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## Acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction during the COVID – 19 Pandemic as Perceived by Filipino Students in the Countryside

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### Abstract

Since the classes in the Philippines were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic last March 2020, teachers have worried how they are going to contact their students and conduct their classes. Several online applications were tried – zoom, google meet, edmodo, hangouts, facebook messenger, etc., all are but options, and not one is considered the most accepted. The purpose of the study was to see how the students perceive the use of Facebook Messenger as medium of online instruction during the COVID – 19 pandemics. Its goal was to find if there are relationships between the students' profile to how they perceive the acceptability level of facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction in terms of usefulness and ease of use. This study utilized the descriptive correlational design, where it sought to describe how acceptable the facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction and how it relates to the profile of student respondents. Based on gathered data, results revealed that students find the facebook messenger as moderately acceptable as a medium of online instruction.

**Keywords:** Facebook Messenger, Medium of Online Instruction, COVID-9 Pandemic, Online class

### 1. Introduction

The Philippine COVID-19 pandemic became a part of the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide. On the 30th of January 2020, the very first COVID-19 positive in the Philippines was recorded. Another positive virus test result was recorded on the first of February, when a corpse was tested, which made the Philippines the next country to China to record a COVID-19 death. (Ramzy, 2020).

When the World Health Organization proclaimed the COVID-19 as a universal health problem and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte announced a public health emergency on March 2020, dealings were out rightly implemented to mitigate spread of the disease. Works were stopped, classes were put on hold, and all Filipinos were informed to stay at home. The Philippine higher education sector had a few weeks/months left before the end of the last term of Academic Year (AY) 2019-2020 when classes were suspended in March. To make sure that classes would be continued, Commission on Higher Education (CHED) instructed higher education institutions to use flexible learning. (CHED & DOH Memo No, 2021 – 001)

The COVID-19 remains a gripping issue weakening both the economy and education in almost all parts of the world, especially the countries which are less-economically developed (Alipio, 2020). In most countries, the usual face-to-face classes were suspended to make sure that students and teachers be safe (Bączek et.al., 2020).

Chang (2007) mentioned that because mobile devices have become popular, Mobile learning has recently become very useful to some teachers and students. Several teachers opted for varied medium of online instruction for them to reach out to their students. Teachers use Google classroom, Edmodo, and Facebook using smartphones. Milošević, et. al., (2015) used Facebook as a medium of instructions being the most popular social network among students. He conducted a study to examine the attitude of students towards Facebook as virtual classroom, through consideration of its acceptability level, hence this study.

**1.1 Objectives of the Study**

The study would like identify the acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a medium of online Instruction during the COVID-19 Pandemic as perceived by COED students, it has the following objectives; (1) to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of the following; sex and age; (2) to identify the level of acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a medium of online Instruction in terms of; usefulness and ease of use, (3) to find the relationship between the profile of respondents and their perception of the level of acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a medium of online Instruction in terms of usefulness and ease of use, (4) to find the relationship between the respondents' perception of acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a medium of online Instruction in terms of its usefulness and ease of use.

**2. Methodology**

This study utilized the Descriptive - Correlational design. The study was conducted in Eastern Samar State University Borongan City, Philippines. The respondents were COED students who have attended online classes using Facebook messenger as its medium of instruction during the school year 2020-2021. Purposive sampling was utilized in identifying the respondents of the study. The study adopted a questionnaire – checklist used by Kyalo and Hopkins in their study “Exploring the Acceptability of Online Learning for Continuous Professional Development”. Frequencies and mean were used to summarize the responses from the questionnaire which were analysed and interpreted after. Correlation was utilized to find if there are significant relationships between and among variables.

**3. Results and Discussion**

Table 1.a presents the data on the sex of respondents. Majority of the student-respondent investigated in this study were female (74.4%), and only around one-fourth of the total respondents were male (25.6%).

**Table 1.a** Sex Profile of Respondents

Gender	f	%
Male	31	25.6
Female	90	74.4
Total	121	100

Data related to age of the respondents are presented in Table 1.b. Majority of the student-respondents are with age ranging from 19 – 20 with a total of 46 respondents (38.0%). Thirty-eight of the respondents are at age bracket 21 – 22 years old (31.4%), while around 15% only were respondents coming from the brackets 18 years and below, and 23 years and above.

**Table 1.b** Age Profile of Respondents

Age	f	%
18 yrs and below	19	15.7
19 – 20	46	38.0
21 – 22	38	31.4
23 yrs and above	18	14.9
Total	121	100

Table 2.a presents the Acceptability level in terms of usefulness. It is gleaned from the table below that the highest mean of 3.89 was given on the item 5 interpreted as Acceptable. The lowest mean of 2.75 was given to the item 2 interpreted as moderately acceptable.

**Table 2.a** Level of Acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction in terms of Usefulness during the Pandemic as perceived by the respondents

A. Perceived Usefulness	Mean	Interpretation
I feel positive about using online learning to further my skills and knowledge	3.62	Acceptable
Facebook Messenger can give me the same quality of knowledge and skills as face-to-face learning	2.75	Moderately Acceptable
I would like to see Facebook Messenger utilized in all the universities	2.78	Moderately Acceptable
Facebook Messenger are accepted and recognized by many	3.51	Acceptable
I would inform my fellow students that Facebook Messenger learning helps me understand the lesson	3.89	Acceptable
Facebook Messenger can improve my knowledge and skills level	3.33	Moderately Acceptable
Facebook Messenger can improve my exam performance	3.17	Moderately Acceptable
My experience with Facebook Messenger is/was a successful one	3.51	Acceptable
Overall, teaching through Facebook Messenger can improve the quality of learning	3.22	Moderately Acceptable
<b>Grand Mean</b>	3.31	Moderately Acceptable

Table 2.b presents the Acceptability level in terms of Ease of Use. It can be seen from the table below that the highest mean of 3.99 was given on the item 4 interpreted as

Acceptable, while the lowest mean of 2.70 was given to the item 5 interpreted as moderately acceptable.

**Table 2.b** Level of Acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction in terms of Ease of Use during the Pandemic as perceived by the respondents

B. Perceived Ease of Use	Mean	Interpretation
I always look forward to lessons sent thru Facebook Messenger for reading	3.72	Acceptable
Facebook Messenger is flexible and suitable for me as a college student	3.69	Acceptable
One can successfully complete/ learn a course through Facebook Messenger without face-to-face sessions	3.08	Moderately Acceptable
Facebook Messenger are cheaper than those other forms of learning	3.99	Acceptable
I prefer Facebook Messenger learning to face to face learning	2.70	Moderately Acceptable
<b>Grand Mean</b>	3.44	Moderately Acceptable

In table 3 below, when gender and age was correlated with the perception on the usefulness of facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction, a correlation coefficient of

0.140 and 0.048 was obtained respectively and interpreted as low correlation, and further tested and showed no significant relationship with p-values of 0.161 and 0.205.

**Table 3.** Correlation between the Respondents profile and their Perception on the level of acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction in terms of Usefulness during the Pandemic as perceived by the respondents

IV	DV	Correlation Coefficient	p	Interpretation
Gender	Perceived Usefulness of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction during the COVID – 19 Pandemic	0.140	0.161	Low Correlation Not Significant
Age		0.048	0.205	Low Correlation Not Significant

Correlating gender and age with the perception on the ease of use of facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction is presented in table 4. A correlation coefficient of 0.152 and 0.026 respectively was obtained and

interpreted as both low correlations, and when tested further, showed no significant relationship at p-values of 0.094 and 0.173.

**Table 4.** Correlation between the Respondents profile and the Level of Acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction in terms of Ease of Use during the Pandemic as perceived by the respondents

IV	DV	Correlation Coefficient	p	Interpretation
Gender	Perceived Ease of Use of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction during the COVID – 19 Pandemic	0.152	0.094	Low Correlation Not Significant
Age		0.026	0.173	Low Correlation Not Significant

In table 5 below, when the respondents’ perception on the acceptability of facebook messenger as a medium of instruction in terms of its usefulness and ease of use were

correlated, a coefficient of 0.103 was obtained, interpreted as low correlation. When tested further, it showed no significant relationship at p-value of 0.088.

**Table 5.** Correlation between the Level of Acceptability of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction in terms of Usefulness and in terms of Ease of Use during the Pandemic as perceived by the respondents

V1	V2	Correlation Coefficient	p	Interpretation
Perceived Usefulness of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction during the COVID – 19 Pandemic	Perceived Ease of Use of Facebook Messenger as a Medium of Online Instruction during the COVID – 19 Pandemic	0.103	0.088	Low Correlation Not Significant

**4. Findings and Conclusions**

Findings from table 2 and 3 imply that the student-respondents find facebook messenger the cheapest form of online learning and helpful in understanding the lessons and would inform other students about this especially during this time of pandemic, but still prefer face-to-face learning on the belief that lessons would be understood better on this set-up.

All hypotheses were accepted. These imply that both gender and age does not affect their perception on the acceptability of facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction during the covid – 19 pandemics. Also, the respondents’ perception on the usefulness was not dependent on their perception on the ease of use of facebook messenger as a medium of online instruction in terms of usefulness and in terms of ease of use during the pandemic.

**5. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following are recommended; (1) The use of facebook messenger for online classes is recommended because it helps the students to understand their lessons and may improve the quality of learning especially this time of pandemic, but other online platforms are also encouraged, (2) Facebook messenger is found to be one most accessible form of online mode of learning, instructors are encouraged to use more of this platform especially those whose students are residents of areas with very poor to no internet signal, (3) Being considered the cheapest online mode of learning, the facebook messenger

is recommended to be utilized especially for students who have no budget for internet connection, (4) Similar studies may be conducted.

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