Students of UM Digos College, specifically two (2) students from each year level because the target participants of the study, as per instructed by the research adviser, were language learners. Following this, Creswell and Creswell (2018) supported the number of chosen participants since it was stated that phenomenological research needed three (3) to ten (10) participants during the interview. In addition, non-probability sampling, particularly purposive sampling, was utilized by the researchers in selecting the participants to achieve the study's intended purpose (Crossman, 2020). By definition, purposive sampling was a selection of samples based on the researchers' judgment and the study's requirements (Vijayamohan, 2022).

Moreover, the inclusion criteria set in this paper for the participants to be qualified were the following. First, the participants must be eighteen (18) years old and above. Second, they must be enrolled in the school's online classes. Third, they must be English major students, and lastly, the participants must be social media (Facebook, messenger, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, online games, and the likes) inclined individuals. On one hand, being unable to meet fixed schedules for no valid reasons, not being reachable after the scheduled interview, and the inability of the participants to sign the informed consent were the exclusion criteria of this study. Most importantly, the participants were allowed to withdraw their participation at any time and whenever this situation occurred, the

participants' personal information remained anonymous and confidential throughout the study to follow ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Instrument

In this study, the researchers used a designed and validated guide questionnaire during the interview with the use of Google Meeting application. In line with this, the researchers presented open-ended supporting questions for the participants to describe their experiences in detail during the data-gathering processes. Prior to the actual interview, the researchers prepared a letter of permission addressed to the participants acknowledging their participation and authorization which allowed the researchers to obtain data from them, making sure that it was undersigned by the Dean of College, Program Head, Research Coordinator, and Adviser. Afterward, a copy of the Informed Consent was sent to the participants for them to sign and to be aware of their rights.

Moreover, to fully document the entire interview, the researchers have set a video and audio recorder as agreed by the participants so that data were gathered and noted with utmost accuracy, honesty, and objectivity. In addition, individually scheduled meetings were given to the participants considering their most convenient date and hour. Aside from that, adequate time was provided for the participants and they were treated with tremendous respect and equality throughout the interview. Above all, the participants were given a token of appreciation acknowledging their efforts in participating in the regulated study. Most importantly, the researchers firmly kept the promises and agreements being mutually agreed with absolute sincerity to make the execution of the study just and free from errors or any false information.

3.3 Research Design and Procedure

This study was a descriptive-phenomenological type of qualitative research where it sought for a few research participants to share and describe their lived experiences about a particular concept or a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Qutoshi, 2018). Furthermore, the data collection method utilized in the study was an in-depth interview (IDI) because individual interviews were needed to give the participants a chance to discuss their perspectives openly on the questions prepared by the researchers (Shaiekh, 2019). By definition, an in-depth interview, as stated by Communication for Research (2021), was a qualitative data collection method that emphasized the direct involvement of the researcher/s and the participant/s during the scheduled interview.

After properly executing the data-gathering procedure, the researchers transcribed the participants' responses while utilizing a non-verbatim transcription process where laughter/s, background noises, verbal pauses, and throat clearing were omitted (Brooks, 2021). Next, the translation of the transcribed data follows if and only if the participants used their native dialects in answering the questions provided by the researchers. Then, the researchers proceeded to the organization of data by adopting the seven (7) steps of Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological data analysis method of thematic patterning, as cited by Yuan et al. (2021). By definition, it is a type of qualitative method

that secured the credibility and reliability of its findings and results regarding the participants' personal experiences in line with the research questions presented, allowing the researchers to come up with emergent themes (Wirihana et al., 2017).

To elaborate Colaizzi's method, the first was to read the transcript repeatedly to become familiar with the data. The second step was to identify and extract significant statements and phrases from the familiarized data. Third, formulate meanings from the identified and extracted relevant words or phrases. Fourth, group all formulated meanings into categories such as clusters of themes and themes. Fifth, define all emergent themes in the detailed description, then sixth, describe all the fundamental structures of the phenomenon, and lastly, return the findings to the participants to verify whether the data gathered was accurately taken. After executing the whole process, an email addressed to the data analyst with the compiled and coded data was sent to the data analyst for the validation procedure.

To discuss further the ethical considerations being set on this study, before the actual interview, the participants understood that their participation was completely voluntary, and without any consequence, they were free to decline their involvement in the study at any time, prior to or during the actual interview. Similarly, they were also aware that any information coming from them was kept in a secured environment for confidentiality and was only used for the purpose of completing this undertaking. Moreover, they were also aware that the result of this study was used exclusively in the university and it was hereby authorized by the participants to publish the study in any form considering the ethical consideration being agreed. Most importantly, the participants understood that there were no risks involved in their active participation throughout the whole implementation of the study being conducted.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Influence of Social Media Distractions on the Behavior of Students

One of the main objectives of this undertaking was to distinguish the influence of social media distractions on students' behavior in online classes based on the given responses of the participants in the interview. With that, "Students' Indifferences" was extracted as an emergent theme in acquiring the language, and presented in the figure below were its clustered themes:

4.1.1 Students' Loss of Eagerness

This new educational setup exposed students to social media sites where entertainment trends became accessible. As a result, six (6) out of eight (8) participants said that in terms of their behavior towards learning with easy access to social media, while the class was still in process, their will and interest to study their English language lessons were not as eager as before. The following were responses coming from them;

"So, when I compare my eagerness to learn the English language, my eagerness to learn before is much higher than now, I was not really into social media, so I am consistent in learning and studying English language. However, when the pandemic started, my English learning consistency was lower than I expected." (Participant 1, Lines 5-6)

"Although I sometimes deviate from the road because of these social media distractions, I am still eager to learn the English language but not as eager as I was before because I tend to focus more on other things that would contribute to my professional growth."
(Participant 7, Line 2)

In line with this, Singh and Thurman (2019) supported the above statement, for they said that with this new educational platform, students could be anywhere, which led them to lose their motivation to learn the intended tasks and use social media platforms instead. Likewise, Umar and Idris (2018) asserted in their study that successive use of social media platforms prompted students to lose interest in the lesson. Mauliya et al. (2020) cited that the students experienced low eagerness to learn since social media were sometimes demotivating (Eatough, 2022).

4.1.2 Behavioral Interruptions

As online classes became more dominant across the country, students' behavioral inconsistency due to social media distractions such as flash notifications led to class interruptions since students' attitudes towards learning got interrupted as quickly as the flashing of social media pop-up alerts.

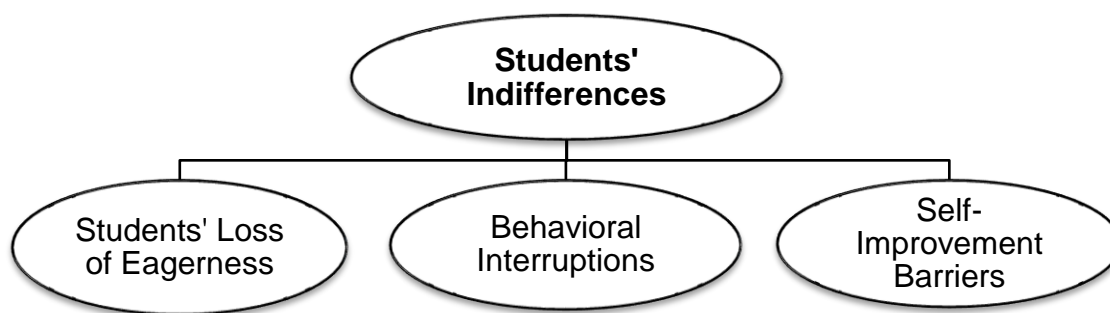


Figure 1: Influence of Social Media Distractions on the Behavior of Students

"However, when I started to get distracted with Facebook notifications, I shifted my interest, and learning my English classes tended to be uninteresting." (Participant 6, Line 2)

In addition, as social media platforms started to gain control over students' focus and concentration, their attention ended up getting ruined and distracted.

“So, my class concentration is always ruined. I can be easily distracted by a single noise or even a ring on my messenger, and my ears will immediately listen to it. In virtual classes or our virtual class is going on, then a chat head pops up on my cellphone, I would end up talking to that person, especially if I think that person has some juicy tea to spill or that person has important matters to talk with me or if the teacher does not sound motivating enough to me, although it is not the teacher’s role to motivate me.” (Participant 7, Lines 1-3)

“I wonder if we have all experienced this, but I cannot help but be distracted, especially now that we are dealing with this virtual class. My attentiveness and my concentration in class were affected because of the distractions that were so prevalent among us.” (Participant 3, Lines 1-3)

As shown in the result above, behavioral interruptions were indeed experienced by the participants when social media distractions took over their class concentrations since multitasking in the utilization of social media when the class was ongoing most likely to generate serious distractions that altered students' learning behavior (Wang et al., 2015). This idea suggested that task-irrelevant stimuli from social media prevented the learners from focusing on their primary task, which was to listen to their virtual class (Koessmeier & Buttner, 2021). Moreover, Hollis and Was (2016) unveiled that students' minds often wandered on social media while learning, and when this happened, internal distraction occurred, hitting students' behavioral persistency (Wilmer et al., 2017).

4.1.3 Self-improvement Barriers

Social media platforms significantly affected the younger generation, especially when the pandemic started, because the execution of educational matters was set up through online instructions and some participants claimed that these distractions prohibited individual development.

“Based on my experience, social media distractions harm my efficiency and efficacy in acquiring the English language. Just like my addiction to Twitter, frequently, I encounter misspelled words, incorrect grammar usage, or punctuation, which is not helping me. Rather, it caused me to get used to it and adapt those writing. Thus, it hinders my capability to acquire the English language fully.” (Participant 5, Lines 1-5)

“As far as I can observe, learning English with social media distractions tends to withdraw me from my productivity in learning.” (Participant 6, Line 1)

In line with that, participant 1 also admitted that social media distractions did handicap students' development in acquiring the lessons effectively.

“About my learning, I cannot say that it is generating an impressive result or outcome like I’m in the higher level of comprehending English language.” (Participant 1, Line 1)

Out of the presented statements above, it was clear that the self-improvement barrier due to social media over-usage hindered their capability and productivity in generating impressive academic results since they became addicted to it and became oblivious to time (Shalini, 2021). Kuznekoff et al. (2015) posited that digital media provided users with content unrelated to the lessons. Thus, it led to lesser self-development. Above all, social media interrupts students from learning, which is attributed to lower academic performance since students enjoy using social media more than studying their topics, reducing their self-learning improvement (Balakrishnan et al., 2017).

4.2 Causes of Social Media Distractions in the Blended Learning Education

The second main objective of this research study mainly focused on the different causes of social media distractions in the blended learning education of students. As a result of the different answers of the participants, an emergent theme, “Students’ Social Interests,” was obtained with its respective clustered themes as presented below.

4.2.1 Classroom Interactiveness

Effective class interaction was crucial in gaining students’ full attention towards the discussion, and one of the principal causes of students’ distraction was the lack of an engaging environment within the virtual lecture room. Under this, five (5) participants responded that noninteractive discussion caused them to indulge in social media sites.

“What makes me visit other social media platforms while I am having my virtual class is when the discussion of my professor is not interesting for me. I really feel tired or sleepy when my class is very serious or not interactive enough to make me feel interested, so I can’t really stop myself from opening my social media platforms to kill my tiredness or boredom.” (Participant 1, Lines 1-2)

“There are classes that really make me bored or uninterested, especially that the current set-up is through online classes, so it’s really hard for me to attend participatively.” (Participant 5, Line 1)

Otherwise, participant 5 added that no one opted to open social media entertainment when the class was interactive, as elaborated below.

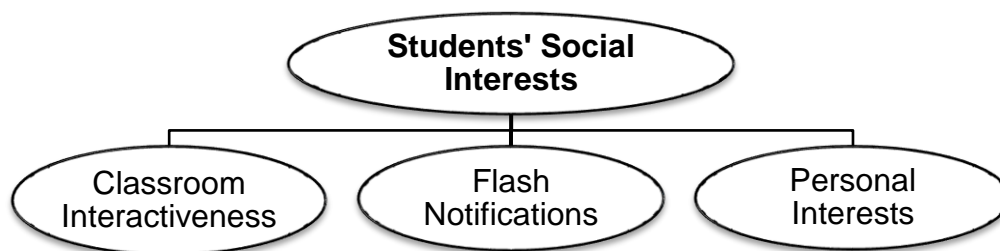


Figure 2: Causes of Social Media Distractions to Students' Learning

"But, if the class is quite engaging even if it's just online, then I am not tempted to open some apps and divert my attention in there." (Participant 5, Line 3)

Furthermore, classroom interactions, as elaborated above, were one of the main distractions because when teachers' methods of delivering instructions were not engaging enough and aligned with students' characteristics and interests, students tended to divert their attention in opening their social media accounts (Munawaroh, 2017). Similarly, Ugar and Koc (2015) asserted that using social media resources reduced students' boredom in class, especially when participation in the discussion was not highly encouraged. Hence, distractions from social media platforms depended on the instructor's way of engaging and effectively allowing students to interact in the online lectures (Agarwal et al., 2021).

4.2.2 Flash Notifications

Other participants also affirmed that sudden flashes of social media notifications on their screens made them distracted from the class since it was tempting enough.

"Like what I've said in terms of visiting other social media platforms while having a class, there are times that we forgot to turned off our phone then it will notify us about this and that. So, social media can really be distracting that can make you curious about what are those chats and you end up talking to the person." (Participant 4, Lines 1-2)

"Also, notifications are one of the clickbait in this issue such as TikTok notification, Facebook, and even Instagram." (Participant 6, Line 3)

To be more specific, notifications from friends and distant families, according to seven (7) participants, caused them to allow themselves to open their social media alerts while engaging in online classes to exchange valuable and fascinating information with others.

"Through the use of social media platforms like Facebook and Messenger, its notification gives me a way to communicate with my loved ones and it also gives me information regarding updates like in group page in Facebook that can help me about the occurrence around us that we don't know." (Participant 4, Line 1)

Furthermore, flash notifications, as shown above, were said to be one of the reasons that pushed students to open social media platforms since they were captivated to check their emails and keep up with their social media feeds (Pew Research Center, 2015). Unexpected notifications also interrupted students, leading to an instant shift of interest while learning virtually since flash notifications were extremely enticing to students (Gazzaley, 2016). In addition, the continuous vibrations and sounds of notifications immensely distracted students during classes because these primarily captured the learners' focus and attention, specifically when the messages or notifications received were highly entertaining and valuable for them (The White Hatter, 2021).

4.2.3 Personal Interests

Most participants said that their specific personal interests pushed them to open their social media applications while having a class. Presented below were their responses.

"In this generation, people my age are very active in social media. Just like their common reason, I enjoy using different social media platforms, because I can express myself freely. I become confident with my physical appearance and it also allows me to interact with people better than I could ever imagine." (Participant 2, Lines 1-3)

"It is because it appears interesting to the eyes of the viewer, especially me, compared to listening to virtual classes. The fact that trendy topics are provided on the internet, it allows the netizen to click and then be drowned into the topic being talked on social media." (Participant 6, Lines 1-2)

An additional response from another participant said that personal interest caused someone to get distracted from the task at hand. Here was the verbal response of the participant.

"We cannot deny the fact that social media and online games are beneficial to us to kill our boredom and tiredness. or to have knowledge about the issues circulating in entertainment trends. So, social media is the main reason why I am having distractions these days. It's because of all the trends and issues." (Participant 1, Lines 1-3)

Also, peers often introduced famous social media applications. As a result, some participants responded that their friends caused them to indulge in social media sites because the world of technology was penetrating their interests. Elaborated below were their vocal answers.

"However, those words of mouth by my friends, that's what pressures me just like mobile legends, I have never indulged myself to mobile gaming before. What I've known was only candy crush, that's the only online game I've known but now, when my group of friends started to talk about that game and they look very entertaining to me, I was interested too."

So, that's why I started to play. So that's it, social media does not pressure me about its trends but the word of mouth from my friends are." (Participant 7, Lines 4-6)

In the same situation as Participant 7, Participant 2 also acknowledged the presence of peers in hitting her interest and level of addiction towards social media entertainment applications, as stated below.

"The way I see it, social media pressure can be the reason of our distraction, like the emergence of Call of Duty online game, I installed that application because of my friends telling me to play with them, because it is so fun." (Participant 2, Line 1)

On the other hand, students' social behavior influenced them to open social media sites during online classes since they have distinct personal attentiveness. Presented below was one of the responses following the clustered theme.

"Sometimes, online classes make me bored, that's why I used social media to entertain myself." (Participant 8, Line 1)

Most importantly, participants revealed that they became distracted by social media platforms because it was their channel for communication with distant families and friends. Also, it made their behavior and focus encounter a sudden switch since instant messages in the notification bar attracted students and, eventually, made them feel the urge to respond quickly (Attia et al., 2017). Otherwise, personal interests were also part of the causes of the social media distractions of the students since they have distinct fascinations toward entertainment trends and issues found in social media which distracted them from learning and affected their academic progress (Bekalu et al., 2019). In line with that, Lu, Hao, and Jung (2016) cited that students preferred to use social media platforms mainly for personal interests, entertainment, and networking with friends.

Likewise, during virtual class hours, the researchers found that their friends encouraged them to play games and open online applications for chatting and messaging, an exciting topic common for teenagers nowadays (Nidirect Government Services, n. d.). At the same time, individual interests made learners become interrupted, as perceived in the findings since when students' learning attitude got bored and addicted to the different trends in social media, it placed them at higher risk of distractions and patterns of behavioral changes (Stockdale & Coyne, 2020).

4.3 Ways to Overcoming Social Media Distractions

The third main objective of this research study was to know the students' different ways to overcome social media distractions. Upon contemplating the succeeding answers of the participants regarding the prepared main question with its probing questions, the

researchers came up with the theme, "Students' Multifaceted Strategies," from its clustered themes as demonstrated below.

4.3.1 Traditional Strategies

Even though people have high technologies in today's generation, the selected participants still used traditional strategies to take action against social media distractions.

"During online classes, in order to stop myself from getting tempted by social media platforms, just like when the classes were conducted face to face, I will get my pen and notebook, so that my attention will be on writing my notes." (Participant 2, Line 1)

Aside from that, six (6) participants performed the same traditional strategies in combating social media distractions: setting a schedule.

"This is from my experience that I will prepare in the evening a timetable and I will try to schedule the time for me to study again and the time to do your social media things. For example, in the morning I will spend 6 am to 9 am studying this subject then after that, I will allow myself to play games and then so on." (Participant 7, Lines 2-3)

In line with traditional strategies, the most significant way to conquer every challenge and obstacle, especially with social media-related issues and concerns, according to four (4) participants of the study, was to impose self-discipline.

"Although I am not a saint on this topic, I know that I can still control my urge to be tempted by social media. I think the best way to be not distracted by these is to discipline oneself just as how we do in face-to-face classes. Although our teachers are not looking, we must do so for ourselves because too much distraction from all these things will sooner influence our learning capacities." (Participant 6, Lines 1-3)

Furthermore, five (5) participants stated that to cope with social media distractions, people, specifically students, must develop their focus and attention span.

"As I have mentioned, I am still not a pro in managing my focus. I have this attitude that some moments, I tend to just tell myself, okay self-let's browse for a bit then go back later. Then, later on I would just find out our class was already done and I failed again to maintain my focus. That's it, I wanted to regain my focus and harness it even more especially since learning English language is truly challenging and needs full effort and attention." (Participant 6, Lines 1-4)

"I need to lengthen my attention span, try to counteract boredom and interest-related issues so that I will be more participative in class, avoid having social media as my comfort zone, and be more productive as an English learner." (Participant 5, Line 2)

Otherwise, five (5) participants also answered under traditional strategies that setting limitations and boundaries were essential considerations in dealing with social media distractions.

"Set boundaries, set limitations on everything that you do and then you reflect. Just like what I've said a while ago, to create a schedule although all of us don't have ample time to create a schedule but at least you set boundaries on everything." (Participant 7, Lines 5-6)

Reflecting and reconnecting with one's goal was acknowledged by some other participants to minimize the influence of social media distractions on the student's behavior while establishing priorities was also said to be a helpful tip in surmounting the experienced distractions.

"I must identify what really matters, what really comes first and I must improve my attention in class by writing notes and participating in class discussions." (Participant 2, Line 1)

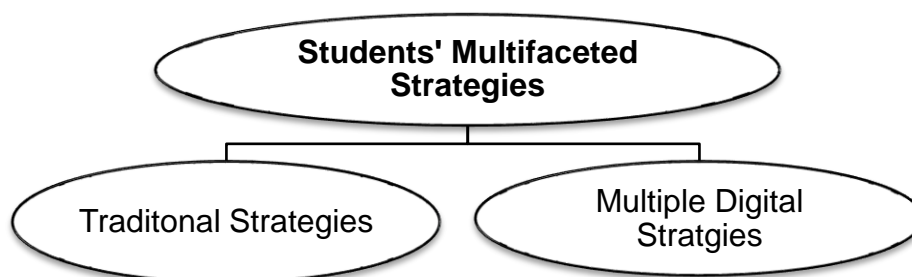


Figure 3: Ways to Overcoming Social Media Distractions

As another traditional technique, time management was enunciated as well by the participants to remove the different social media interruptions encountered during online class discussions.

"The things I need to improve to remove these distractions from social media platforms are to manage my time well. Time management is one thing I need to improve to make myself not easily distracted by social media platforms. Working my time well, like I have time for social media and also time for my learning and studying English language lessons, helps me beat social media distractions." (Participant 1, Lines 1-3)

Aside from being responsible with one's actions concerning social media distractions, as articulated by the participants, improving learning habits was also significant in beating social media disturbances. Beyond everything, one participant strongly implied praying before engaging in any school-related work, for prayer was the most powerful tool to prevent interference from taking over. That was how participants reacted to getting through social media distractions using common traditional strategies. Reinforcing the participants' traditional strategies, such as setting schedules and note takings during class discussions, were considered steps in beating social media interruptions. Setting plans for checking social media pages was a great way to limit social media use to avoid wasting school working hours (Kohlbach, 2021). Similarly, UMass (2020) posited that taking notes made students pay attention and stay awake in class which in turn allowed them to avoid utilizing social media disturbances. In addition, the researchers discovered that behavioral discipline was one of the best ways of avoiding social media distractions. Having said that, Hutt (2022) stated that self-discipline might be rigid, but it was the simplest way to reduce distractions and keep an individual focused on the task. Also, managing time well (Swerdlow, 2019) and removing apparent distractions can help improve your attention span (Griffin, 2021). At the same time, setting limitations and boundaries (ReachOut, 2022), often revisiting or reconnecting one's goal (Rigby, 2020), and being responsible for one's actions, as presented in the results above, were said to be a helpful mechanism in overcoming social media distractions.

4.3.2 Multiple Digital Strategies

Since the research study mainly revolved around the digital world, strategies in preventing distractions from it also have digital techniques, and the most mentioned strategy among all was turning off notifications. Seven participants of the study acknowledged this action.

“Also, to avoid distraction, they need to turn off their notifications while in virtual classes because once they clicked it, they will find their selves getting distracted again.” – (Participant 2, Line 2)

Moreover, one of the primary ways to stop these distractions from social media platforms was to eliminate distractive devices and applications recognized by the participants. On the one hand, some participants said that preventing from using two devices works better, but many of them regarded that closing and uninstalling social media sites and applications as the best way to prevent social media interruptions.

“So, the tips we can apply so as not to be distracted are: close any social media sites and applications, limit your smartphone usage, create a social media schedule.” (Participant 3, Line 1)

With that, participant 1 suggested that students must create a distraction-free zone aside from uninstalling social media applications to avoid social media distractions.

“Social media is quite engaging and distracting as well, but you can stop yourself from using any social media undertakings by using a distraction-free zone. All you have to do is keep your phone from this zone and resist the temptation to get through this area.”
(Participant 1, Lines 3-4)

Besides that, another participant likewise considered turning on the phone’s focus mode to avoid social media distractions.

“My last strategy is that, I turn on my device focus mode, in which it helps you get rid of distractions from your phone or other devices by blocking some apps from usage for a specific period of time and only turn on apps that you would like to use and focus on.”
(Participant 5, Line 5)

Thus, as presented above, the participants also applied multiple digital strategies to stop social media distractions, wherein turning off notifications and turning on device focus mode were suggested as the best alternatives for combating social media diversions. Pais (2019) stated that turning on the device focus mode helped learners from getting disturbed because this device kept unnecessary and distractive apps unavailable for the scheduled working hours while turning off notifications, according to Alton (2022), must be deemed deep to avoid hearing the beep that impeded students from learning effectively and productively (Kohlbach, 2021). Apart from that, the researchers distinguished eliminating distractive applications and devices as an effective strategy for defeating social media distractions, such as uninstalling social media applications, preventing using two devices, creating a distraction-free zone, and closing any social media sites or applications. During online classes, this initiative indicated that social media distractions could be prevented and resisted by deleting all social media apps (Aakash, 2022), keeping the interrupters away from these distraction-free zones (Kohlbach, 2021), and not using two or more devices because it affected students’ class concentration and ability to learn (Attia et al., 2017). Based on the significant findings presented and discussed above, social media distractions influenced language students’ behavior in acquiring and learning English.

5. Summary and Implication

5.1 Summary

The study emphasized the students' behavior regarding social media distractions with this new educational system implemented in UM Digos College, particularly among English language practitioners. In line with that, based on the significant findings of the study out from the generated questions, it was revealed that social media platforms

mainly for entertainment and leisure purposes influenced students' English language learning behaviors. Specifically, research question one (1) presented students' indifferences due to social media interruptions wherein they were perceived to lose their interest in learning the English language and as a consequence, it led to their successive unimpressive academic results. On the other hand, research question two (2) suggested that social interests caused students' class interruptions, such as sudden flashing of notifications, passive classroom interactions, and personal interests. In contrast, the last question revealed that the students used multifaceted strategies for getting through social media distractions, namely traditional and multiple digital strategies. With, social media used must be balanced and wisely generated to avoid and prevent continuous distractions and students' demotivation to acquire the English language.

5.2 Implication

The findings of the study have contributed to the understanding that social media distraction was an inevitable phenomenon that appeared not just in the field of people's day-to-day life but also in the life of the learners in terms of their academic undertakings and the teacher's teaching methods and processes as well. So, after a thorough analysis of the study's significant findings, the researchers achieved the following practical implications.

A. The Implication to Learning Process

This study implicated those social media applications distracted students from effectively learning. The reason behind this was that the distractions brought by this highly technological world integrated into the education spectrum diluted students' capacity to learn, such as flash notifications, online games, social media trends, issues, and other elaborated personal interests by the participants that could harm their learning progress and language acquisition development. Thus, a responsible approach and utilization of these social media interruptions by the participants to control the impact of these known disturbances in the process of gaining the intended knowledge and lessons for them to redirect their will to gain significant understanding related to their discipline with the same interests and willingness as before.

B. The Implication to Teaching Process

This paper conveyed that teaching procedures were vital to the consistency and hitting of students' attention, especially with the presence of social media distractions in the blended learning education of the students. In line with that, the findings stated above that students often indulged in social media entertainment and leisure activities due to their educators' teaching methods and techniques in providing an interactive learning environment. Specifically, a series of procedures requiring students to engage with the virtual discussion actively, yet when teachers were flexible in fostering an engaging learning space within the classroom, it was claimed by the participants as well that they were motivated to learn thoughtfully and attentively. Hence, teachers' teaching methods

were vital in the virtual transmission of knowledge and understanding to the students. The reason for that was that teachers were the ones who could enhance the teaching and learning strategies, such as facilitating more active participation and interactions within the class to create an avenue for educators to effectively monitor and prevent students from getting distracted by social media sites and applications during online discussions.

C. The Implication to Learners' Performance

Social media distractions influence students' academic performance differently, following the participants' feedback. Additionally, participants mentioned that their improvements and learning developments could have been generating impressive results, and as a consequence, it stopped them from maintaining their efficacy and efficiency in acquiring the English language. Also, social media distractions prohibited their productivity and capability from sharpening their knowledge. With that, learners considered different strategies and techniques to beat these disturbances from social media sites and applications, just like traditional and multiple digital strategies.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors affirm no conflicts of interest in this study. The data collected has been objectively scrutinized to aid its goal, so the researchers can guarantee that there is no personal intention in conducting this quest. Most importantly, this work is directed not by financial benefits or acknowledgement but by the researchers' will to recognize the influence of social media distraction on English major students' behavior in class.

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The authors are students under the Teacher Education Department of the University of Mindanao, Digos College. They have specialized English language as their field of expertise. Also, the co-author of this undertaking is the department chair of the aforementioned department specializing in Applied Linguistics in her PhD study focusing on the Sociolinguistic field.

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