Group Chat via Facebook Messenger to Encourage Punctual Submission of Student Output

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Abstract: The availability of Facebook Messenger prompts people to maximize its benefits in different disciplines. Particularly in education, some students and teachers use it to extend their communication pertinent to learning. Although some may not be comfortable using it for education, there are some who tried its utilization and found positive impact to students' academic performance. Taking into consideration the advantage of Facebook Messenger in learning, the researcher employed group chat to improve prompt submission of outputs from Bachelor of Science in Information Technology students of Iloilo Science and Technology University Miagao Campus, who were officially enrolled in IT Capstone Project course. As revealed in the results of this study, there was an increase in the number of groups which was able to submit the requirements on time. Based on the narratives of those students who belonged to the groups which promptly submitted the output, the group chat via Facebook Messenger served as reminder about the requirements and the schedule of submission as well as an avenue for updates and verification about the requirements, thus they were able to submit promptly.

Keywords: group chat, social media platform, academic performance, narrative analysis.

I. INTRODUCTION

The curriculum of the Fourth Year Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) students of Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISAT U) Miagao Campus for academic year 2018-2019 includes IT Capstone Project course. The mentioned subject requires students to form a group and produce an information technology solution with corresponding documentation. Last First Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019, the said course was offered and taken by the students together with other courses. One of the requirements submitted within the semester was the complete research document corresponding to their chosen and approved information technology solution.

Certain requirements were submitted all throughout the semester. The first requirement was the concept paper, which was presented in July 2018. The next requirements were the proposal document and initial IT solution, which were presented in August 2018. The final requirements included the complete research document and final IT solution, which were tentatively scheduled for presentation in October 2018. Taking into consideration several constraints such as time and requirements in other courses, students were having difficulty in submitting the requirements on time.

The researcher, who handled the course, observed that students failed to observe the schedule of submission. Based on their submission of requirements for the concept defense, none of the groups passed the requirements on time, while only five (5) out of 28 groups were able to submit promptly the requirements for proposal defense. Such response from students caused unfavorable consequences regarding the quality of documents and preparation for the defense. Hence, this study was conducted to improve the punctuality of students in submitting their requirements.

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This study aimed to utilize the Facebook group chat to ensure punctuality in the submission of outputs by the respective groups who were taking the IT Capstone Project course during the First Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions: (1) What percentage of student groups was able to submit the requirement on time? How does group chat via Facebook Messenger help the participants in the prompt submission of the requirement?

II.   RELATED LITERATURE

The availability of the Internet has allowed people and organizations offer different applications. It has been used for academics, gaming, and social networking [1], among others.

Facebook is among the applications designed for social networking purposes. However, it has been used in many other purposes. It has been used for self-glorification, for interaction by people with low self-esteem to feel better, and for the acquisition and promotion of possessions [2]. A certain study even showed that people with high-extroversion and high-self-esteem obtained higher scores on the degree of exposure and reward in Facebook [3].

Facebook allowed for an efficient outreach and noticeable public works. It served as a two-way form of communication between the local government and its community [4]. Its secret group was used efficiently for an online focus group [5].

In the academe, although it was discovered that most students did not want to use Facebook in their studies because students felt uncomfortable having a professor monitoring their discussions [6], many studies support its benefits.

 In a particular course delivered by the Computer Education and Instructional Technology Department at a university in Turkey, Facebook was used as a learning management system (LMS). Some students favored for its use taking into consideration the features such as sharing of course materials, instant messaging, opportunity to upload files, having discussions and getting instant notifications. However, some students hesitated sharing materials in terms of accessing pre-uploaded files [7].

In a study on how teachers from different cities in Brazil used groups on Facebook, it was found that the teachers used the groups for different purposes, which led to an improvement in communication between teachers and students, both online and in-classroom, as well as in students' engagement in the classrooms [8]. Examining the impact of Facebook usage on students' academic performance based on the empirical data collected from 1165 Malaysian university students, it was found that the construct Socially Accepted influenced Facebook usage while Acculturation did not have any significant relationship with usage. Furthermore, it was discovered that there was a positive relationship between students' Academic Performance and Facebook usage, in which the higher the usage, the better they perceived they perform [9].

III.   METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design and Intervention

This action research employed a mix-method approach. Particularly, this study used the pre-experimental design and narrative inquiry. Action research is a strategy for the development of teachers as researchers for the improvement of their teaching and consequently students' learning [10]. Pre-experimental design is among the experimental types, which focuses to a single group only [11]. While narrative inquiry has storytelling as the common element, which may be autobiographical, biographical, testimonial, or in another form and that narrative may be spoken, written, or visual story, which can be presented in various discursive formats, serves multiple purposes, and can be approached in diverse analytical and interpretive ways [12].

A Facebook group chat was prepared by the researcher. This group chat was joined by selected students who were enrolled in IT Capstone Project subject during the First Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019. This group chat was used by the teacher to post announcements pertinent to the subject. Also, this served as an avenue for students to raise questions and clarifications relevant to the teacher's posts as well as a virtual room to discuss concerns among group members and among different groups.

B. Participants and Instrumentation

This study involved the Fourth Year BSIT of ISAT U Miagao Campus who were officially enrolled during the First Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019 and were taking up IT Capstone Project course. From the 28 groups, at least two (2) members per group joined the Facebook group chat, while a representative from each group which submitted the output on time submitted a written narrative.

On the one hand, quantitative data that determine the number of groups which submitted the requirements on time, teacher's record was used. On the other hand, qualitative data to support the benefits of Facebook group chat for prompt submission of outputs was based on the written narrative among selected participants.

C. Data Collection and Analysis

On August 24, 2018 (Friday), at least two members of each group (from the 28 groups) were asked to attend an On August 24, 2018 (Friday), at least two members of each group (from the 28 groups) were asked to attend an orientation. During the orientation, students were informed that a Facebook group chat would be available and at least two (2) members of each group should join. Moreover, they were informed on the purposes of this group chat, such as posting of requirements and the corresponding date of submission, bringing up of concerns and clarifications, and discussion among group members and among different groups.

On August 29, 2018 (Wednesday), the researcher created the group and started adding students from the different groups. These first few members were requested to add other students from various groups.

On September 10, 2018, record on the submission was retrieved and processed accordingly. On the same day, one (1) representative from each group who submitted the required output on time was asked to write a narrative regarding the role and benefits of Facebook group chat in their prompt submission.

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the students' output submitted on time. While narrative thematic analysis of the written narratives of the participants was employed to describe the benefit of Facebook group chat in their prompt submission of output.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 28 groups, eight (8) groups, equivalent to 29%, were able to submit promptly the requirements set last September 10, 2018. An increase of 11% was observed as compared to the previous submission.

Based on the written narratives of the representatives from the eight (8) groups which were able to submit promptly the requirements, two (2) themes were identified regarding the benefit of Facebook group chat in their prompt submission: a reminder and an avenue for updates and verification about the requirements.

Group chat via Facebook Messenger served as a reminder to students about the requirements and the schedule of submission. As mentioned by one of the participants "…notified me anytime as long as there is an internet connection." Another participant said that "…I received notification before and during the deadline." In addition, another participant noted that "…it helps us in reminding of the exact time of submission …."

Group chat via Facebook Messenger also served as an avenue for updates and verification about the requirements. As stated by one of the participants, "…it also helps us updated…" Another participant specified that "…it is the easiest way for us to get updated of the things we have to do or the changes of the schedule and some instructions…" Also, another participant cited that "…and clarify the information that is being disseminated."

V. CONCLUSION

Group chat via Facebook Messenger encouraged punctual submission of outputs among Bachelor of Science in Information Technology students of Iloilo Science and Technology University Miagao Campus, who were officially enrolled in IT Capstone Project during First Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019. Its utilization in the identified group of students was effective.

Utilizing such Facebook feature in classroom setting would be beneficial. It would allow teachers to post reminders for their students. Moreover, it may serve as an avenue for students to ask clarifications; hence, they may get updated and verified information.

The use of Facebook Messenger may be considered when the resources permit. Announcements may be posted, and discussion may be encouraged via group chat. If such tool will be used, teachers and students should try to discover its various features to maximize its capabilities. However, they should limit the discussion to relevant topics only, so as not to flood with unnecessary conversation.

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