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MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

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**Facebook as Platform for Health Communication: Engaging Users in
Promoting Orofacial Cleft Programs Among Cleft Communities in Rizal
Province, Philippines**

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ACCEPTANCE PAGE

The thesis attached hereto, entitled “**FACEBOOK AS PLATFORM FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION: ENGAGING USERS IN PROMOTING OROFACIAL CLEFT PROGRAMS AMONG CLEFT COMMUNITIES IN RIZAL PROVINCE, PHILIPPINES**” prepared and submitted by **CHRISTINE DELOS SANTOS-CRUZ**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION**, is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Christine Delos Santos Cruz is a proud Rizaleno, born and raised in the small town of Morong. Now, happily married and a mother of three beautiful and talented girls.

She earned her bachelor's degree in Film and Audio-Visual Communications at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

Currently, she is the Senior Head of the Marketing Department for a leading services company. She has 18 years of solid background in Retail Marketing and Media.

Her mission is to be able to give back to her community as her way of thanking the unconditional support given to her daughter during her medication to treat clefting. She pledges to share her experience, learning, and expertise to create awareness in Orofacial Clefting and its programs to the public and to rally a call against discrimination and bullying of people with this condition.

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DEDICATION

To my Tatay and Nanay
Gaudencio H. Delos Santos +
Victoria SJ. Delos Santos +

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ABSTRACT

Two hundred and sixty-one participants from the Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation (NCF)- Rizal were surveyed to determine the potential of Facebook as a platform for orofacial clefting (OFC) communication.

Premised on the Uses and Gratification Theory by Elihu Katz and Jay Blumler (1974), the study assumed that Facebook's special features satisfy the needs of the media consumers, which in turn gives them the motivation to patronize it.

The results of the study showed that Facebook holds considerable potential for health communication specifically for OFC communication compared to its traditional counterparts and other social media channels. The survey revealed that Facebook topped the list in terms of respondents' medium preference with 98% share, exceeding the popularity of other traditional media such as television (96%), radio (6%) and print (1%), and other social media accounts such as YouTube (38%), Instagram (1%) and Twitter (1%). It is associated with Facebook's special features such as accessibility, interactivity, multi-content, and customizable that fulfill the respondents' need for OFC communication like connection, support, empowerment, information, and communication.

There were also threats exposed using Facebook as a medium for OFC communication; connectivity and concerns on digital gap were raised as well as issues on privacy and bullying. Moreover, the study revealed that Facebook is not fully maximized for health communication but for other purposes

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

Facebook, took the web by storm as the first social networking site (SNS) to surpass 1 billion registered accounts and now, by a very wide margin, the biggest social network worldwide. As of the fourth quarter of 2020, Facebook had more than 2.8 billion global monthly active users. These figures are expected to grow as mobile device usage increasingly gains traction as a popular device to access social networking sites (Statista, 2021). In the Philippines, Facebook is the country's most popular social networking site with 75 million Facebook users out of the 76 million social media users last 2019 (Gonzales, 2019). Because of Facebook popularity among Filipinos, the Philippines has been nicknamed by the Asian Correspondent as "The Social Networking Capital of the World" (Russel, 2011). The popularity of Facebook is being linked to its special features as well as its connection rooted in Filipinos distinct characteristics and way of life.

Over the past years, Facebook has grown substantially, encompassing personal use and has opened more opportunities for people and organizations to provide information and communication on different topics and fields including health. Especially now that the world is facing this global public health crisis, it has underscored the importance of social media in battling the coronavirus pandemic. Many health organizations have shifted online and heightened the use of social media especially

Facebook. The World Health Organization recently launched an interactive experience on Messenger to provide accurate and timely information about the coronavirus outbreak (Kang-Xing, 2020). The Medical City introduced its "Teleconsultation Service" to give an alternative solution in care delivery wherein people can consult their health concerns from home using Facebook Messenger (Delos Reyes, 2020). With Facebook popularity among Filipinos and its growing significance in the healthcare industry, this platform can be an effective medium for sensitive health cases like Orofacial clefting.

Orofacial clefting (OFC) is a global health concern and among the most common birth defects worldwide, especially for developing countries like the Philippines. According to the World Health Organization, out of 1,000 live births, 1 to 2 babies are afflicted with cleft lip and/or palate (cited in Smile Train Philippines n.d.). In the Philippines, the incidence may be greater than 1 in every 500 live births. This means as many as 200,000 Filipinos may have a cleft lip and/or palate, with around 4,000 new babies born every year with this condition (Cleft Foundation, n.d.)

Unfortunately, clefting most commonly occurs among the lower social income and the marginalized group, which often makes proper cleft care inaccessible to them (Cleft Foundation, n.d). Numbers of Filipinos are suffering from unrepaired clefts; most of them cannot afford the surgery and other therapies needed throughout the treatment process. Furthermore, community hospitals and health centers are limited to corrective and treatment expertise and services for orofacial cleft (Smile Train Philippines, n.d.) Aside from economic reason, lack of awareness, innocence, beliefs, and customs are some factors why the Philippines have an increasing number of clefting and unrepaired clefts (Daack-Hirsch, 2007).

Fortunately, it can be treated and concerns regarding treatment can be resolved. Reconstructive surgery for clefts has come a long way, surgery today is simple and the transformation is immediate (Smile Train Philippines, n.d.). Some organizations are providing 100%-free cleft repair surgery and comprehensive cleft care all over the globe including the Philippines. Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation, Operation Smile, Cleft Foundation, and Operation Smile Train are some of the health organizations and support groups that are extending their help to prevent, treat, support, and educate people with cleft deformity.

Aside from physical quarters all over the region, and caravan missions to reach far-flung provinces, these organizations are also accessible online and mostly present on Facebook. However, little is known of their existence because of the low awareness level about this organization and their mission from the public including the local health sectors. Furthermore, the misconception about it is still prevailing as well as the openness of OFC patients and their families about the condition are lacking.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the continuous effort of these organizations to reach out to the public, with the increased access and awareness of health information through information technology, knowledge about cleft deformity and its program is limited and sometimes unknown.

OFC is a common birth defect in the Philippines; however, misconceptions about the condition as well as the programs and organization to support it are not known to

many. While Facebook is widely used in the Philippines; it is not maximized for health communication like OFC. More importantly, many of the OFC patients belong to the marginalized segment, thus, the issue of digital gap is one big concern.

Thus, in general, the study sought to answer the question: What is the potential of Facebook as a platform for health communication in engaging users to promote Orofacial Cleft communication and its programs?

Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are Facebook's special features that will promote OFC and its programs?
2. How do these features are perceived to affect/influence people's behavior and perspective?

Objectives of the Study

The study generally aimed to determine the potential of Facebook as a platform for health communication in engaging users to promote orofacial clefting communication and its programs in the Philippines. Specifically, the study intended to:

1. Identify the special features of Facebook in promoting OFC communication and its programs; and
2. Determine how these features are perceived in influencing or affecting people's perspective and behavior.

Importance of the Study

The research can contribute valuable information that will further assess Facebook as an effective platform in health communication specifically:

1. Improving the development of health communication in social media. It hopes to provide insights on how health messages should be crafted in social media platforms, particularly on sensitive health issues like OFC.
2. Expanding and increasing reach and engagement among patients, support groups, and the general public. It hopes to expand programs and information reach, increase network, and gather support and funding from different organizations and groups.
3. Maximizing the potential of Facebook as a communication platform for health. Aside from creating awareness and education about OFC and its program, it also hopes to change behavior and promote empowerment to the OFC community specifically the smile patients.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents various literature and studies, which became the basis to identify the potential of Facebook as a powerful platform for health information and communication, especially in sensitive cases like clefting. On the other hand, it also recognizes possible threats of Facebook in health communication and its limitations particularly issues of the digital divide.

OFC Origin and Misconception

Clefts result from failure of migration or fusion of the facial prominences between the 4th and 8 weeks after conception. It is known to be multifactorial in origin, in that both genes and environmental factors (Bermudez, Lizarraga, & Carter, 2009). Moreover, the prevalence of OFCs' varies depending on the geographic origin, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic status (Agbenorku, 2013). Most experts agree that the causes of cleft lip and/or palate are multifactorial and may include a genetic predisposition as well as environmental issues such as drug and alcohol use, smoking, maternal illness, infections, or lack of Vitamin B, also known as folic acid (Bermudez et al., 2009).



Figure 1 Cases of Orofacial Clefting (Belo Medical Group, 2018)

However, some reports describe widespread Asian beliefs about the cause of orofacial clefting as a natural or supernatural phenomenon such as fate, imbalance of natural forces, and demons (Cheng, 1990). In some parts of India, the cleft lip was presumed to be a curse of God in ancient times, but strange enough, the population living in the remote hilly areas of the Garhwal region still believes the same. The children born with these deformities are called as “Khandu” or incomplete by the rest of the society (Dvivedi & Dvivedi, 2012).

On the other hand, Filipinos from the far-flung provinces and remote towns, tend to explain illness and disabilities with superstitious beliefs and supernatural intrusion. Filipino mothers believed illness, stunting of growth, and death with their children could be caused by sorcery. Supernatural causes of illness like clefting, have been attributed to witches, sorcerers, devils, dead relatives or friends, and objects as conduits of harmful influences. It is also believed that a baby will take on characteristics of the food craved

and eaten by the mother. For instance, some of the Cebuanos believe that eating “Tambis” during pregnancy will cause clefting. Tambis in Visayas or Watery Rose Apple is a translucent pink juicy fruit with a mild sweet taste. The upper portion of the fruit appears similar to the un-repaired cleft, which is believed to be the possible culprit for the cleft disorder (Daack-Hirsch, 2007). On the other hand, in some remote towns of Rizal, they assumed that if the mother saw or teased a person with a cleft during the period of craving, she would bear a child with this condition too.

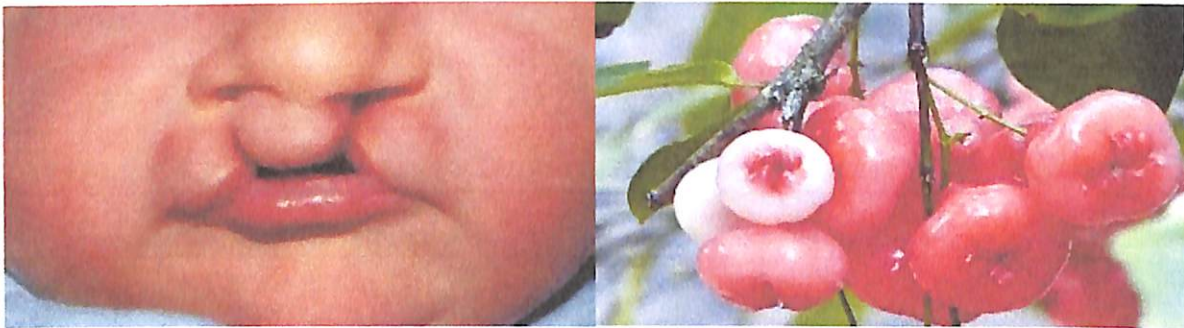


Figure 2: Parallel Illustration of Bilateral Cleft (Children’s Minnesota, n.d.) and “Tambis” (FashionLady, 2018)

Until now there is no concrete conclusion that has caused a cleft lip and/or palate, but research is ongoing to better understand the condition. According to The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.) understanding the factors that are more common among babies with a birth defect and evaluating the mother’s pregnancy exposures will help them understand the causes of and risks for birth defects, including orofacial clefts.

OFC and its Socio-Demographic Patterns

There are increasing reports associating that the prevalence of OFC cases is very common to the marginalized communities. These are the families with poor socioeconomic status and lower educational attainment which contributed to the poor delivery of proper health education, practice, and treatment for OFC.

A recent study conducted in North Jordan highlighted that the majority of cleft incidences are from parents with lower educational achievement and from families living below the poverty line. It is also reported that only 33% of the families received health education and listed incidences of OFCs (Alfwaress, Khwaileh, Rawashdeh, Alomari, & Nazzal, 2017). Moreover, Dvivedi and Dvivedi (2012) claimed that the condition in third world countries like India is worse due to poverty and illiteracy. The study revealed that the majority of cleft cases belong to families with low-income levels or families identified by the government as under the "poverty line". Their study presented that more than three-fourths of families of persons with clefts belonged to below the poverty line status. The association of clefts with the low socioeconomic class has also been connected to naturally deprived of a nutritious diet, folic acid, and multivitamin supplementation during pregnancy and living in unhealthy conditions. The report claimed that the majority of OFC patients being poor are illiterate thus level of mass awareness and proper care and treatment of cleft disorders is generally low in this population.

OFC and its Implications

OFC patients generally have abnormalities in their physical appearance, particularly with their nose, mouth, and teeth, for some extreme cases, it includes deformity in their eyes and the whole facial structure. Children with a cleft lip with or without a cleft palate or a cleft palate alone often have problems with feeding and speaking clearly and can have ear infections. They also might have hearing problems and problems with their teeth. Additionally, persons with this kind of deformities suffer from low self-esteem brought about by fear of humiliation and embarrassment, social stigma, and trauma which makes these patients emotionally scarred (Baquiran, 2018).

The research explains that learning to live with a change in the appearance of one's face because of injury or disease is a difficult task. It is additionally challenging for children with congenital craniofacial conditions and their parents to adjust. In addition to coping with their physical appearance, children with a cleft anomaly, in general, have to deal with their more superficial psychological issues/ psychosocial limitations (De Sousa, Devare, & Ghanshani, 2009). With such conditions, they are usually teased and bullied, in turn, leading them to limit their social interactions and openness to discuss their condition.

Facebook: Filipinos' Well-Loved Social Media Platform

In the Philippines, Facebook is the country's most popular social network with a penetration rate 99% topping the list alongside Malaysia, Taiwan, and the United Arab Emirates. Based on the annual digital report by creative agency We Are Social and social media management platform Hootsuite, the Philippines, for the 4th straight year, topped worldwide social media use. It was reported that Filipinos are power-users of the Internet, with nearly 10 hours a day spent online. Likewise, it was revealed that Filipinos spend the most time on social media sites with 3 hours and 45 minutes daily. The global average for daily time spent on social media is 2 hours and 24 minutes, accounting for more than one-third of the total Internet time (Llamas, 2020).

Aside from the technical aspect, Kemp (2012) mentioned that there's a cultural aspect ingrained in it that made Facebook so impactful to the Filipinos. It's a special connection rooted in their way of life and culture that Filipinos continue to cultivate. For instance, Filipinos are generally fun-loving and happy people as evident from memes displayed in images and videos shared on Facebook. Its humor and entertaining content captured the Filipino audience massively. It is particularly appealing to them because it is very relatable, wherein content is based on people's life experiences, culture, and current events delivered in a very light and comical way. More so, Filipinos are distinguished as highly sociable people; they are naturally friendly, so getting in touch with friends and peers is important. Facebook allows them to reach and socialize with convenience. Aside from being friendly, Filipinos are also very outspoken. Facebook can also be a way to

publicize campaigns and even become a medium to call for activism. Nowadays, Filipinos' rant and rave were delivered through Facebook. More and more organizations are using Facebook Group Page to reach and mobilize the public to actively participate and call for their cause.

Facebook also takes on particular importance in the Filipino household; it is typically popular amongst housewives. They are spending considerable amounts of time chatting and posting simple updates about their daily activities. They stated that it plays a central role in their lives, allowing them to connect with friends and family, and providing a critical source of entertainment and relief from daily chores. On the other hand, it also holds a special part to overseas Filipino workers (OFW) by providing a cheap and constant way to stay in touch with their loved ones (Kemp, 2012).

Facebook's popularity heightened because of the growing e-commerce industry in the Philippines. Selling online turned into a steady income generator among Filipinos. Facebook MarketPlace is a popular platform among casual sellers, small business owners, and newbie entrepreneurs; selling anything from homemade goods to pre-loved items. Compared to other e-commerce platforms like Lazada and Shopee, wherein they get a percentage commission to the seller for every item sold, it is practically free for everyone.

The lifestyle and traits associated with the popularity of Facebook among Filipinos can be traced to its features. For instance, memes as a source of entertainment for the fun-loving Filipinos can be associated with the multi-content feature of Facebook. Memes are commonly made of multiple content or material such as images, GIFs, or

videos. Therefore, in-depth analysis and further study are needed to maximize its full potential as a powerful platform for health communication in the Philippines.

Facebook and its Social Media & Traditional Counterparts

In the Philippines, the internet is almost synonymous with Facebook, where it continues to dominate the lives of Filipino social media users. According to Tracy (2020), Facebook is at the top of the social media game as its platform caters to a wide variety of people, incorporating many different media aspects, from videos to photos, and text. It is not as limited as LinkedIn and Twitter, which typically cater to a specific demographic. Because of its wide appeal, Facebook has attracted a significant number of users and become Filipinos most preferred social media platform. Moreover, Facebook appeals to a wide range of age groups, as reported by NapoleonCat (n.d.), age ranges from 18-24 and 25-34 are the largest age group among Filipinos captured by Facebook with more than half of the population or 62.3% of the user population. The remaining age groups are distributed as young as 16 and as old as 65. Compared to its social media counterparts like LinkedIn who caters young professionals and professionals whose age ranges from 21-45 years old.

On the other hand, Facebook continuously gains its popularity over its traditional media in terms of entertainment, news source, and communication. For instance, the recent survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations revealed that more Filipinos get news from Facebook than from radio and newspapers combined. One in every five

Filipino adults use Facebook to consume news, overpowering traditional media. Only 15 percent or about 9.7 million Filipino adults consume news by listening to the radio while 2 percent or only a million read newspapers daily. Television, according to the survey results, is the top source of news in the country with 60 percent of Filipino adults or about 40 million individuals getting news through it (CNN Philippines, 2019). However, the recent COVID 19 pandemic, highlights the significant role of the internet specifically Facebook for news and information dissemination during this global health crisis. The GlobalWebIndex reported that people have been spending long periods on social media, compared to their pre-lockdown behaviors. The survey also revealed that the Philippines has the greatest number of time spent on social media platforms. Around 64 percent of the Filipinos in the survey said their 'social time' increased, compared to the global average of 47 percent (Nortajuddin, 2020). It was heightened even more, because ABS-CBN, one of the leading TV networks in the country, was shut down due to the denial of the renewal of its broadcast franchise (BBC News, 2020). According to the report released by Rappler's, both the number of viewers and length of viewing time declined. TV viewing decreased by 24%, with the dip continuing for the period May 6 to June 5 after the shutdown (Elemia, 2020).

Facebook: A Powerful Platform for OFC Communication

As one of the largest social networking sites in the world and the number one social media network in the Philippines, Facebook holds great potential in health communication.

Its popularity among other media platforms is attributed to the special features that made it a viable platform for health communication, specifically for a sensitive condition like OFC. The following Facebook features are:

Accessibility

People can access information using Facebook anytime and anywhere at a very reasonable cost leading way to a greater and wider reach. The growth of Facebook's penetration and accessibility was linked to its partnership with one of the Philippines' largest mobile operators, Globe Telecom, to provide free dedicated Facebook access to its millions of customers last 2014 (Globe, 2014). This was shortly followed by other telecom giant's Smart and Sun Cellular. Last 2016, Inquirer reported that Facebook launched its satellite office in the country, introducing a series of initiatives to provide free access to its platform via rebate and rewards programs. These opened bigger opportunities for the Filipino public to access Facebook anytime and anywhere (Esguerra, 2016). More so, the messaging platform, known as Facebook Messenger, made it a top choice from its social media counterparts. People can chat and interact easily and conveniently for as low as Php 15.00. Globe Telecom Inc. said the Philippines has the second cheapest mobile internet price per gigabyte (GB) in the region, next only to India. The country remains data price friendly, especially in the prepaid segment where an overwhelming majority of the population are subscribed to (Mercurio, 2019).

Since clefting commonly occurs among the lower social income group, Facebook is an ideal platform to reach them because accessing it is very cheap and some features like messaging can be accessed for free.

Interactivity and Networking

One main feature of social media is the function of interactivity. In advertisement and media communications context, interactivity attempts to provide end-users with the platform to communicate effectively as either senders or receivers with other users in real-time to access or to deliver information on an on-demand basis where the timing, content, and sequence of the communication is in the control of the end-user (Fortin & Dholakia, 2005). Its real-time propagation and feedback mechanism are great advantages over its counterpart. Social media channels provide a stronger discussion platform that allows people to share their thoughts and opinions, compared to traditional media, discussion and interaction are limited. Online interactions encourage engagement without physical interactions. This is ideal for OFC patients who fear social interactions because of their speech problems and physical insecurities. They can freely interact with people without fear and apprehensions compared to their experiences with physical or face-to-face interactions. In turn, this new found freedom encourages them to open up, create friends and connections, and feel a sense of empowerment.

A recent study conducted by Harvard University and Brigham and Women's Hospital confirmed some significant benefits of Facebook in the management of the chronic disease; there was evidence of patients sharing valuable insights into their conditions not typically available through traditional medical channels as well as evidence of community-building where emotional support is abundant (CVS Caremark, 2010). Moreover, a case study conducted for diabetic Facebook groups, explained that interactions on Facebook were structured by information, emotion, and community

building. The group was shaped as a social network where peer users share social support, cultivate companionship, and exert social influence (Zhang, He & Sang, 2013).

Moreover, the interactive nature of Facebook, for example, encourages exponential effect in terms of reach and connection coined as “networking”. Information today not only reaches the public much faster, but can also spread out to a much broader audience through social networks. Social networking sites allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). This social mechanism provides them the social capital. Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as ‘the aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition’. Individuals and organizations maximize this feature of social media to further their causes or businesses. There are few empirical findings of the strategic use of social media in promoting social causes and conducting businesses. In the study of Flor (2004) about Indonesian women entrepreneurs, he found out that the interaction of these women entrepreneurs with their established online networks helped them generate a target market for their business.

Multi-Content

Its messages and ads can support different media formats like text, images, audio, and video; making Facebook a preferred medium nowadays. A multi-content platform captures different market groups while most traditional media can only support a single format. Radio can only cater to audio format, while newspapers support only texts and

images. Concerning this, Facebook is a perfect platform for OFC communication since smile patients' demographics vary. It can support different materials that will capture different interests, age groups, and more. Memes and GIFs can easily attract the young market, while articles and infographics will appeal more to older groups.

On the other hand, Facebook's multi-content feature can also serve different communication purposes. For instance, the National Association of County & City Health Officials used Facebook text announcements for easy and fast information dissemination in response to the outbreak of H1N1 in 2009. The government health agencies and local health departments used Facebook to provide up-to-date information, including flu clinic schedules, availability of vaccines, and mortality reports. With these communication efforts, far more people joined one local health department's social networking page, and those fans and followers acted as ambassadors who disseminated more information through their network (Park, Rodgers, & Stemmler, 2011). Some health institutions like Mayo Clinic and VCU Health used video format to increase engagement and clarity to their followers. VCU Health used Facebook Live to create and increase engagement. Their first Facebook Live was an interview with their Chair of the Division of Infectious Diseases. At the time, people were very concerned about the Zika virus and prompted an increase in engagement (Gandolf, 2019). While Mayo Clinic launched a healthy cooking video tutorial named Making Mayo Clinic's Recipe in response to their call for healthy eating. They explained that video tutorials can quickly show more details than could ever be described in the text (Mayo Clinic, n.d.).

Meanwhile, Facebook Live can be used for speech therapy sessions and tutorial video lessons online in response to the need for continuous speech therapies among smile patients particularly to patients from far-flung towns and provinces and especially now that the world is currently facing a pandemic that forced everyone to stay home. Moreover, this particular type of therapy needs moving visuals and sounds that a simple text or image instructions will not be effective.

Customizable

It can tap the right receiver of a message or advertisement. It also allows the user to take control of their preferences; from their choice of audience, visibility, look, and more. Some of the many customizable features of Facebook that can be used for health communication are Preferences, Custom Images, FB Boosting, and Call to Action Buttons.

For OFC patients, their dilemma with bullying can be resolved since Facebook allows users to cover their identity. They can opt to change their profile pictures into different icons and images and can freely interact without worrying about being physically judged. Moreover, OFC page groups can use Call to Action (CTA) buttons to prompt users to take a specific action. Page admins can use "Donate Now" CTA to collect funds from possible sponsors to support smile patients' medication and therapies or "Act Now" to encourage people to take action to support their call to end smile patient bullying.

One of the many success stories using the customizable feature of Facebook is Stephen Curry's Nothing but Nets Charity, it's a fundraising drive in partnership with the NBA basketball star and the World Health Organization to raise money for the fight against malaria. It successfully raised \$82,000.00 by tapping his dedicated Fan base groups on Facebook (Facebook, n.d.).

Digital Divide: A Possible Threat to Connect

Nowadays, it is evident that we are living in a society wherein information plays an important role in nation-building and development. The advent of the digital era created global interactivity that enables to connect people of different cultures and demographics. However, beyond these possibilities, there are also challenges to battle, instead of connecting or bonding people as one, it created a gap between the information-rich and information-poor segments coined as the digital divide.

Digital Divide refers to the gap between those who have access to, know, and use information technology, and those who do not (van Dijk, 2006). According to Van Dijk (2012) it can be understood as inequalities in four successive types of access: motivation, physical access, digital skills, and different usage. Moreover, according to Flor (2019), digital divide is not just an issue of technological access, but it also addresses issues on economic access. He also added that digital divide is not just about digital inclusion and opportunities, but should consider political inclusion and social opportunities.

The digital divide is not only brought about by elements of control, access, and consumption, but also by these factors: socioeconomic, gender, age, literacy, and language. Van Dijk (2006) suggested that variables of income, education, and occupation are important to physical access. Motivational access is also observed among the non-user. People refuse to use digital technology because of having no need or find no significance in the use of the internet, they lack money, they lack skills, or they reject the internet because it is dangerous. Skill access or the capacity to use digital technology is also a decisive factor in internet use. Instrumental skills on the use of computer hardware and operational skills on the use of computer software or programs are required skills in

digital technology. Usage access or the final stage in consuming digital media can be measured in usage time, usage application, broadband, and narrowband use, and active or creative use.

In the Philippines digital divide is waged based on the reason for poor internet connectivity or quality of access, rather than skills, socioeconomic status, and demographics particularly age. The country has one of the slowest internet in Southeast Asia, if not the entire world. In 2019, the mobile internet download speed of 15.06 megabits per second (Mbps) was below the global average of 26.12 Mbps, which was slower than that of Zimbabwe's 15.2 Mbps and even that of Syria's, a war-torn country, which had 19.48 Mbps. The Philippines ranked 103rd in the 139 countries surveyed. While the quality of access is a problem due to poor internet speed, a substantial majority of the Filipinos already have online access, but mainly in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Contreras, 2020).

Mobile Phones: Bridging Digital Divide

Mobile Technology, specifically the mobile phones opened the opportunity regarding concerns on digital gap in the Philippines. Mobile phones are widely used among Filipinos, according to the annual report presented by Statista a total of 44.3M Filipinos accessed the internet through their mobile phone and are projected to amount to 50.8 million mobile phone internet users by 2023 (Sanchez, 2019). More so, the Philippines ranked third in terms of internet freedom in the Asia Pacific Region, according

to the Freedom House Index of 2019 (Moore, 2020). In addition, Rappler reported that 67% of online Filipinos access social media on their phone, surpassing the global average rate of 42% (Gonzales, 2019).

Considered as the fastest-growing market for smartphones in Southeast Asia, with a staggering 326% increase in smartphone sales last 2012, the Philippines is a growing market. The continuous increase of smartphone use can be traced to the increase of Chinese brands with very competitive pricing points plus the inexpensive cost and easy-access owning a SIM card (Rappler, 2012).

The increased utilization of mobile phones among Filipinos, it has allowed people to access the internet more frequently and with more convenience. With the cheaper rates and increased internet freedom in the country, getting connected is within reach of the general public.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study used the **Uses and Gratification Theory** to explain the potential of Facebook as a platform for OFC communication. With this theory, Facebook's special features were identified and examined to explain the motives of the media consumer in choosing and using Facebook and how it satisfies their needs.

Uses and Gratification Theory

Elihu Katz and Jay Blumler formulated and introduced some of the earliest concepts of Uses and Gratification Theory (Mehrad and Tajer, 2016). Blumler and Katz (1974) examines media consumption by how it is consumed and what benefits it creates for the consumer. This theory adapts a functionalistic approach to communications and media, and states that media's most important role is to fulfill the needs and motivations of the audience. Therefore, the more these needs are met, the more satisfaction is yielded (Windahl, Signitzer, & Olson, 2008).

According to Blumler and Katz (1974), UGT suggests that individuals mix and match use with goals, according to a specific context, needs as well as social backgrounds. This stresses an active participant in a communication process, motivated by social and psychological needs (Katz, Blumber, & Gurevitch, 1974).

Moreover, for Lariscy, Tinkham, and Sweetser (2011), the basic premise of Uses and Gratifications Theory is that individuals seek out media among competitors that best fulfills their needs and leads to ultimate gratifications. UGT postulates that given certain

needs, only some media will be able to satisfy it. While gratifications received are good predictors of media use and recurring media use (Kaye & Johnson, 2002). The theory of satisfaction and gratification is based on two core questions presented by Mehrad and Tajer in 2016:

- 1) why are people attracted to certain media?
- 2) what kind of satisfaction does the media provide for people?

Understanding the popularity of mass media lies in the identification of the factors underlying its use. Haas, and Gurevitch (1973) classified UGT into five categories related to five groups of human needs 1. Cognitive needs – acquiring information, knowledge, understanding our social environment, curiosity, exploration; 2. Affective needs – aesthetic and emotional experiences, pleasure; 3. Personal identity – self-confidence, personal stability, integrity, social status, the need for self-respect; 4. Integration and social interaction – family relations and friendship, connection with the outside world, the need for affiliation; 5. Escapism – the need to escape, tension release, shifting attention from unpleasant to pleasant.

As illustrated in Figure 3, a particular media attribute or feature fulfills the need of the user and gives the user the motivation to use a particular media platform that in effect satisfies their needs. Gratification can be predicted by identifying what needs will be served by a specific media characteristic.

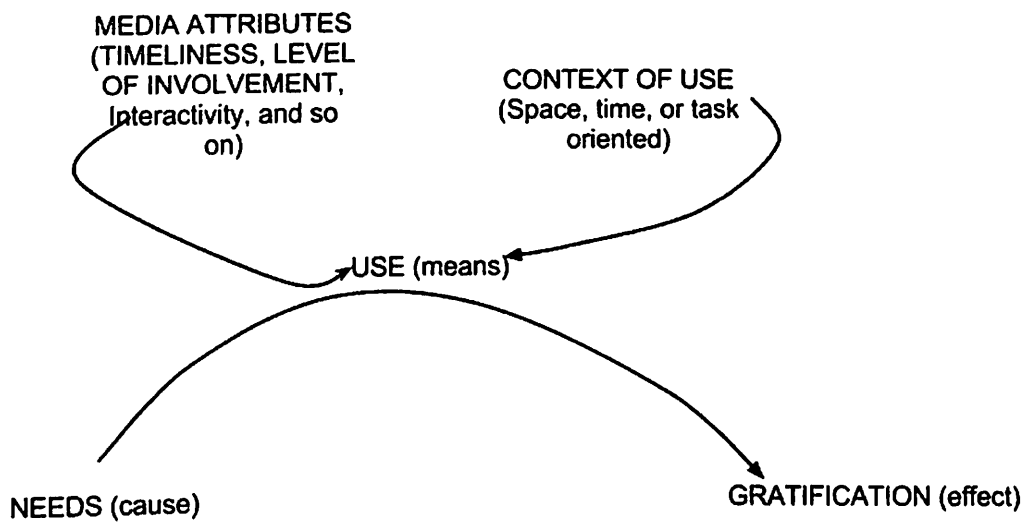


Figure 3: Uses and Gratification Theory Framework (Matei, 2010)

Facebook's special features were recognized in this paper as accessibility, interactivity, multi-content, and customizable. These features are considered drivers for a person to choose a certain media platform because it satisfies their needs. These common needs are connection, support, entertainment, information, and communication. In this case, the relationship of Facebook features and the gratification gained by the users were presented and discussed:

Accessibility

Facebook fulfills the users' need to gain and share information and communication conveniently or their cognitive needs. Studies about UGT on Facebook were commonly traced with information-seeking needs, where people nowadays, specifically millennials

and the young digital natives, are inclined to check any kind of information thru Facebook than of its traditional media and social media counterparts. It is because of the convenience of accessing any kind of information anytime and anywhere at a very minimal cost.

In the recent Pew Survey's findings, Facebook is already the news powerhouse and news generator among SNS, with half of its users sharing news stories, images, or videos. According to Scale (2008), Facebook has been used as a tool for information and discovery. Facebook's "Top Story", "Most Recent", "Trending" and "Most Shared" make a user encounter the news from both social and public circles. More so, the presence of the News Feed that looks like a customized newspaper is generated to suit a particular interest of each user that triggers people to use Facebook for news and information. Ashgar (2015) cited that Facebook is constantly seeking ways to encourage people to visit the site more often and stay longer, and view news as a way to deepen user engagement.

Interactivity

Facebook facilitates better interaction and connection among users that leads to fulfilling users seeking for a support system and network or their integration and social interaction needs. Friendship, connection, and a sense of belongingness plus emotional and social support from a Facebook community or group are some of the things gained using Facebook. The strong discussion platform of Facebook encourages frequent interactions that build up a network that nurtures strong connection and a sense of empowerment among users.

Multi-Content

Facebook offers a wide variety of materials for short videos, e-novels, GIF memes, and games that attract entertainment-seeking users (escapism) to choose FB over other media and social media platforms. This particular feature will be useful to create a material in different formats that will capture different types of users.

Customizable

Facebook offers flexibility to its users as it gives liberty to modify their page based on their preferences and use. This sense of freedom to take control of their account and pages gives them self-confidence and empowerment or the users need for personal identity.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Guided by the Uses and Gratification Theory, the study assumed that the special features of Facebook motivate people to choose and use this platform. These features satisfy users' different needs unleashing people's potential for the common good. Facebook's special features can positively impact the online OFC community. Accessibility of Facebook leads to a bigger and wider reach to communicate a certain program while its interactive feature (interactivity) encourages engagement among patients, stakeholders, and the public. Moreover, its customizable and multi-content features offer more options and flexibility to both users and admins leading to attract and tap the right audience and bigger segment of OFC community.

These effects, in turn, unleash people's potential in many ways. Since these features satisfied the user's needs, it created a positive effect on the whole system, leading to people's change of perspective and behavior.

Conceptually, therefore, it can be assumed that Facebook's special features fulfill the needs of OFC communities in many ways. This satisfaction, in turn, leads to positive effects on users making Facebook a medium of choice and a powerful platform for OFC.

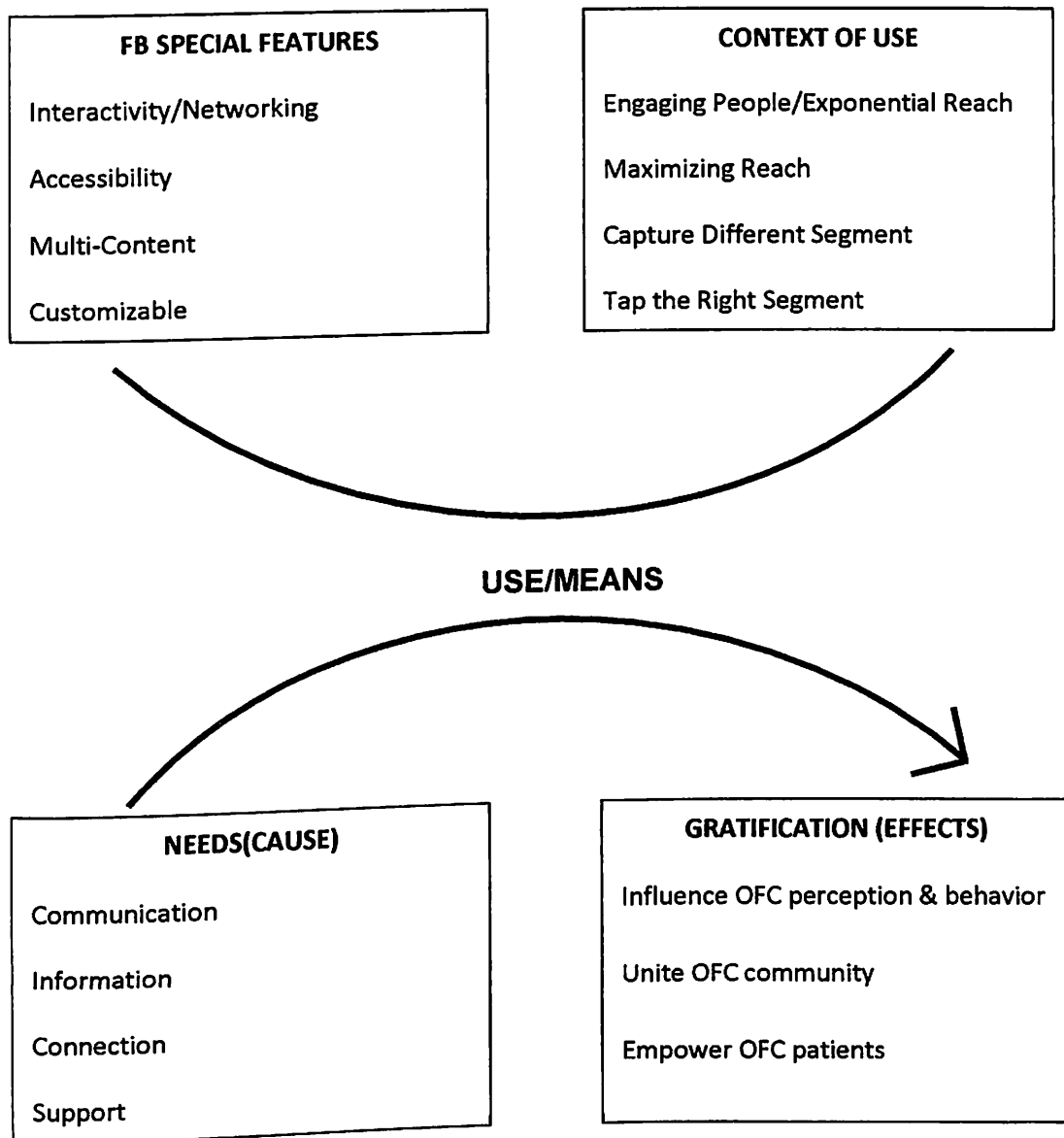


Figure 3: Facebook as Potential Medium for OFC Communications

Operational Definition of Terms

FB Special Features

refer to the special characteristics of Facebook compared to its traditional counterpart and other social media platforms that made it to be a potential medium for OFC communication. These features are interactivity, accessibility, multi-content and customizable. This was measured by asking respondents favored characteristics or features of Facebook.

Gratifications/Effects

refer to the positive impact or outcome of Facebook to the OFC communities, especially to the smile patients. It was measured by asking the respondents' reasons for visiting OFC Facebook page, their experience using it, and their satisfaction rating. Satisfaction rating was measured through a five-point Likert scale degree of agreement as: 1 as very satisfied, 2 as satisfied, 3 as moderately satisfied, 4 as slightly satisfied, and 5 as least satisfied.

Needs/Causes

refer to the necessities of the OFC community members fulfilled by using Facebook. These are communication, information, connection and to seek or

offer support. This was measured by asking the respondents' reasons for visiting OFC Facebook pages.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a Quantitative Research Approach, specifically, **Survey Research Design** to determine the potential of Facebook as a communication platform for OFC and its program. According to Viscer, Krosnick, and Lavrakas (2014), survey research is a specific type of field study that involves the collection of data from a sample of elements (e.g. adult women) drawn from a well-defined population (e.g. all adult women living in the United States) using a questionnaire.

Sampling Procedure

Convenience Sampling Technique was employed to recruit the respondents of the survey. Convenience sampling, commonly known as haphazard sampling or accidental sampling, is a type of non-probability or non-random sampling technique where members of the target population can meet certain practical criteria, such as accessibility, proximity, and availability (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Given the limited time provided to conduct the survey and the duration of the patients' involvement was variable or not consistent, convenience sampling was found to be suitable for this research.

Research Instrument

A traditional paper survey questionnaire with pre-coded answers was developed and administered to measure different variables presented. The questionnaire was initially drafted in English and then translated into Taglish (Tagalog and English) to ensure a full understanding of the respondents.

The questionnaire was composed of 4 parts. The first part determined the respondent's socio-demographic profile, while the second part determined the communication profile or media use of the respondents with an in-depth focus on Facebook use. The third part dealt with the respondents' awareness level of OFC programs, groups, and social media pages. Lastly, the fourth part dealt with the respondents' ratings of OFC Facebook pages. The last part was measured through a five-point scale on degrees of satisfaction and performance using the following interpretations:

RANGE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	
	1	VERY SATISFIED
2	SATISFIED	GOOD
3	MODERATELY SATISFIED	FAIR
4	SLIGHTLY SATISFIED	POOR
5	LEAST SATISFIED	VERY POOR

The Locale of the Study

The survey was conducted at the **Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation Philippines, Inc. (NCFPI)** satellite office in Cainta, Rizal inside Tahanang Walang Hagdanan Compound (Appendix A).

NCFPI is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing comprehensive cleft and craniofacial treatment and care to Filipinos. It has been providing subsidies for the treatment and hospitalization of craniofacial, cleft lip, or/and cleft palate patients since 2006 (NCFPI, 2009).

Respondents of the Study

Participants were conveniently selected from the representative population or people with cleft and their families from NCF-Rizal. The sample size was determined using an online survey facility named **Raosoft**. It has a built-in calculator to compute for survey sample size or population, including the margin of error and confidence level.

A 5% margin of error was considered, giving a 95% level of confidence. Using the Raosoft sample size calculator, out of the total population of 800 active cleft patients as of January 2020, the recommended sample size was 260.

Data Gathering Procedure

A series of surveys were conducted every Monday from 6:00 to 7:00 AM which was aligned to NCF-Rizal's general assembly, wherein patients from different towns of Rizal gathered to visit Our Lady of Peace in Paranaque City, NCF's partner medical center, for a weekly progressive check-up and therapy.

The questionnaires were personally handed to respondents by the researcher and NCF-Rizal staff. Respondents were assisted by providing general instruction during data gathering. Data collection took place until the target sample size of two hundred sixty (260) respondents was completed. The actual survey was conducted only to respondents who were available during the specific time. Respondents were approached modestly to answer and participate in the survey.

The research instrument was pretested to limit misleading, inappropriate, or redundant questions. A pretest was conducted a week before the actual survey, with 10 representatives of the target group, composed of OFC patients and their relatives.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical norms or sometimes-called ethical considerations serve as a guide in research in a manner that is respectful to the participants (Resnik, 2015). These ethical

considerations are: 1) voluntary participation, 2) informed consent, 3) respect for anonymity and confidentiality, and 4) respect for the privacy of the subjects 5) consideration to vulnerable groups (Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011).

With consideration of the sensitive condition of the patients, consent was acquired. Permission from the NCFPI Executive Director, NCFPI-Rizal Head Facilitator, and parental consent for patients under 18 with full capacity (physical, psychological, and emotional capability) to answer the survey was acquired. On the other hand, a waiver was secured for parents or guardians of patients who are not capable (physical, psychological, emotional capability) to answer the survey. Taking photos for documentation and its release was allowed, but limited to NCF staff and volunteers only. On the other hand, photo documentation and its release for the smile patients and their relatives required their approval, however, they requested not to be photographed.

Moreover, respondents received full disclosure of the nature of the study such as risks, benefits, and an opportunity to ask questions and clarify concerns. Respondents were assured and informed that the results obtained from the survey and their personal information will be treated with full confidentiality. Likewise, the distribution of survey questionnaires was carried out in a fair and unbiased manner.

Data Analysis

The results of the study were analyzed using a descriptive statistics approach such as frequency counts and percentages.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The study was conducted among 260 respondents of NCF Rizal, composed of OFC patients and their families. As shown in Table 1, participants were dominated by the patients' relatives with 85% of the respondents' share while the remaining share was represented by the patients and members of the OFC support group. The inability of the patient to join in the survey due to their physical and mental capacity is the main reason for its relatives' majority participation. Most of the patients (85% or 220) were infants and children from 0-5 years old.

The age group of the respondents varies, with the largest age bracket from 31-40 years old with 42% or 108 respondents. On the other hand, the great majority of the respondents (74% or 193) were female. It was observed during the data gathering process that the female participants were the patients' mother.

Moreover, the great majority (71% or 184) of the respondents were from the progressive towns of Rizal composed of Cainta, Antipolo, Taytay, and Angono. When verified, it was revealed that proximity to the location and information are the factors why most of the respondents came from these cities. While the minority group was from the far-flung towns of Rizal like Jala-Jala, Piliia, Tanay, and Baras with only 1% share or 1-3 respondents. The respondents revealed that there were numerous cases of clefting in their areas, however, they were not aware of NCF and other organizations helping OFC

patients.

In terms of education profile, the largest group was elementary school graduates with almost half (46%) or 120 of the respondents. However, only 13% or 34 of the respondents reached the tertiary level, and it was revealed that most of them were not able to finish it. It was observed that the majority of respondents who earned a degree were from the city group respondents coming from Cainta and Antipolo, while respondents with the least education attained were from the far-flung towns of Rizal namely Jala-Jala, Pililia, Tanay, and Baras. It was observed that half (50% or 38) of the respondents from the town group were respondents without formal education and did not even graduate from the elementary level.

In terms of work status and income, there was a big disparity between respondents with work and jobless respondents. It was revealed that 8 out of 10 respondents (80%) are jobless, only 51 of the respondents (20%) were working. On the other hand, it was revealed that almost all (96% or 49) of the working group earned below minimum wage or P15, 000.00 and below wage per month. While the respondents within the highest salary bracket (P21, 000.00-P25,000.00) with 4% share or only 2 respondents were OFC program volunteers and support groups. The employment and income profile of the respondents revealed respondents cannot afford the medication and operation procedures for OFC conditions, given a considerable number of below wage earners (19% or 49) and jobless respondents (80% or 209). When asked about their current jobs, it was revealed that they were farmers, fishermen, and local merchants. Jobless respondents were composed of housewives, senior citizens, and students.

TABLE 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percentage
Profile		
Patient	35	13%
Relative of the Patient	222	85%
Others	3	1%
Age		
10 and below	2	1%
11-20 years old	24	9%
21-30 years old	60	23%
31-40 years old	108	42%
41-50 years old	40	15%
51-60 years old	20	8%
61 years old and up	6	2%
Gender		
Male	67	26%
Female	193	74%
Location Distribution		
Antipolo	46	18%
Angono	39	15%
Baras	2	1%
Binangonan,	7	3%
Cainta	60	23%
Cardona	15	6%
Jala Jala	2	1%
Morong	8	3%
Pililia	3	1%
Rodriguez	12	5%
San Mateo	19	7%
Tanay	2	1%
Taytay	39	15%
Teresa	6	2%
Educational Profile		
Elementary	120	46%
Secondary	68	26%
Tertiary	34	13%
Graduate School	0	0%
Others	38	15%
Employment Status		
Working	51	20%
Not Working	209	80%
Income Distribution		
P10,000.00 and below	34	67%
P10,001.00-P15,000.00	15	29%
P15,001.00-P20,000.00	0	0%
P20,001.00-P25,000.00	2	4%
P25,001.00-up	0	0%

In summary, most of the respondents (85% or 222) were relatives of the patients, specifically their mother because most of the patients (85% or 220) are babies and children 5 years old and below. Majority of them (57% or 148) were young adults and middle-aged adults and a big majority (61% or 158) earned elementary and below education. With the level of education acquired by the majority group, it was linked to respondents' majority share on the jobless status and below-minimum salary earners.

Most of the respondents were from the progressive cities of Rizal. It is because of their proximity to the location of the NCF-Rizal office; thus, they are familiar with NCF and its program compared to the remote towns of Rizal. Therefore, there's a need for an intensified information dissemination to reach the far-flung towns of Rizal. With the data presented, it is therefore associated that the prevalence of OFC belongs to families with poor socioeconomic status and part of the marginalized group.

The result of the socio-demographic profile of the respondents is evident in the presented literature review that the majority of OFC patients were from families who live in poverty (Alfwaress, et al., 2017). OFC patients being poor were associated with low educational level and illiteracy resulting in limited awareness about OFC and groups helping smile patients. Most of the participants are inclined to their beliefs about clefting that its origin is due to natural or supernatural phenomena. Cheng (1990) stated that the issues of folk and religious beliefs among Asians are complex, and the variations among them are often intertwined, associating illnesses and disorders to natural and supernatural intrusions and are accepted as their tragic fate or curse. Moreover, living below the poverty line is also associated with poor maternal nutrition and condition that leads to the incidences of OFC. Bermudez et al. (2009) discussed the importance of folic

acid in early fetal development. It has been proven that folic acid supplementation during the first 4 months of pregnancy provides significant protection against cardiovascular defects, neural tube defects (anencephaly, spina bifida), and may also diminish clefting.

Based on the data presented, it is significant to highlight that the socio-demographic profile of the respondents is the population captured by Facebook. The patients' mother is the majority respondent and is considered to be the captured segment of Facebook. As Kemp (2012) reported, Facebook is very popular amongst Filipino housewives because it is their constant source of entertainment and relief from their daily chores. Since most of them are unemployed, they are spending considerable amounts of time chatting and connecting with families and friends and posting simple updates about their daily lives. Age is also an important profile to consider as the majority of the respondents are from the age groups ranging from 21 to 40 years old. Age brackets from 18-24 and 25-34 are the largest age groups that appeal to Facebook with 62.3% of the Filipino user population (NapoleonCat n.d.). Furthermore, since the respondents belong to lower social income groups, Facebook is typically their medium of choice because accessing it is very cheap and some features like messaging can be accessed for free. Mercurio (2019) cited that the majority of the Filipinos are prepaid users and are subscribed to promos, making data price affordable and beneficial to them. Since clefting commonly occurs among this socio-demographic profile, Facebook is an ideal platform to reach them because of its popularity among this group.

The popularity of Facebook among the respondents can be traced to the assumption of UGT that a media user seeks out a media source that best fulfills the users' needs. (Blumler & Katz, 1974). The result clearly shows that Facebook satisfies the

various needs of the respondents; in terms of entertainment, relationship & connections, or simply for economic reasons. It is also evident that the demographics of the respondents are important factors that dictate their needs, thus affecting the medium preference of the consumers.

Communication Profile or Medium Use and Preference of the Respondents

To identify the communication channels frequently utilized by the respondents for health communication and information, they were asked about their medium preference and media use. Furthermore, to find out the effectiveness of Facebook as a medium for health communication and information, respondents were asked about their usage and their reasons for patronage.

Table 2 clearly showed that the internet topped the list in terms of respondents' medium preference with 98% share (, exceeding the popularity of other traditional media such as television (96%), radio (6%), and print (1%). The result implied that the advent of the digital age contributed a big shift to people's choice of the medium from traditional to digital. Moreover, the significant change in the Philippines media landscape due to COVID-19 and the shutdown of ABSCBN is expected to further accelerate the digital shift as well as the use of Facebook.

The digital adoption in the Philippines presented the assumption of UGT that media consumers. For instance, Filipinos particularly the younger generations are now more

inclined to use the internet particularly Facebook for information and entertainment than for print and radio, and now even television. Millennials and the younger generation are more inclined using Facebook and other social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube because of the convenience and accessibility that it offers. Aside from it, they find the multi-format feature of the internet more entertaining than of the linear format of print and radio so as the audio-visual or dual format of the television. Based on the literature review presented, CNN Philippines (2019) reported that more and more Filipinos get news from Facebook than from radio and newspapers combined. The use of Facebook as their news source started as an alternative to TV, radio, and print and as Facebook fulfills the needs of the media consumers, the shift of media preference occurred.

TABLE 2: MEDIUM PREFERENCE

Medium	Frequency n=260	Percentage
TV	250	96%
Radio	15	6%
Newspaper/Magazine	3	1%
Internet	255	98%
Others	0	0%

***multiple responses**

Almost all or 98% of respondents accessed Facebook more frequently compared to other social media sites. There is a big disparity in terms of use between FB and its social media counterparts like YouTube (38%), Instagram (1%), and Twitter (1%). The patronage for FB as opposed to other social media platforms can be linked to its accessibility and use. For instance, it is cheaper to access FB versus YouTube while in

terms of connecting to friends and loved ones, they preferred FB compared to Instagram and Twitter. Moreover, 100% of those with access to Facebook have their account (Table 4). The result implies that FB could be used as a popular medium for communication and information, and could be a possible medium for health communication like OFC. On the other hand, 2% or five out of two hundred sixty (5/260) of the respondents were identified as non-internet users and are mainly composed of senior citizens (Table 3).

As observed, digital gap did exist but with a very little percentage, only 2% of the respondents are non-Facebook users or non-internet users. While digital gap is recognized as an important factor to consider using social media as a channel for health communication, the result presented that access and usage of social media particularly Facebook is still high even to the respondents who belong to the marginalized group. This is linked to the convenience of access through mobile phones and the affordable data rates and surfing packages available in the country. Based on the literature review presented, Contreras (2020) reported that while the quality of access is a problem due to poor internet speed, a substantial majority of the Filipinos already have online access, but mainly in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Therefore, regardless of the problem in access to the internet in the Philippines, it cannot be addressed as the main problem, but the psychological dimension of the digital divide. As mentioned in the related literature, Van Dijk (2006) cited that motivational access is also observed among the non-internet users. The challenge is to make people appreciate the use of the internet for health communication, and not just for entertainment, leisure, and social networking.

TABLE 3: FREQUENTLY ACCESSED SOCIAL MEDIA SITE/S

Medium	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Facebook	255	98%
Instagram	3	1%
Twitter	2	1%
YouTube	100	38%

*multiple responses

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS' FACEBOOK ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP

Ownership	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Yes	255	98%
No	5	2%
Total	260	100%

The majority (58% or 147) of the respondents spent 5-6 hours on Facebook and the lowest share spent less than an hour (4% or 10). The data revealed that respondents were consuming the majority of their time in FB, surpassing the average daily social media use recorded by We Are Social and Hootsuite. As per the report, Filipinos spent an average of 4 hours and 12 minutes per day on social media (Rappler, 2019) (Table 5).

Table 6 revealed that half of the respondents (50% or 128) who have an account on Facebook exposed that they access FB every single day with the minimum access of 2-3x a week (3% or 7). The high access rate among respondents was linked to the cheap rate of prepaid internet data for as low as P15.00 enough for daily access. According to Globe Telecom, the Philippines has the second cheapest mobile internet price per gigabyte (GB) in the region, next to India. Globe said the country remains data price

friendly, especially in the prepaid segment where an overwhelming majority of the population are subscribed to (Mercurio, 2019).

As seen in Table 7, all (100% or 255) of the participants frequently accessed FB through their mobile phones, followed by desktop or personal computer (14% or 36), and lastly, laptop and tablet (5% or 12). The results imply that patronage of mobile phones among respondents was linked to access and mobility. Mobile phones are cheaper to acquire and very handy versus other gadgets such as laptops, tablets, and computers. Given the economic profile of the respondents with a great majority of below minimum wage earners, mobile phones would be a popular choice. On the other hand, with regards to mobility, mobile phones can be conveniently accessed anytime and anywhere, compared to other sources of media like radio, print and TV.

Therefore, in terms of patronage when it comes to accessibility and convenience the popular choice of medium among respondents is the internet wherein the majority of the respondents dedicated their online time at Facebook.

TABLE 5: AVERAGE DAILY TIME SPENT IN FACEBOOK

Hours Spent	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	10	4%
1-2 hours	85	33%
3-4 hours	13	5%
5-6 hours	147	58%
7-8 hours	0	0%
9-10 hours	0	0%
11-12 hours	0	0%
More than 12 hours	255	100%
Total		

TABLE 6: FREQUENCY OF ACCESS IN FACEBOOK

Frequency of Access	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Everyday	128	50%
4-6x a week	120	47%
2-3x a week	7	3%
Others	0	0%
Total	255	100%

TABLE 7: FREQUENTLY USED MEDIUM TO ACCESS FACEBOOK

Medium	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Mobile Phone	255	100%
Laptop/Tablet	12	5%
Personal Computer	36	14%
Others	0	0%

***multiple responses**

Table 8 shows all (100%) of the 255 online respondents used Facebook as their means of acquiring connection and communicating with others. The respondents revealed that most of the time they used messenger chatting instead of standard texting and calling because it is cheaper and more flexible when connecting with groups of people. In terms of connection, respondents revealed that they used FB to maintain existing relationships at the same time to develop new relationships and meet new friends especially with the same condition and situation as OFC. This finding illustrates the importance of the networking feature of social media. Its interactive function leads them to build more connections with other users. Furthermore, most of the respondents use FB as a source of entertainment (89% or 226) closely followed by respondents who use FB for acquiring information (86% or 220), to follow influencers (62% or 158), and for online

shopping (5% or 12). Moreover, there were 3 respondents (1%) who revealed that they're using Facebook for recognition, attention, and self-presentation. On the other hand, participants revealed that most of the time, they acquired new information not on television, radio, or newspaper but on the internet, particularly on Facebook.

The results revealed that the popularity of Facebook to the respondents can also be traced to the fulfillment of UGT's five groups of human needs namely; cognitive needs, affective needs, personal identity, integration and social interaction and escapism (Katz, et al., 1973). Based on the result presented, Facebook fulfills the respondents need for connection and communication to their friends and family (affective needs, integration/social interaction and personal identity), entertainment and pastime (escapism), acquiring information (cognitive needs).

Table 9 revealed that most of the online respondents (89% or 226) searched for information about an individual or a group. They usually searched for celebrities and friends with few searches for individuals and groups who can help them fund their medication like politicians and businessmen. It was followed by news and current affairs searches (86% or 220) and searches for trending news and videos, memes, funny videos, and property rentals (83% or 212). Only 38% or 96 of the respondents were looking for health information specifically about OFC. This is a notable indication that despite Facebook popularity among the respondents, it is not fully utilized in OFC health information and communication.

TABLE 8: USAGE OF FACEBOOK

Use	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Acquiring Information	220	86%
Connection	255	100%
Way of Communication	255	100%
Source of Entertainment	226	89%
Online Shopping	12	5%
Business/Selling	0	0
Follow Celebrities/Influencers	158	62%
Others	3	1%

***multiple responses**

TABLE 9: FREQUENTLY SEARCHED INFORMATION IN FB

Information	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Health Information	96	38%
News and Current Affairs	220	86%
Individual/Group Profile	226	89%
Others	212	83%

***multiple responses**

On the other hand, while patronage for FB over other communication platforms was linked to the fulfillment of the respondents' needs using this medium, its usage was then linked to its special features. As UGT claimed, one of the keys to understanding the popularity of mass media lies in the identification of the factors underlying its use. The result of this study clearly recognized and explained Facebook's special features as

accessibility, interactivity, multi-content, and customizable.

According to Table 10, convenience and affordability (accessibility) topped the respondents' votes; both garnered 100% share or 255 online respondents. Nowadays, people value convenience, the advent of digital technology created a platform that will transcend time and space. Compared to traditional media like print, television, and radio access is limited. Aside from accessibility, communication using Facebook is very cheap, for as low as PHP 15.00 you can already access it for a day while messaging is normally free of charge.

Following closely is the presence of a feedback system (interactivity) with 98% or 250 of the respondents share. Aside from real-time sharing, wider reach, and multiway communication, being able to share the reactions and comments to the public created a sense of voice and empowerment to some of the respondents.

On the other hand, its multi-platform features garnered half (50% or 127) of the respondents' share. Compared to other media platforms like print, television, and radio, Facebook has multiple features; video, audio, and text. Traditional media only feature one to two functions; radio is a platform for audio-only, print is a platform for text, and television both features audio and video. Its flexibility and multi-feature functions appealed to the respondents.

Lastly, FB's customizable feature earned 21% (54) of the respondents share. When asked some of the most mentioned features were 1) can choose the look of their page 2) control what page visitors see 3) select their audience 4) inclusions of fun images like emoticons. Respondents from the support group composed of NCF volunteers and

staff mentioned some customizable features of FB that need to be explored to maximize its potential for OFC communication and awareness. For instance, they mentioned that emoticons and GIFs can be used to capture young audiences to visit and check the post or the page that may generate leads for volunteers as well as awareness.

TABLE 10: FAVORED FB CHARACTERISTIC/S VS. OTHER MEDIA

Characteristics	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Accessibility	255	100%
Cheap way to communicate	255	100%
Interactivity/Networking	250	98%
It is multi-platform	127	50%
It can be customized	54	21%
Others	0	0%

***multiple responses**

In a nutshell, the results presented that Facebook is an ideal platform for health communication particularly OFC because it caters to the needs of the OFC community. The fulfillment of these needs was connected to the special characteristics or features of Facebook.

Respondents' Awareness Level on OFC Groups

To identify the level of awareness among respondents about OFC groups, programs, and Facebook pages, they were asked about their familiarity and encounter with other support groups. Furthermore, questions about their experiences before NCF's intervention were

also asked.

Table 11 revealed that almost all of the OFC patients consulted their community centers (99% or 254), sought alternative medicine (33% or 85), and private hospitals (2% or 5) about the condition beforehand. It was revealed that some were endorsed by the community centers and hospitals to seek help from OFC groups like NCF. It was also mentioned that they even came to seek help from faith healers or folk healers also known as “albularyos”. There were also a notable few or 1% or 3 of the respondents who did not even seek any of the listed until NCF was recommended to them.

Moreover, Table 12 revealed that upon learning possible medical procedures, including the cost of medication, almost all of the respondents seek assistance from their local health centers (99% or 254), followed by relatives (70% or 179), and their local government (6% or 16). However, respondents exposed that the assistance from them was not enough to even cover the cost of the initial stage of medication. The remaining 1% (3) were respondents who did not seek any consultation and support from anyone until NCF intervention.

TABLE 11: SOURCE CONSULTED BEFORE OFC GROUPS’ INTERVENTION

Source	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Community Center/Hospital	254	99%
Private Hospitals	5	2%
Alternative Medicine (Faith Healers, etc.)	85	33%
Others	3	1%

*multiple responses

*3 volunteers not included

TABLE 12: SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE BEFORE OFC GROUPS' INTERVENTION

Source	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Family/Relative	179	70%
Local Government	16	6%
Public Hospitals/ Health Centers	254	99%
Others	3	1%

***multiple responses**

***3 volunteers not included**

As expected, Table 13 highlighted the popularity of NCF with 100% (260) share over other OFC groups like Smile Train (58% or 150), Operation Smile Philippines (33% or 87), and 3% (5) for other organizations and support groups helping OFC patients like Belo Smiles, and more. It was revealed that the majority of the respondents also seek help from Operation Smile and Smile Train because both offer comprehensive and holistic care for the patients; however, they opted to stay with NCF because of their proximity to the satellite office. According to some respondents, there were also other organizations and government offices which offer mission-based treatment that will only cover the surgery procedure, while NCF, Smile Train & Operation Smile provide continuing comprehensive quality care from surgery preparation to the post-surgery stage. It also addresses other needs of cleft and craniofacial patients beyond surgery like dental, orthodontics, speech therapy, pediatric-genetic consultation, and other social services for the patients including support groups that will help them cope with the after-surgery trauma. It was also mentioned the increased popularity of NCF specifically to the remote towns of Rizal is because of their roving jeepney also known as "Smile Dyip", offering free jeepney rides for cleft patients to visit NCF's Craniofacial Center in Paranaque City.

TABLE 13: RESPONDENTS' RECOGNIZED OFC GROUP/S

Organization	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation-Philippines	260	100%
Smile Train Philippines	150	58%
Operation Smile-Philippines	87	33%
Others	5	3%

***multiple responses**

When asked about the sources of information about these groups, Table 14 revealed that almost all (99% or 257) of the information was acquired through word of mouth followed by social media (37% or 96), health centers (14% or 37), and lastly the local government (1% or 2). Some even revealed that they initially acquired the information specifically through their friends and neighbors who encountered the Smile Dyip roving around their locality.

Despite the popularity of NCF and high awareness level on OFC groups, Table 15 revealed that the awareness on OFC Facebook Pages was very limited with only 37% (96) share, while a big majority (63% or 164) of the respondents remained unaware.

Table 16 showed that among the 96 respondents or the 37% aware respondents, their reason for visiting the OFC FB pages varies. All (100% or 96) of the aware respondents revealed that their reasons for visiting the OFC FB pages were initially to acquire information and to get support from the group. They mentioned that they want to acquire information about OFC health information. Aside from getting the latest OFC related information, they were able to get information about operation and consultation schedules and updates on upcoming events and programs of the group. Furthermore,

securing financial and medical support were some of the important reasons for visiting the page.

More than half (52% or 50) of the aware respondents revealed that they visit OFC pages for communication and connection purposes. They mentioned that they were able to communicate easily with the group members and program administrators regarding concerns and issues for clarifications. Lastly, a notable 3% (3) would simply want to help and support as volunteers.

TABLE 14: RESPONDENTS' SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR OFC GROUPS

SOURCE	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Word of mouth	257	99%
Local Government	2	1%
Hospitals/ Health Centers	37	14%
Social Media	96	37%
Posters, Flyers, Banners	0	0%
Radio	0	0%
Newspapers and Magazines	0	0%
Television	0	0%
Others	0	0%

*multiple responses

TABLE 15: RESPONDENTS' AWARENESS FOR OFC FACEBOOK PAGE/S

Answer	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Yes	96	37%
No	164	63%
Others	0	0%
Total	260	100%

*96 respondents aware of NCF FB page

TABLE 16: RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR VISITING OFC FACEBOOK PAGE/S

Reason	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Acquiring OFC health information and programs	96	100%
Communicating and connecting with the group	50	52%
Seeking for financial and medical support	96	100%
To offer support and help	3	3%
Others	0	0%

***multiple responses**

***96 respondents aware of NCF FB page**

In summary, the result implies that FB's popularity was not fully utilized in health information and communication specifically for OFC and its programs despite its potential as a powerful channel for communication, information, and a platform to support and help the patients.

Respondents' Satisfaction Rating on OFC Facebook Pages

To identify the possible course of action or improvements to work on existing OFC Facebook pages, respondents were asked to rate their experience and satisfaction level using these pages. To further understand and support their satisfaction rating, they were also asked about their good and bad experiences using it.

As shown in Table 17, all (100% or 96) of the aware respondents revealed that their continuous visits on OFC pages created positive experiences and impact on their lives. They mentioned that they were able to get emotional and psychological support from the group as well as a very strong feeling of belongingness. They even confessed that they found new friends in these groups.

Correspondingly, almost all of the respondents (94% or 90) shared that this OFC online group somehow provides empowerment and self-worth. Being able to speak up about their thoughts and share their experience in public (online), helped them to boost their morale and self-esteem. Followed by the respondents who shared that they learned to embrace OFC and significantly helped them to become more open about their condition (93% or 89). Some patients mentioned that their physical deformities somehow limit them to socialize, but with OFC pages available, they can openly share their experiences about their condition without the fear of criticism and bullying.

Lastly, 3% or 3 of the respondents composed of volunteers and support group members revealed that Facebook helped them to reach out to sponsors to get support and fund the program. They also mentioned that it opened up an opportunity to tap a wider audience with the help of celebrities and influencers supporting the cause. They revealed that there is an increase in engagements whenever they post an article with the celebrity or their celebrity supporters posted their article or ads.

Based on the result presented, it implied that Facebook is indeed an effective tool not just for communication and information, but also a channel to find a support system. The findings also confirmed that it could be a very powerful tool to mobilize the general

public for a greater good. However, its benefit can be only realized, if awareness and usage on OFC pages will be maximized. Based on the data presented, only 37% or 96 of the respondents were aware of the NCF Philippines Facebook page.

TABLE 17: RESPONDENTS' POSITIVE EXPERIENCE/S IN OFC FB USE

Aspect	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Able to understand and embrace OFC condition	90	94%
Get emotional and psychological support	96	100%
Find friends and have a sense of belongingness	96	100%
Feel a sense of empowerment and self-worth	89	93%
Becoming more open about this condition	90	94%
Others	3	3%

***multiple responses**

***96 respondents aware of NCF FB page**

As compared to positive remarks, negative feedbacks accessing their OFC FB pages were generally lower. As per Table 18, respondents shared that many of their bad experiences were due to privacy issues (26% or 25). Respondents shared that their concerns were mainly people who reached them through messengers and private messages to sell products and alternative medicines for their condition with few concerns on students who casually asked them online to be part or become a subject of their projects and research studies. In addition, there were few concerns about the content of the ads specifically photos of the patients which they considered pitiful and inappropriate. Some respondents believe that it's an act of privacy invasion.

Additionally, there were also concerns about bullying and discrimination (17% or

16). The reports regarding this issue were mainly incidents of “name-calling” and teasing online, especially when their pre-operation pictures were posted on the page. Some respondents opened up that their fear of discrimination and bullying is the reason why they are not comfortable with posting pictures of patients with an unrepaired cleft at the OFC pages since this is accessible to the public.

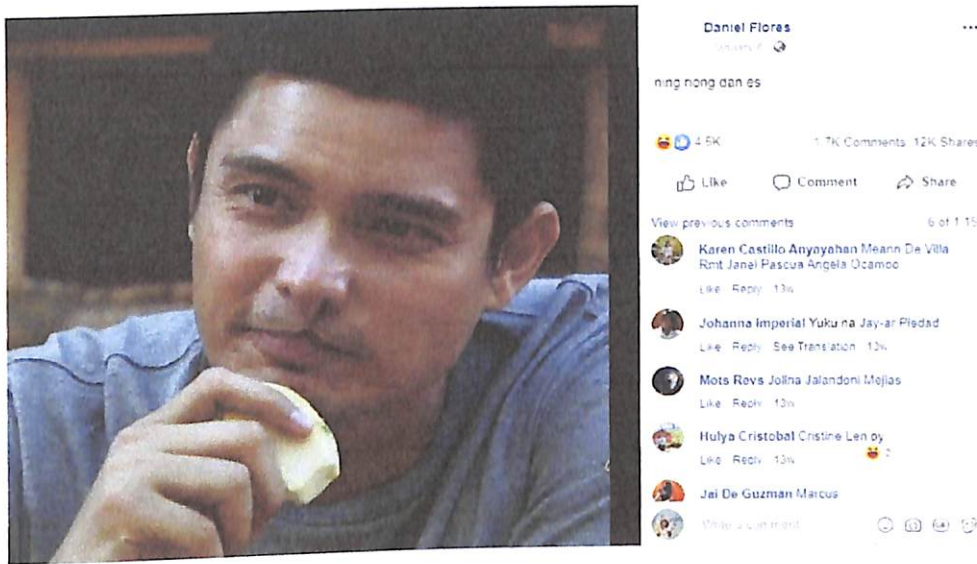


Figure 4- Screenshot of Facebook Memes on Clefting (Flores, 2020)

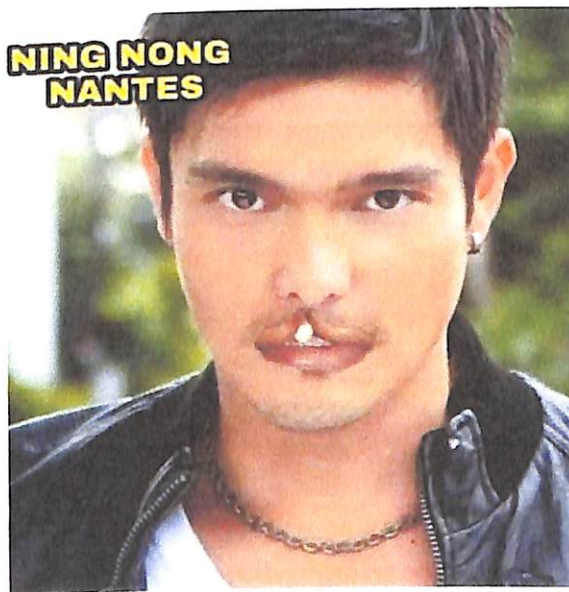


Figure 5- Ning Nong Nantes Viral Meme on Clefting (Malasig, 2020)

It was closely followed by concerns regarding the page which include page inactivity, slow feedback system, and unattractive contents (16% or 15). Some respondents revealed that they get feedback from the admins the next day or more upon sending their inquiries or questions. While regarding contents, they shared that while they appreciate the effort of the admins, they believe that content should be more graphic and should use a different approach to attract attention like images and videos. They also recommend that contents should also be localized by using Tagalog as their primary language in communicating with the public as well as they recommend limiting pitiful pictures of smile patients particularly their pre-operation photos.

Lastly, there was little feedback regarding the difficulty in navigating the pages because of slow internet connection (6% or 6). The low percentage score regarding slow internet connectivity exposed a positive indication of concerns about digital gap.

While the majority of the responses from the survey participants were positive, negative should be considered as an indicator of possible threats to the page. There were reports that they immediately leave or unfollow the group upon learning the needed details to reach NCF-Philippines or immediately after the treatment. Likewise, negative feedback should also be considered for possible threats to the page users specifically to smile patients that may lead to further degradation and even limit their interactions online.

TABLE 18: RESPONDENTS' NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE/S IN OFC FB USE

EXPERIENCE/S	Frequency n=260	Percentage
Privacy Issue/s	25	26%
Bullying/Discrimination	16	17%
Slow Internet Connection	6	6%
Others	15	16%

*multiple responses

*96 respondents aware of OFC FB page

Tables 19 shows that almost all of the aware respondents (92% or 88) were generally satisfied with the existing OFC pages. Only 8% (8) of the respondents were not fully satisfied with their experience on OFC pages.

The result on satisfaction rating strengthened and confirmed that there is a big potential in Facebook as a powerful channel to communicate and mobilize OFC programs, while some improvements should be made to maximize its full potential.

TABLE 19: RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION RATING ON OFC FB PAGE/S

Rating	Frequency n=260	Percentage
1-Very Satisfied	46	48%
2- Satisfied	40	42%
3- Moderately Satisfied	2	2%
4- Slightly Satisfied	8	8%
5-Not Satisfied	0	0%
Total	96	100%

*Rating is 1-5, 1 being the highest

*96 respondents aware of OFC FB page

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study generally aimed to determine the potential of Facebook as a platform for OFC communication in the Philippines. Hence, the objectives of the study sought to:

1. Identify the special features of Facebook in promoting OFC and its programs.
2. Determine how these features influence or affect people's perspective and behavior, specifically the smile patients and members of the OFC online communities.

Moreover, the premise of the study suggests that the popularity of Facebook among Filipinos was associated with the fulfillment of their needs through FB. Thus, the concept of UGT by Katz and Blumler was used to answer the objectives of the study.

The study was held at the NCFI satellite office in Rizal, it is a non-profit organization dedicated in providing free comprehensive cleft and craniofacial treatment and care to smile patients. Data gathering was one of the limitations due to the limited time and schedule dedicated to conduct the survey. Hence, convenience sampling was used to gather a total sample of 260 respondents from the members of the OFC communities to participate in the study. A self-administered survey questionnaire was used as the data

collection tool in the study. As a measurement, a five – point Likert- scale was used to measure the satisfaction level of the respondents using Facebook, while descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze data results.

This paper provides encouraging information about the many potentials of using Facebook for OFC communication. It highlighted an interesting and significant discovery regarding the potentiality of Facebook for the greater good. It was revealed that it is a powerful medium to change, support, and empower people specifically the marginalized group like an individual with OFC condition. Moreover, Facebook is the top medium of choice among Filipinos because of its special features and its relationship with Filipinos' culture and way of life. Facebook addresses some of the limitations in traditional media through increased accessibility, interactivity, and flexibility. More so, it also covers the restrictions in other social networking sites in terms of variety and flexibility brought about by its upgraded customizable features. Aside from the technical aspects, there's also a cultural aspect rooted in Facebook that made it a medium of choice among Filipinos. The lifestyle and traits associated with the popularity of Facebook among Filipinos can be traced to its features.

While the accounts on possibilities were presented using Facebook as a powerful medium for OFC communication there were also threats exposed that may limit its full potential. Connectivity and concerns on digital gap were raised as well as issues on privacy and bullying. Fortunately, these threats are considered potentially solvable. For instance, the popularity of mobile phones and cheap data rates and packages in the country somehow covered some issues about connectivity and availability, whereas the customizable features of Facebook can narrow down threats to privacy and bullying.

On the other hand, some accounts revealed that most of the respondents use Facebook mainly for entertainment, personal communication, and connection. Users' communication and connection are very intimate and limited mainly for family and social needs, rather than a medium to connect and communicate in a wider perspective. Also, respondents recognized Facebook as their main source of entertainment and pastime rather than a medium worthy of health communication and support. Given that the misconception about OFC conditions are still widespread plus the innocence and lack of awareness of the programs and support are still very limited, the popularity of Facebook should be capitalized to maximize reach regarding OFC and its programs.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it is therefore concluded that Facebook has a big potential to be an effective medium for OFC communication. Its potential is associated with Facebook's special features such as accessibility, interactivity, multi-content, and customizable which fulfill OFC communities needs specifically in terms of connection, support, information, and communication which impact the OFC community positively. The positive effect in the whole system leads people to change their perspective and behavior towards OFC. Patients' engagements and interactions encourage information sharing and increased awareness for OFC and its program, thus promoting change in perspective and behavior towards the condition. Furthermore, reaching the right audience

specifically patients, sponsors and influencers creates a strong, unified, and empowered OFC community.

Recommendations

Based on the results presented in this paper, the following are recommended:

For the OFC Support Group Administrators

- 1. Capitalize on the popularity of Facebook among Filipinos to reach a wider segment of the population.**

As the number one social media network in the Philippines, Facebook holds great potential in OFC communication. Since the majority of Filipinos are on Facebook, the group administrators can communicate information about OFC and its program on a wider scale for free. Facebook captures the common people popularly known as “masa” which is the widest segment of the Filipino population. More than that, this sector includes the working class and the marginalized group wherein most of the OFC patients belong.

On the other hand, page administrators can use Facebook to reach possible groups and individuals to get support and funding for their cause. Celebrities, influencers, and even politicians are already on Facebook to communicate with their followers and supporters. Aside from financial aid they can provide to the organization, these influencers can reach and encourage a big crowd to support and promote the organization’s advocacy. As Biran, Rosental, Andrea, McKeown, and Rambow (cited in Heldman, Schindelar, & Weaver,

2013) mentioned that influencers exhibit the characteristics of credibility, persistence in convincing others, and the ability to drive conversations so that others take notice of the topic or idea and show support.

2. Maximize Facebook for patients' support and empowerment.

Aside from information dissemination and communication, Facebook should be used for a greater cause. Since Facebook facilitates better interaction and connection among users, page administrators can maximize it as a tool to provide a support system to the OFC patients. From a simple day to day communication regarding clinic schedules, doctor's availability, and casual Q&A talks about the condition, to a deeper and more serious interaction like providing emotional and social support.

More than medical assistance, this study revealed that most of the smile patients are seeking friendship and a group that will embrace and understand their condition. Accounts were revealing that some smile patients gained friendship, connection, and a sense of belongingness upon joining an OFC group.

In addition to that, the advantage of using Facebook as a medium for support is the ability to provide immediate response and it can cover big groups. Page administrators can use the platform anytime and anywhere to give instant feedback to smile patients who need advice and guidance on a larger scale. As a result, it encourages frequent interactions that build up a strong relationship among group members. More than that, it encourages smile patients to open up about their condition and experiences leading them to build confidence and feel a sense of empowerment.

3. Maximize the special features of Facebook to penetrate the target segment and create impact based on objective

It is essential for health promotion organizations like NCF to capitalize on the special features of Facebook to improve and modernize strategies in crafting and disseminating effective OFC campaigns online. Facebook offers various features that page admins can use to optimize their campaigns that can tap the target segment and induce objective-based impact.

The study revealed that there were accounts stating the contents in OFC pages are not attractive enough for the respondents to continue navigating it. Its customizable and multi-content features offer more options and flexibility to admins to improve and resolve this concern. Facebook can support different media formats like text, images, audio, and videos that can be very useful to reach and penetrate different types of users. For instance, memes and GIFs' content will attract the younger market, while infographics, news, and short story types of content appeal more to the older market.

Page administrators should also consider incorporating entertainment value and enhance the emotional connection to their contents to entice people to check and navigate their page. Filipinos are generally fun-loving and warm-hearted people; the humorous contents and touching stories will capture them massively. It is also evident that the most shared and trending contents are memes and heartwarming videos in the country. For instance, "Kwentong Jollibee" is the most shared post on Facebook last 2019 up to February this year (Socialbaker, 2020). "Kwentong Jollibee" is a collection of heartwarming short stories that features real-life events about love, family, and success. It is particularly appealing to the Filipinos because it is very relatable, wherein content is based on life experiences delivered in a very touching and heartwarming way.

Furthermore, the page administrators can use Facebook customizable features to modify their page based on their objectives or use. Admins can use Call to Action (CTA) buttons to prompt the user to take a specified action. One good example is the use of CTA's like "Donate Now" to collect funds from possible sponsors or "Act Now" to encourage people to take action to a particular movement.

4. Consider digital gap, support Facebook communication with local and community based communication strategies.

While digital gap is recognized as a threat using Facebook as a medium for OFC communication, it is recommended to compliment it with community based communication activities like seminars, house to house awareness efforts and more.

For the Smile Patients and OFC communities

1. Use Facebook to be informed and connected

As the news powerhouse and engagement facility among SNS, Facebook has been used as a tool for information and connection. OFC Facebook page would be beneficial for the smile patients as a valid source of relevant health news regarding OFC and to be updated on the latest happenings within the group. Moreover, it can also be an important medium to maintain connection and relationship with the members of the page, which could transform into a deeper and special relationship as friends or family.

2. Use Facebook to educate, inspire, and support.

Smile patients may use Facebook for a variety of purposes. It can be a powerful tool to inform and educate the public about OFC by sharing their stories and experiences combating the condition. It hopes to inspire people to make a move to support OFC

programs and influence other smile patients to positive behavior and outlook to fight their condition.

Facebook Group is a special place where smile patients can share and discuss their experiences and knowledge about OFC. It is especially powerful for a group that wants to form and expand their community to create deeper engagement and eventually create a positive impact on each other.

3. Use Facebook to amplify voice for a collective call for a change

Smile patients should maximize the interactive feature of Facebook to create a reliable network and encourage exponential reach. For instance, it can be used as a platform to rally a call against discrimination and bullying of people with OFC conditions. Sharing their stories and experiences of bullying and discrimination through FB can create an amplified voice to reach a wide segment of the population and hopefully create awareness to the public.

For Development Communication and Future Studies

1. More research is needed to determine Facebook's long-term effectiveness in OFC communication.

2. To further develop social marketing and mobilization for OFC communication using FB which nurtures a strong and unified support system, community involvement, and increased awareness. Since FB is characterized by the principle of participatory culture, it particularly compliments social marketing and mobilization efforts to make the community members become aware of the problem, and eventually to take action for the greater good.

3. To continuously work on adapting convergence and present content in a variety of formats, to be delivered on a diverse field of platforms and devices, Digital media like FB should be used as complementary tools to traditional media to better enhance communication for the greater good.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A

Letter of Request to Conduct a Survey

(Date)

Ms. Mildred Maranan
NCF – Executive Director

Dear Ms. Maranan,

Good day!

I am a student of the **University of the Philippines Open University** under the Development Communication Program. I am currently conducting a study entitled: **FACEBOOK AS PLATFORM FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION: ENGAGING USERS IN PROMOTING OROFACIAL CLEFT COMMUNICATION AMONG OFC COMMUNITIES IN RIZAL PROVINCE**. This study aims to determine the potential of Facebook as a platform of communication for OFC programs that will hopefully contribute to OFC-related programs.

In line with this, I am writing to request permission to conduct the study at your institution. Part of the study is to conduct a survey of OFC patients, staff, and volunteers of your good office. The survey process would take no longer fifteen (15) minutes to complete and respondents' profiles will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

I am looking forward to your favorable response to this humble request. Kindly sign below to acknowledge your approval to conduct this study. Thank you so much and more power!

Respectfully,

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz
Researcher

Mildred E. Maranan
Executive Director

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

Parent's Consent Form

(Date)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am a student of the University of the Philippines Open University under the Development Communication Program. I am currently conducting a study entitled: **FACEBOOK AS PLATFORM FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION: ENGAGING USERS IN PROMOTING OROFACIAL CLEFT COMMUNICATION AMONG OFC COMMUNITIES IN RIZAL PROVINCE**. This study aims to determine the potential of Facebook as a platform of communication for OFC programs that will hopefully contribute to OFC-related programs.

In line with this, I am writing to request permission to allow your child to participate in this study, which will involve filling out a survey that would take no longer fifteen (15) minutes to complete. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If you and/or your child choose not to have your child participate or choose to withdraw your child from the study, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study will be published and/or presented, rest assured that the child's profile will not be used nor will any identifying information be shared.

I am looking forward to your favorable response to this humble request. Kindly sign the below authorization to acknowledge your approval.

Respectfully,

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz
Researcher

I hereby authorize _____ to participate in the survey described above. My signature below indicates that I DO AGREE TO ALLOW my child to participate in this study.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

ANNEX C

Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the University of the Philippines Open University under the Development Communication Program. I would like to request your participation to be part of my study entitled: **FACEBOOK AS PLATFORM FOR HEALTH COMMUNICATION: ENGAGING USERS IN PROMOTING OROFACIAL CLEFT COMMUNICATION AMONG OFC COMMUNITIES IN RIZAL PROVINCE.**

The study aims to: 1. determine FB's potential as a platform of communication for OFC programs. 2. identify the unique characteristics of FB in promoting the OFC program. 3. determine how this characteristic influence or affect member's behavior and health outcomes.

Rest assured that your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purposes of this study.

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz
Researcher

Pangalan: _____

Edad: _____

Tirahan (Brgy. & Town): _____

Kasarian: _____

1. Pasyente ka ba o kapamilya ng pasyente?

___ pasyente

___ kapamilya/kamag-anak

___ others, pls. specify _____

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

2. Ano ang natapos mo?

___ elementarya

___ sekundarya/high school

___ kolehiyo/college

___ graduate school

___ others, pls. specify _____

3. May trabaho o wala? _____

4. Kung meron, magkano ang iyong buwanang kita?

___ 10,000 pababa

___ 10,001-15,000

___ 15,001-20,000

___ 20,001-25,000

___ 25,001-up

___ others, pls. specify _____

5. I-rank o pagsunod-sunurin ang mga sumusunod na medium base sa halaga nito sa iyo. Isa (1) bilang pinakamahalaga?

___ telebisyon

___ radyo

___ dyaryo/magazine

___ internet

___ others, pls. specify _____

6. Kapag gamit mo ang medium na internet, ano ang madalas mong ina-access o tinitingnan?

___ Facebook

___ Intsgram

___ Twitter

___ YouTube

others, pls. specify _____

7. May account ka ba sa Facebook?

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

meron

wala

8. Ilang oras ang ginugol mo sa Facebook sa isang araw?

1 oras pababa

1-2 oras

3-4 oras

5-6 oras

7-8 oras

9-10 oras

11-12 oras

others, pls. specify _____

9. Gaano mong kadalas i-access o buksan ang Facebook?

araw-araw

4-6 beses sa isang linggo

2-3 beses sa isang lingo

others, pls. specify _____

10. Saan mo madalas ina-access o binubuksan ang Facebook?

mobile phone

laptop/tablets

personal computer

others, pls. specify _____

11. Saan mo ginagamit ang Facebook?

makakuha ng impormasyon

pakikipagkaibigan/koneksyon

komunikasyon

libangan

online shopping

negosyo/e-commerce

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sundan ang mga celebrities/influencers

others, pls. specify _____

12. Ano ang hinahanap mong impormasyon sa Facebook?

impormasyong pangkalusugan

mga balita/news and current affairs

profile ng Isang tao/grupo

others, pls. specify _____

13. Anong katangian ng Facebook ang nagustuhan mo kumpara sa ibang medium?

madaling ma-access o magamit anumang oras at saan mang lugar

murang paraan sa pagkalap ng impormasyon at pakikipag-usap

mayroon feedback system o maari kang magbigay ng kumento hinggil sa issue

madaling makipag-usap/network/koneksyon

may visual, sound at text ito na nakakatulong sa malinaw na pag-unawa sa mensaheng nais nitong iparating

Maari itong iayos o i-customize base sa mga tao o grupo na nais mong maiparating ang mensahe

others, pls. specify _____

14. Noong mga panahong hindi ka pa aware sa mga organisasyong nabanggit, saan ka kumunsulta para malunasan ito?

lokal na pagamutan (community center/hospital)

pribadong pagamutan _

altematibong manggagamot (faith healers, hilot, etc)

others, pls. specify _____

15. Noong mga panahong hindi ka pa aware sa mga organisasyong nabanggit, saan ka humihingi ng tulong pang-medikal at pinansyal para malunasan ito? _

pamilya/kamag-anak

lokal na pamahalaan

pampublikong pagamutan

others, pls. specify _____

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

16. Alin sa mga sumusunod na organisasyon ang kilala mo?

Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation (NCF)-Philippines

Smile Train Philippines

Operation Smile Philippines

others, pls. specify _____

17. Paano mo ito nalaman?

word of mouth

lokal na pamahalaan/pagamutan

pribadong doctor

social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

posters, flyers, banners, etc

radyo

diyaryo/magazine

telebisyon

others, pls. specify _____

18. Alam mo ba na ang mga organisasyong nabaggit ay may kani-kaniyang Facebook page?

oo

hindi

19. Kung OO, ano ang dahilan kung bakit mo binisita o binibisita ang OFC page na ito?

upang makakalap ng impormasyong pangkalusugan

upang makakuha ng tulong pinansyal at medikal

upang makatulong (volunteer, sponsor)

upang makipag-usap at magkaroon ng koneksyon/network

others, pls. specify _____

20. Saang aspeto nakatulong o nagkaroon ng positibong epekto ang FB page na ito sa iyo? Lagyan ng tsek ang mga items na sa tingin mo ay nakatulong sa iyo.

nagkaroon ako ng malawak napag-unawa at pagtanggap sa OFC

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

___ pinaguhugutan ko ito ng suportang emosyonal at sikolohikal

___ nagkakaroon ako ng "sense of belongingness" o kaibagan/pamilya sa grupong Ito

___ may "sense of empowerment" sa parte ko kapag nakakapagbigay ako ng opinyon ukol sa akin/aming kalagayan

___ nagkaroon ako ng lakas ng loob at nawawala ang aking hiya at takot na mag-open up tungkol sa akin/aming kalagayan

___ others, pls. specify _____

21. May mga negatibo o di magandang karanasan ka ba sa pag-access sa page nila? Lagyan ng tsek ang mga items na sa tingin mo ay negatibo o hindi magandang karanasan dito.

___ nawala ang privacy naming mga pasyente at kapamilya namin

___ naging sanhi ng bullying/tampulan ng tuksuhan

___ madalang sumagot ang admin ng page na ito

___ others, pls. specify _____

22. Bigyan ng grado/rating ang FB page ng mga organisasyong nabanggit base sa naitulong nito sa iyo o satisfaction level mo sa paggamit nito. Isa (1) bilang pinakamataas na grado o rating.

___ (1) very satisfied

___ (2) satisfied

___ (3) moderately satisfied

___ (4) slightly satisfied

___ (5) not satisfied

MARAMING SALAMAT PO!

Lagda

Christine Delos Santos-Cruz

ANNEX D

Photo Documentation During the Survey



The researcher with Ms. Dina and Ms. Margie of NCF-Rizal