



Knowledge and Attitudes on Internet Memes and its Perceived Relevance to Social Studies Subject among Grade 10 Students

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Abstract

This study investigated the utilization of internet memes as educational tools in Social Studies instruction for Grade 10 students in the Philippines. Drawing upon the pervasive influence of internet memes in contemporary digital culture, the research aimed to elucidate students' perceptions, attitudes, and usage patterns regarding memes, as well as their perceived relevance to Social Studies subjects. Employing a quantitative research design, descriptive and correlational methodologies were employed to analyze survey data collected from a purposive sample of 82 students. Findings revealed a high level of knowledge and positive attitudes towards internet memes among Grade 10 students, with a significant proportion of their daily screen time allocated to social media platforms where memes are prevalent. Students recognized memes as humorous and engaging representations of significant issues, underscoring their potential as effective educational tools. Moreover, a strong correlation was observed between students' knowledge and attitudes towards internet memes and their perceived relevance to Social Studies education, highlighting the importance of aligning instructional strategies with students' digital literacy skills and socio-cultural contexts. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on innovative pedagogical approaches in education, offering insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to enhance student engagement and critical thinking skills in the digital age. It underscores the potential of internet memes as valuable resources for fostering meaningful learning experiences and promoting active participation in Social Studies instruction.

Keywords: Internet memes; social studies education; humor; digital literacy; instructional material

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1. Introduction

Internet Memes have emerged as a prevalent and significant means of communication and dissemination of information within the contemporary social media landscape. Internet memes, which are frequently presented in a visually captivating and humorous style, have emerged as a widespread source of humor

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within online communities. The word "meme" finds its etymological root in the Ancient Greek *mīmima*, signifying "imitated object." Richard Dawkins, a British evolutionary scientist, popularized the concept in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*. Dawkins employed this concept as an illustration of how evolutionary principles can be utilized to understand the propagation of ideas and cultural phenomena.

As defined by Dawkins, a meme is a cultural element that is transmitted among members of a society, including ideas, habits, and styles. Transmission can occur through various mediums, such as written or spoken language, symbolic actions, rituals, or other improvised occurrences that share a common theme. From its origins in evolutionary theory, the term "meme" has undergone a transformation to signify an exceptional phenomenon that has emerged in the digital age. Internet memes are defined by Borzsei (2013) as visual content that is distributed rapidly all-over online platforms, primarily through social media platforms. Memes can manifest in various formats, such as videos, animated GIFs, and photographs. Furthermore, Davison (2012) described an Internet meme as a piece of culture that spreads over the online world or the internet, generally in a funny way. However, Davison (2012) argues that not all Internet memes are jokes and comparing them to offline jokes reveals what sets them apart: the speed with which they are transmitted and the conformity with which they are imitated.

In line with this, based on a recent survey conducted by Electronics Hub, it has been determined that the Philippines has the highest average duration of screen time devoted to social media, gaming, and mobile devices. The study analyzed data from the Digital 2023: Global Overview Report by DataReportal to investigate the prevalence of electronic device usage in the Philippines, with a comparative analysis to more than 50 countries. The results indicate that approximately 32.53% of the daily activities of Filipinos are devoted to mobile phone use, which surpasses that of countries like Brazil. Notably, this substantial duration of screen time aligns with the findings of a Telenor survey which designates the Philippines as the country with the highest degree of digital dependence in Asia. More precisely, 29% of the populace relies significantly on digital platforms. In the context of this widespread reliance on electronic devices, there is a noteworthy connection to the contemporary trend of internet memes becoming prevalent to the daily socio-cultural and political life of people (De Leon & Lintao, 2021; Ariani & Rachmadani, 2020; Calimbo, 2018).

Given the excessive amount of time spent looking at screens, teachers might take advantage of the increasing popularity of Internet memes to engage students and bridge the gap in their understanding. Scholars including Dongqiang et al. (2020), Marymee (2021), Rishabh et al. (2020), and Purnama (2017) have examined and advocated for the incorporation of Internet Memes as effective educational tools. Employing internet memes in educational settings is a shrewd strategy for effectively and imaginatively involving Filipino students, who

are accustomed to dedicating a substantial portion of their day to electronic devices. However, a notable gap exists in the knowledge and attitudes of students toward internet memes, presenting an intriguing avenue for exploration. While the study underscores the Philippines' digital dependence, understanding how students interpret and engage with this data through the lens of internet memes becomes paramount.

The primary purpose of Social Studies instruction is to prepare students to be good citizens who are productive to society. Students are taught to assess others' decisions and create connections between influences and circumstances as part of critical thinking in Social Studies. However, since Social Studies instruction relies around people, places, and dates, it is easy to develop assignments and tests that don't go beyond Bloom's Taxonomy's Memory Level. This level of teaching and learning usually involves rote memorization and does not require students to use advanced critical thinking abilities that are required for actual learning. Indeed, it is a big challenge for the Social Studies teacher to engage its learners to participate in their lessons.

Prior research on social studies education has found many obstacles encountered by teachers in successfully teaching the topic and captivating students. Seludo & Murill (2023) identified obstacles associated with fostering civic competency, such as the complexities of lesson planning, accommodating varied learners, and the inadequate performance of instructors. This study also unveiled distinct difficulties for students, including inadequate development of civic competency and a proclivity towards irresponsible citizenship. Gonzales & Hermosa (2023) investigated the correlations of instructional techniques, classroom environment, topic difficulty, and teacher conduct with cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal learning outcomes in the field of social studies. Their results revealed significant correlations, underscoring the significance of these elements in influencing students' learning experiences. Nevertheless, there is a lack of study in comprehending the ways in which innovative teaching techniques, including the use of online memes for social studies education, might effectively tackle these obstacles and improve student involvement.

Moreover, according to Guillena's (2023) study, the inclusion of social networking sites (SNSs) has a beneficial impact on the motivation of college students. This has important implications for educators, as they may use these platforms to encourage cooperation and facilitate the exchange of knowledge. Bao et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of instructor humor that is relevant to the course material in enhancing students' involvement, thereby deepening our comprehension of the function of comedy in elementary school education. Nonetheless, there is a chance to investigate the utilization of Internet memes, which are a kind of modern comedy, as a regular instructional technique to improve student involvement in social studies. Furthermore, Ofiaza (2023) recognized the significance of using impactful teaching methodologies and

incorporating a wide range of instructional resources to inspire students' engagement in the study of Social Studies. Utilizing Internet memes as a teaching tool might be an innovative strategy that corresponds with the present patterns in communication and promotes an interactive learning atmosphere for students in Social Studies. Therefore, it is necessary for future study to examine possible advantages linked to the use of Internet memes in Social Studies instruction.

On the basis of prior research, Matias (2020) has identified the potential use of Internet Memes as an effective tool for teaching social studies. The publications that were examined suggest that there may be a correlation between the incorporation of online memes and the improvement of students' critical thinking skills. However, Matias (2020) accurately observes that the existing data is insufficient to conclusively ascertain the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach. The researcher's literature review underscores the necessity for more comprehensive investigations that explore not only the impact of internet memes on social studies instruction but also their broader ramifications on the development of critical thinking skills. Matias (2020) argues that further research is warranted to examine various aspects of the use of online memes in education, emphasizing the necessity of investigating additional effects beyond those initially identified. This recommendation aligns with the demand articulated in previous studies (Seleudo & Murill, 2023; Gonzales & Hermosa, 2023; Guillena, 2023; Bao et al., 2023; Ofiaza) for a more comprehensive examination of innovative pedagogical methods. The utilization of internet memes in social studies classes has the potential to augment the learning environment.

1.1 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to provide insight into the significant aspects of students' perceived knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes, as well as to their perceived relevance in teaching Social Studies concepts. The results of this research possess the capacity to provide educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers with insights regarding the practicality of incorporating internet memes into Social Studies curricula. Furthermore, the results could potentially establish a foundation for innovative and useful pedagogical approaches that are in harmony with the ever-changing digital environment and accommodate the varied learning inclinations of contemporary learners. This study aims to address the current deficiencies in the academic literature and lays the groundwork for subsequent research that investigates the ever-evolving convergence of internet memes and education. Specifically, this study seeks to:

- Identify the social media platforms they utilize and ascertain the daily duration spent by Grade 10 students on social media platforms.

- Assess the perceived knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes and its perceived relevance to Social Studies subjects.
- Determine the significant relationship between time spent daily on social media sites to the level of knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students about Internet Memes and perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.
- Determine the significant relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes and the perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.

1.2. Visual Learning Theory

This research is grounded in visual learning theories that have been put forth by esteemed scholars including Buzan & Buzan (1993), Fleming & Mills (1992), Gardner (1999), Kolb (1984), and Mayer & Moreno (1999). These scholars have established fundamental ideas that highlight the importance of visual inputs in the process of learning. The VARK model, which was formulated by Fleming & Mills (1992), acknowledges the importance of visual preferences with auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic modalities. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences places equal importance on visual-spatial intelligence and visual cognition, highlighting its fundamental nature and the influence that visual stimuli have on cognitive processes. Kolb's theory of experiential learning integrates visual learning into the reflective observation process, recognizing the significance of visual signals in comprehending concrete experiences. Moreover, the research conducted by Mayer & Moreno (1999) on multimedia learning underscores the effectiveness of incorporating visual components alongside written material. Similarly, the study conducted by Buzan (1993) on mind mapping highlights the potential of visual aides to enhance understanding and retrieve information from memory.

The research endeavors to examine students' knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes, which are visual representations frequently employed in digital discourse, as well as their perceived relevance in Social Studies pedagogy. The purpose of this research is to determine whether or not online memes, which are visual resources, influence the learning experiences and perceptions of relevance of students, particularly in the field of social studies education. This research question aligns with the objectives of the study, which are to assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of internet memes in conveying Social Studies themes and to assess their attitudes and knowledge regarding Internet Memes. Through an examination of students' perspectives regarding the efficacy and appropriateness of internet memes as educational tools, this research endeavors to make a scholarly contribution to the ongoing dialogue surrounding new pedagogical strategies in Social Studies education.

1.3. Humor and Learning: The Instruction Humor Processing Theory

The Instruction Humor Processing Theory (IHPT), which was first proposed by Wanzer, Frymier, and Irwin in 2010, posits that enhanced student learning outcomes are correlated with the implementation of appropriate instructional humor, analogous to internet memes. According to the International Humor in Pedagogy and Teaching (IHPT), certain comedic genres, including those centered around memes, may contribute positively to the enhancement of student learning. On the contrary, humor that disparages or insults others serves no purpose in education. Further evidence in favor of this notion can be found in the review of humor in educational contexts conducted by Banas, Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Liu (2011). The findings indicate that the utilization of humor, specifically internet memes, successfully engages students, boosts their incentive to participate in course material, and ultimately facilitates the process of learning. Moreover, an investigation carried out by Lujan and DiCarlo (2016) underscores the notion that although humor may not directly stimulate learning, it cultivates a positive learning milieu through the engagement of the audience, the reduction of stress, and the enhancement of the learning experience's enjoyment and memorability.

In addition, empirical studies conducted by Kaplan and Pascoe (1977) as well as Bryant, Comisky, and Zillman (1979) provide evidence that incorporating appropriate forms of humor, such as online memes, into educational settings enhances students' comprehension, retention, and performance assessments. Empirical evidence supports the notion that incorporating humorous parodies into the classroom environment can enhance student engagement, alleviate anxiety, and contribute to a more positive classroom atmosphere. However, it is critical that educators exercise caution when employing humor, ensuring that it is suitable and refraining from any form of derogatory remarks towards others. Employing self-deprecating humor, wherein instructors parody themselves through the use of memes, can foster a sense of camaraderie among students while also demonstrating the instructor's willingness to commit mistakes. To foster a respectful and inclusive learning environment, it is essential, nonetheless, to abstain from employing parodies that tackle delicate topics such as race, gender, or religion.

2. Method

This study used quantitative research design, particularly descriptive research, and correlational research. This study uses a descriptive method to describe the perception of Grade 10 students of Reina Mercedes Vocational and Industrial School (RMVIS) about Internet Memes as a learning tool in teaching Social Studies. Moreover, the descriptive method will be used to determine what social networking sites they are using and how many hours they spend their day on the internet.

Correlational research was used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the level of awareness of the learners about Internet memes and the level of agreement of the learners in using Internet Memes as a learning tool in teaching Social Studies. Furthermore, correlational research will be used to see if the number of hours spent daily by the learners on the internet has something to do with their perception of Internet Memes as a learning tool in teaching Social Studies.

2.1. Population and Samples

The researcher selected grade 10 students from Reina Mercedes Vocational and Industrial School (RMVIS), Reina Mercedes, Isabela, Philippines, as participants for their study due to several key reasons. Firstly, grade 10 students have already completed four Social Studies subjects as part of the K-12 Curriculum, providing them with a foundational understanding of relevant topics. This familiarity with social studies subjects aligns well with the likely focus of the research, making their participation valuable for achieving the research objectives. Secondly, by focusing on students from RMVIS, the researcher ensures relevance to the specific educational context being studied. Additionally, selecting participants from a single school simplifies logistical considerations and enhances accessibility for data collection. The researcher employed purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, to deliberately choose participants based on criteria pertinent to the research aims. By targeting grade 10 students from RMVIS, the researcher can gather insights from a group with the requisite background in social studies, facilitating a focused and insightful investigation.

The total population consists of 389 students who are enrolled for the first semester for the academic year 2021-2022. The study's sample size has been determined as 82 respondents using Raosoft App with a 9.7% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. The chosen sample is intended to represent a significant portion of the population, ensuring that the findings are strong and reliable.

2.2. Research Instrument

This study employed a research-made instrument in the form of a 13-item survey questionnaire for data collection purposes. The reliability of this questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which yielded a highly satisfactory value of 0.93, indicating strong internal consistency among the questionnaire items.

2.3. Collection of Data

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and the necessity for remote data collection, an online survey approach was adopted. Google Forms served as the platform for administering the survey, ensuring ease of access and user-friendly navigation for respondents. The survey link was disseminated to the targeted participants, allowing them to conveniently complete the questionnaire remotely. This methodological approach not only facilitates adherence to safety protocols during the pandemic but also enables efficient and timely data collection for the study.

2.4. Data Analysis

The study employed various statistical treatments using PSPP, a statistical software package, to analyze the gathered data comprehensively. Firstly, percentage and frequency distribution techniques were utilized to organize and describe respondents' answers regarding their usage of social networking sites and the duration of daily internet usage. Descriptive statistics were then applied to characterize the perceived knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students at Reina Mercedes Vocational and Industrial School (RMVIS) concerning Internet Memes as a learning tool in teaching Social Studies, along with their perceived relevance to the subject. Additionally, weighted mean and descriptive rating methods were employed to provide further insights into students' perspectives by assigning descriptive ratings to different levels of perceived knowledge and attitudes. Furthermore, correlation coefficients were calculated to ascertain whether a significant relationship exists between students' perceived knowledge and attitudes regarding Internet Memes and their relevance to Social Studies. Lastly, correlational research methodology was utilized to investigate potential associations between the number of hours spent daily on the internet and students' perceptions of Internet Memes in Social Studies instruction. These statistical analyses collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of Grade 10 students' perspectives on the educational utility of Internet Memes in Social Studies at RMVIS.

3. Results

Social media platforms they utilize and ascertain the daily duration spent by Grade 10 students at RMVIS on social media platforms.

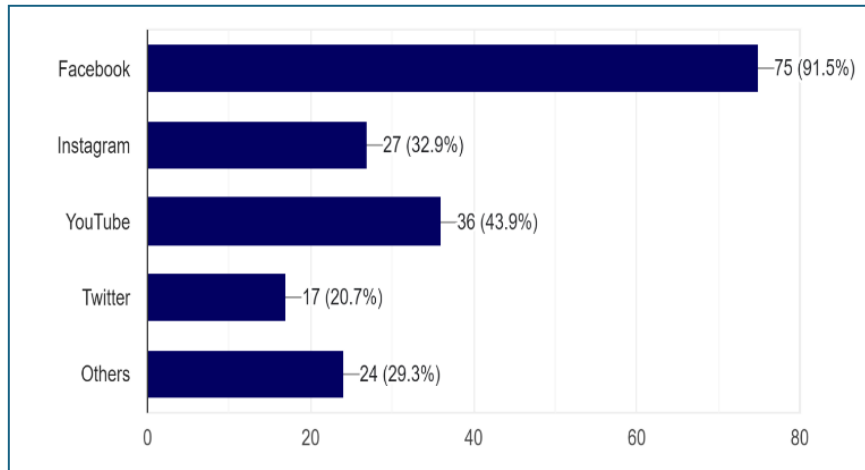


Figure 1. Social Media Sites mostly used by Grade Ten Students of RMVI

Based from the Figure 1, the Facebook App is the most popular social media site among respondents, with a total percentage of 91.5 percent, followed by YouTube (43.9 percent) and Instagram (32.9 percent). Twitter is the least popular social media site among RMVIS Grade Ten students.

The findings regarding the popularity of social media platforms among RMVIS Grade Ten students, particularly the dominance of Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, are consistent with broader trends in the Philippines. Reports from Pulse Asia Poll affirm Facebook's stronghold as the most popular social media platform in the country, aligning with its status as the "World's Social Media Capital." This prevalence of social media usage underscores the potential significance of online content, particularly memes, as tools for communication and information dissemination.

Table 1. Time spent daily on Social Media Sites of the Grade Ten Students of RMVIS

Number of Hours	Frequency	Percentage
1	7	8.54
2	6	7.32
3	3	3.66
4	7	8.54
5	26	31.71
6	2	2.44
7	1	1.22

Number of Hours	Frequency	Percentage
8	7	8.54
9	1	1.22
10	16	19.51
12	2	2.44
15	4	4.88
Total-	82	100 %
Mean Average: 6.27 hrs		

The data from Table 1, revealing Grade Ten students at RMVIS spend an average of 6.27 hours daily on social media, underscores the pivotal role of online content, particularly memes, in communication and information dissemination. This aligns with recent surveys indicating the Philippines' high digital device usage, with significant reliance on mobile phones and a notable connection to the prevalence of internet memes in daily socio-cultural and political life (Electronics Hub, Telenor).

Level of perceived knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes and its perceived relevance to Social Studies subjects.

Table 2. Perceived knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes

Items	Mean	SD	QD
1. Memes are ideas or symbols that are virally spread via the Internet.	2.83	.98	High
2. Memes can be a funny illustration of significant issues/ideas.	3.00	.94	High
3. Important messages may be expressed in memes.	2.82	.90	High
4. Issues in our society can be expressed through memes.	3.02	.94	High
5. Memes may be hurtful to one's feelings since they include sensitive topics.	3.04	.99	High
6. Since memes have the potential to upset netizens,they should be suitable and shared properly.	3.13	.87	High
7. Memes are appropriate if they are suitable for the conditions and safety of others.	3.06	.89	High
Weighted Mean	2.99	.94	High

Table 2 presents Grade 10 students' perceived knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes, with mean scores indicating their level of agreement with statements about memes. The weighted mean of 2.99 suggests a high level of perceived knowledge among students with the statements provided, reflecting positive attitudes towards memes as vehicles for humor, expression of important messages, and addressing societal issues. Notably, the highest mean score of 3.13 corresponds to the statement emphasizing the importance of sharing memes responsibly to avoid upsetting others, indicating strong agreement among respondents. Conversely, the lowest mean score of 2.82 pertains to the definition of memes as virally spread ideas or symbols via the internet.

Table 3. Perceived Relevance of Internet Memes in Social Studies Subject.

	Items	Mean	SD	QD
1.	Memes can keep you engaged in your lessons in Social Studies for a longer period of time.	2.98	.85	High
2.	The use of memes can make Social Studies classes more engaging.	2.83	.83	High
3.	Internet memes can help you better understand your lessons in Social Studies.	2.76	.99	High
4.	Memes can help you to learn how to interpret hidden messages.	3.11	.87	High
5.	Memes related to Social Studies classes might help you stay more interested in what you're learning	3.09	.86	High
6.	Internet memes should be used as a learning tool in Social Studies classes.	2.74	.95	High
	Weighted Mean	2.92	.94	High

Table 3 outlines Grade 10 students' perceived relevance of internet memes in the context of the Social Studies subject, with mean scores indicating their level of agreement with various statements. The data reflects a generally positive perception, with students acknowledging the potential of memes to enhance engagement, facilitate understanding, and encourage interpretation of hidden messages within Social Studies classes. Particularly noteworthy is the high mean score of 3.11 for the statement suggesting that memes can aid in learning how to interpret hidden messages, indicating strong agreement. However, there is slight variability in responses, as seen in the lower mean score of 2.74 for the statement advocating for the use of internet memes as a formal learning tool in Social Studies classes.

Significant relationship between time spent daily on social media sites to the level of knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students about Internet Memes and perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.

Table 5. Correlation between time spent daily on social media sites to the level of knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students about Internet Memes and perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.

		<i>Knowledge and Attitudes</i>	<i>Perceived Relevance</i>
<i>Time spent daily on Social Media Sites</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.10	.01
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.388	.954
	<i>N</i>	82	82

Table 5 indicates that there is a weak positive correlation between the time Grade 10 students spend daily on social media sites and their perceived knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.10. However, this correlation is not statistically significant ($p = 0.388$). Similarly, there is a very weak positive correlation, almost negligible, between the two variables, perceived relevance of internet memes and time spent daily on social media sites, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.01, and this correlation is not statistically significant as well ($p = 0.954$). This suggests that the amount of time spent on social media does not significantly influence students' perceived knowledge, attitudes, or relevance of internet memes in their educational context.

Significant relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes and the perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.

Table 6. Correlation between the knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students regarding internet memes and the perceived relevance of internet memes to Social Studies subjects.

		<i>Perceived Relevance</i>
<i>Knowledge and Attitudes</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.57
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.000
	<i>N</i>	82

Table 6 indicates a strong positive correlation between Grade 10 students' knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes and their perceived relevance to Social Studies subjects, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.57. This correlation is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), suggesting that students who exhibit higher levels of knowledge and positive attitudes towards internet memes are more likely to perceive them as relevant to their Social Studies education. The fourth research objective findings underscore the importance of understanding and addressing students' perceptions and attitudes towards memes in designing effective educational interventions. Social Studies teachers can leverage students' existing knowledge and positive attitudes towards memes to enhance engagement and foster deeper understanding of Social Studies concepts. Additionally, the strong correlation highlights the potential of memes as valuable teaching tools in the Social Studies curriculum, facilitating active learning and promoting critical thinking skills. Moreover, the significant relationship between knowledge, attitudes, and perceived relevance underscores the need for educators to incorporate internet memes strategically into their instructional practices, ensuring alignment with students' interests and educational goals.

4. Discussion

The Grade Ten students spend an average of 6.27 hours daily on social media, underscores the pivotal role of online content, particularly memes, in communication and information dissemination. This aligns with recent surveys indicating the Philippines' high digital device usage, with significant reliance on mobile phones and a notable connection to the prevalence of internet memes in daily socio-cultural and political life (Electronics Hub, Telenor). Integrating these findings with those of Fernandes et al. (2021), Custodio et al. (2021), and Tus et al. (2021), it becomes evident that social media usage, particularly among young people, is a complex phenomenon with varying impacts on different aspects of life, including academic performance. The results from these studies highlight significant differences in problematic internet use among adolescents in different cultural contexts, with social media use being particularly high in the Philippines. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified the reliance on social media for online learning, as evidenced by the qualitative study conducted by Custodio et al. (2021), which revealed both the benefits and challenges associated with using social media for educational purposes.

Although social media provides convenience and accessibility for online learning, students face various problems, such as the ambiguous lines between academic and recreational activities, as well as the perceived ineffectiveness of social media as an educational tool. However, the extensive utilization of social media by students highlights its significance as a medium for communication, social interaction, and

cultural interchange. Tus et al. (2021) have found that social media usage has a significant impact on academic performance. This underscores the importance for educators and policymakers to address the issues and take advantage of the possibilities of social media in educational settings. Scholars have acknowledged that memes are powerful tools for conveying cultural expression and social critique (De Leon & Lintao, 2021; Calimbo, 2018; Sagun, 2013). These various factors create a strong opportunity for educators to incorporate memes as creative educational tools. By taking advantage of memes' connection to students' digital-focused lives and socio-cultural backgrounds, educators can promote interactive and significant learning experiences (Dongqiang et al., 2020; Marymee, 2021, Rishabh et al., 2020; Purnama, 2017).

Moreover, the Grade 10 students possess a high level of knowledge and awareness regarding internet memes' humorous nature, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.00 for the statement "Memes can be a funny illustration of significant issues/ideas." This finding aligns with research in instructional humor processing theory (IHPT), which suggests that appropriate humor, analogous to internet memes, enhances student learning outcomes. IHPT posits that comedic genres, including those centered around memes, contribute positively to learning, as indicated by Wanzer, Frymier, and Irwin (2010). Banas, Dunbar, Rodriguez, and Liu (2011) further support this notion, demonstrating that humor, particularly internet memes, effectively engages students, increases their participation in course material, and facilitates the learning process. Additionally, Lujan and DiCarlo (2016) emphasize that while humor may not directly stimulate learning, it fosters a positive learning environment by engaging the audience, reducing stress, and enhancing the enjoyment and memorability of the learning experience. These findings underscore the potential of internet memes as educational tools to align with students' digital-centric lifestyles and enhance learning experiences.

Furthermore, the findings indicate a consensus among Grade 10 students that memes serve as humorous illustrations of significant issues, vehicles for expressing important messages, and tools for addressing societal concerns. Particularly noteworthy is the high agreement with the statement emphasizing the responsible sharing of memes to avoid causing offense, reflecting a conscientious approach among respondents. Rooted in the concept of cultural transmission in evolutionary theory, internet memes have evolved into dynamic forms of visual content disseminated rapidly across online platforms, primarily social media.

The Grade 10 students' perceived relevance of internet memes in the context of the Social Studies subject is high. These findings suggest that Social Studies teachers might take advantage of students' existing knowledge and attitudes regarding memes to increase their involvement and promote a more profound comprehension in educational settings. The aforementioned sources (Guillena 2023; Bao et.al., 2023; Ofiaza, 2023)

highlight the advantages of integrating internet memes into educational environments. Matias (2020) recognizes memes as a possible instrument for instructing Social Studies and enhancing critical thinking abilities while noting the necessity for additional research to definitively establish their efficacy. The research based on visual learning theories, such as the VARK model and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, provides evidence that visual stimuli, including memes, have a significant impact on the learning process. Theoretical underpinnings highlight the potential efficacy of utilizing memes as instructional instruments, particularly in captivating those with a preference for visual learning. Moreover, there is empirical data that suggests integrating suitable types of humor, such as memes, into educational environments improves understanding, memory, and performance evaluations.

Confirming these findings, previous research in the field of social studies education, as identified by Seludo & Murill (2023), has emphasized the various challenges faced by teachers in successfully instructing the subject and engaging pupils. These obstacles encompass difficulties related to promoting civic competence and addressing the needs of a wide range of learners. Gonzales & Hermosa (2023) highlighted the importance of instructional strategies and classroom environment in shaping students' learning results in social studies. However, there is a scarcity of research on inventive pedagogical methods, such as the utilization of internet memes, to tackle these difficulties and augment student engagement. Expanding on these observations, Matias (2020) discovered the potential utility of internet memes as a powerful instrument for instructing social studies. Matias suggests a connection between the integration of online memes and the enhancement of students' critical thinking abilities. Nevertheless, Matias (2020) emphasized the necessity of additional research to thoroughly evaluate the efficacy of this teaching style. This aligns with the demand for more complete investigations into novel teaching techniques in social studies instruction.

There is a weak positive correlation between the time Grade 10 students spend daily on social media sites and their perceived knowledge and attitudes regarding internet memes. This implies that the duration of time dedicated to social media does not have a substantial impact on students' perception of their knowledge, attitudes, or the importance of internet memes in their educational environment. These findings indicate that although students spend a considerable amount of time on social media platforms, their involvement with memes does not necessarily result in a deeper comprehension or favorable sentiments towards them. It is important for educators to intentionally include online memes in their teaching methods in order to take advantage of students' familiarity with this type of information and promote meaningful learning experiences (Guillena 2023; Bao et.al., 2023; Ofiaza, 2023). Moreover, the absence of a substantial association emphasizes the significance of thoroughly assessing the quality and educational merit of the content consumed on social media sites. Educators should assist

pupils in distinguishing trustworthy and pertinent material from the extensive assortment of memes accessible online, fostering critical digital literacy abilities required for responsibly navigating the internet realm (Halimi, et.al., 2022). Furthermore, the results suggest a possible disparity between students' casual use of social media and their views on the importance of memes in educational environments. This indicates a requirement for educators to close this divide by illustrating how memes can function as efficient teaching instruments, fostering active participation and analytical thinking in the classroom. The absence of a significant association underscores the complex nature of students' engagement with social media and memes, underscoring the need for additional study to investigate the underlying elements that influence these dynamics and to develop more focused educational interventions.

There is a significant positive relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of Grade 10 students about online memes and their perceived relevance in Social Studies subjects. This implies that students with higher levels of knowledge and good attitudes towards internet memes are more likely to regard them as important to their Social Studies education. The outcomes of the fourth research goal emphasize the significance of comprehending and tackling students' views and attitudes towards memes when creating efficient educational interventions. Social Studies educators can utilize students' preexisting knowledge and favorable attitudes toward memes to increase involvement and cultivate a more profound comprehension of Social Studies principles. Moreover, the significant association underscores the potential of memes as important instructional aids in the Social Studies curriculum, enabling active learning and fostering critical thinking abilities. Furthermore, the strong correlation between knowledge, attitudes, and perceived relevance emphasizes the importance of educators integrating online memes purposefully into their teaching methods, while ensuring that they are in line with students' interests and educational objectives.

This link is consistent with well-known visual learning theories put forth by scientists such as Buzan & Buzan (1993), Fleming & Mills (1992), Gardner (1999), Kolb (1984), and Mayer & Moreno (1999). These theories highlight the significance of visual stimuli in the process of learning. The research aims suggest that utilizing students' favorable sentiments towards memes can improve their engagement and better their comprehension of Social Studies ideas. Furthermore, the use of online memes into training is in accordance with the VARK model's acknowledgment of visual preferences and Gardner's idea of multiple intelligences, which highlights visual-spatial intelligence. The strong correlation between knowledge, attitudes, and perceived relevance emphasizes the importance for educators to deliberately integrate memes into their teaching methods, making sure they are in line with students' interests and educational goals. This synthesis emphasizes the potential of memes as effective teaching tools in the Social Studies curriculum, encouraging active learning and critical thinking abilities

while emphasizing the significance of continuous research to guide evidence-based teaching methods. Further research that corroborates these concepts includes the works of Karadeniz, et.al. (2021), Matias (2020), and Mestiola et al. (2018). These studies delve into the incorporation of memes in education and its connection to the development of critical thinking abilities and the enhancement of social studies teaching methodologies.

Conclusions

This study explores the possibility of internet memes as effective instructional aids in teaching Social Studies to Grade 10 pupils. The results emphasize the extensive understanding and favorable opinions of students towards memes, highlighting their widespread acceptability as captivating depictions of important social and cultural occurrences. Additionally, the research demonstrates a significant connection between students' understanding and beliefs about memes and their perceived significance to Social Studies topics, emphasizing the necessity of matching teaching methods with students' digital literacy abilities and socio-cultural backgrounds. These findings have important implications for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers. This study suggests that incorporating internet memes into Social Studies curricula can improve student engagement, develop critical thinking skills, and create meaningful learning experiences in the digital era. By utilizing students' preexisting fondness for memes and harnessing their capacity as educational tools, educators can establish engaging and interactive learning settings that connect with modern learners and enable them to confidently and skillfully navigate intricate socio-political matters.

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