# Awareness on Social Media Netiquettes and Online Behavior Among College Students

Jessa Abadilla[1*], Kylah M. Ostia[2] & Markdy Y. Orong[3]

[1-3]*College of Computer Studies, Misamis University, Ozamiz City, Philippines.*
*Corresponding Author Email: jeessaabadilla@gmail.com*[*]

Crossref

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the awareness of social media netiquette and its impact on the online behavior of college students. A survey method was used to gather information from 342 respondents from different departments. According to the results, there is a high degree of awareness (weighted mean of 4.61 overall) and responsible online behavior (weighted mean of 4.60). According to a Pearson correlation analysis, awareness and behavior have a strong positive relationship (r=0.814, p<0.01), meaning that more responsible online interactions are significantly correlated with higher netiquette awareness. These results highlight how crucial it is to promote netiquette education in order to create safer and more civil online environments.

**Keywords:** Social media netiquette; Online behavior; Digital literacy; Ethical communication; Online etiquette; Digital responsibility; Social media awareness; Cyber civility; Respectful communication; Digital interaction; Online safety; Responsible behavior.

## 1. Introduction

The pervasiveness of technology in daily life has raised a special query: How should people conduct themselves online? Another important factor in this problem is etiquette, which is traditionally defined as the protocol of socialized behavior rather than private acts (Paternoster, 2022). Some social rules on new media technologies emerged as the use of smartphones and social media platforms grew and emails became an essential component of formal relationships.

Recently, the term "netiquette" has been used to discuss appropriate behavior that must be practiced in online communications. The term "netiquette," which was coined to describe proper conduct in online communications, is derived from the words "net" and "etiquette." As educational technology has advanced, teaching and learning goals, objectives, and procedures have been constantly evolving. It appears that technology, particularly ICT, has an impact on education and has surely changed the way that people teach and learn. The ability to locate, evaluate, create, and use information responsibly through digital media, communication tools, or networks is known as digital literacy. Over the past ten years, billions of people have actively participated in technological advancement. Social networks are the best example of the digital revolution, which has resulted in a before and after in terms of how people interact and work together. From the original Facebook, YouTube, and Flickr, a new reality has been evolving to become, for instance, a useful tactic in election campaigns. Mobile devices, particularly smartphones, have been the ideal platform for its growth. Today, it is the ideal nexus due to its technical circumstances and quick integration into practically every aspect of life. These days, it is not surprising that the most popular apps when using these mobile devices are Instagram and other apps more related to instant messaging (Soler-Costa, R., & Ostariz, P., et al. (2021)).

College students must acquire fundamental skills appropriate for the information-rich society of the fourth industrial revolution. When students employ a learning strategy in a digital learning environment, it's critical to

consider how digital tools and applications will support the growth of core competencies. Accordingly, this study looked at how students perceive core competencies concerning digital literacy and learning strategies (Kim, 2019).

This study aims to assess college students' awareness of social media netiquette and its impact on their online behavior. It evaluates their understanding and application of netiquette in areas such as respectful communication, ethical content sharing, and adherence to social media rules. Additionally, it seeks to identify common online behaviors and their correlation with netiquette awareness, as well as the factors influencing students' adherence to or disregard for social media netiquette. The study ultimately aims to promote safer and more courteous online interactions by identifying areas for improvement.

College students' online interactions have been significantly impacted by social media's explosive growth, which emphasizes how important it is to comprehend social media netiquette—the guidelines for polite and responsible online behavior. However, a large number of students continue to lack knowledge about proper online conduct, leading to issues like false information, improper communication, and cyberbullying that negatively impact their relationships and digital experiences.

## 1.1. Study Objectives

The research aims to achieve the following objectives:

(1) assess the level of awareness of social media netiquette among college students. (2) analyze the correlation between netiquette awareness and online behavior. (3) examine the factors influencing adherence to social media netiquette. (4) identify common online behaviors in relation to netiquette awareness. (5) recommend strategies for promoting ethical and responsible digital interactions.

The self-reported netiquette awareness and online behaviors of college students in a particular institutional or geographic context are the only focus of this study, and they might not be typical of all students. The results may be influenced by differences in individual experiences, such as prior exposure to social media policies or digital education, and may not accurately represent the general population. Furthermore, using self-reported data may introduce biases because students' perceptions of netiquette may influence how they understand the questions in the survey or interview. The study also notes that as netiquette standards and online conduct change over time, results may become less relevant due to changing social media platforms and trends.

## 2. Methodology

The primary research tool was a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, featuring closed-ended questions. These questions allowed participants to rate their agreement with statements about digital literacy awareness and behavior, covering topics such as knowledge of digital tools, online safety, information evaluation, and responsible digital conduct. The Likert scale facilitated straightforward quantification and analysis, providing clear insights into students' attitudes and behaviors. The study employed a descriptive survey research design, ideal for evaluating college students' digital literacy. This approach offered a comprehensive view of how awareness influences online decisions and actions by enabling the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data.

College students were selected through convenience sampling, targeting those readily accessible on campus. Participants represented diverse disciplines and academic years, providing varied perspectives on digital literacy. The study was conducted at Misamis University, leveraging classrooms, computer labs, and campus common areas for data collection. Students completed the questionnaire online or on paper at their convenience, with faculty assistance ensuring broad participation. Respondents were briefed on the study's goals and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Quantitative data analysis, including descriptive statistics and correlation studies, revealed key patterns and relationships in students' digital literacy awareness and behavior.

## 3. Results and Discussions
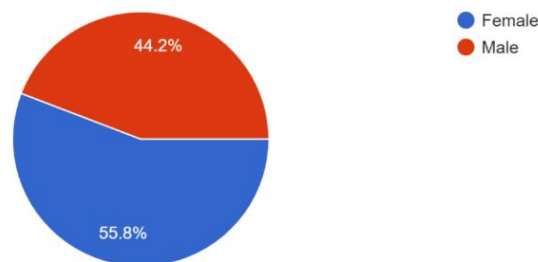


**Figure 1.** Sex Distribution

The data on respondents' sex distribution reveals a nearly balanced representation of male and female participants. Out of 342 responses, 55.8% (191 respondents) are female, and 44.2% (151 respondents) are male. This figure shows the gender distribution of respondents who took part in your study on "Awareness on Social Media Netiquettes and Online Behavior Among College Students." This demographic profile ensures that insights from both groups are recorded for the study by offering a balanced view of responses across genders.
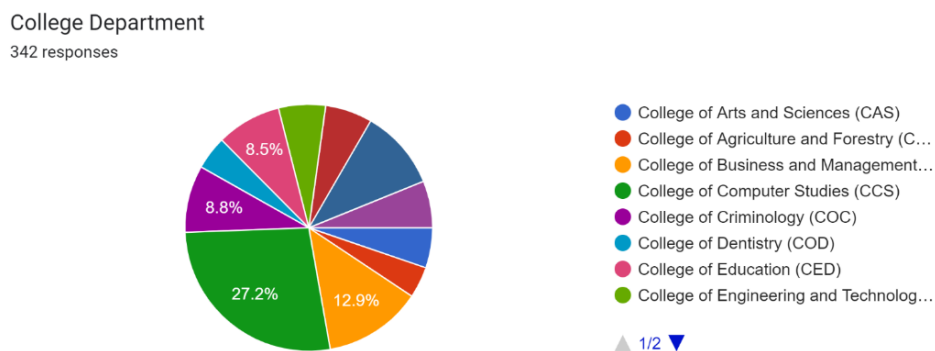


**Figure 2.** Academic Department Distribution

342 participants from a variety of college departments answered the survey. The College of Medical Technology (CMT) was the next most represented, with 12.9%, followed by the College of Nursing, Midwifery, and Radiologic Technology (CNMRT), with 27.2%. Smaller but noteworthy contributions were made by other departments, including the College of Maritime Education (CME), College of Computer Studies (CCS), and College of Engineering and Technology (COET). This cross-disciplinary participation demonstrates the study's comprehensiveness by offering perspectives on online behavior awareness and social media etiquette from a variety of academic backgrounds.

To solicit students' perceptions of Grammarly as an AI tool, responses from 342 respondents who utilized the tool during the course were analyzed. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Awareness (items 1–10) and Behavior (items 1-10). The results for each section are reported separately. The descriptive statistics for the Awareness section, consisting of 8 items, are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Awareness on Social Media Netiquettes and Online Behavior among College Students

| Number | Item | Mean | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I understand what social media netiquette is. | *4.58* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 2 | I have received formal education or training on social media netiquette. | *4.56* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 3 | I know where to find reliable information on social media netiquette. | *4.57* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 4 | I am well-informed about the rules of netiquette. | *4.57* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 5 | Understanding netiquette is essential for using social media responsibly. | *4.65* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 6 | Taking breaks from social media can enhance my well-being and help prevent burnout. | *4.66* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 7 | I understand the importance of sharing content mindfully to respect global diversity and cultural sensitivities. | *4.65* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 8 | I make an effort to verify the credibility of sources before sharing. | *4.62* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 9 | I recognize that acknowledging mistakes online is a demonstration of accountability. | *4.60* | *Strongly Agree* |
| 10 | I am conscious of setting boundaries. | *4.68* | *Strongly Agree* |
| | General Weighted Mean | ***4.61*** | ***Strongly Agree*** |

With an emphasis on statements assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, the table depicted in the image seems to compile survey responses regarding social media etiquette. The Likert scale has a range of "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," and the responses are weighted to indicate how much everyone agrees.

Emphasizing the significance of self-regulation in social media use, the highest mean score of 4.66 indicates respondents' strong agreement with practices that support well-being and help avoid burnout. A possible lack of structured learning opportunities in this area is suggested by the lowest mean score of 4.56, which denotes relatively less exposure to formal education or training on social media etiquette. In spite of this, the total scores indicate a high degree of understanding and support for social media responsibility.

The statements evaluate a number of social media etiquette topics, such as comprehending its tenets, the significance of sharing content responsibly, awareness of diversity around the world, and self-regulation techniques like setting boundaries and taking breaks. The overall weighted mean of 4.61 indicates that respondents

are highly aware of and committed to using social media etiquette responsibly, suggesting that they strongly agree with the statements.

**Table 2.** Online Behavior among College Students

| Number | Item | Mean | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I always credit the sources when sharing content that is not my own. | 4.47 | Strongly Agree |
| 2 | I use respectful and considerate language in my posts and comments. | 4.66 | Strongly Agree |
| 3 | I regularly review my privacy settings to ensure my information is protected. | 4.56 | Strongly Agree |
| 4 | I avoid sharing false or misleading information. | 4.64 | Strongly Agree |
| 5 | I think twice before posting personal information online. | 4.63 | Strongly Agree |
| 6 | I refrain from engaging in online arguments or heated debates to maintain a positive environment. | 4.61 | Strongly Agree |
| 7 | I respect others' opinions, even when I disagree, and respond thoughtfully rather than dismissively. | 4.61 | Strongly Agree |
| 8 | I avoid using all caps in my messages, as it can be perceived as shouting. | 4.51 | Strongly Agree |
| 9 | I take the time to proofread my messages for clarity and professionalism before posting. | 4.62 | Strongly Agree |
| 10 | I am mindful of the tone and context of my messages to ensure they are interpreted as intended. | 4.66 | Strongly Agree |
| | General Weighted Mean | **4.60** | **Strongly Agree** |

The table highlights the online behavior of college students, with all items receiving a "Strongly Agree" interpretation, reflecting high levels of responsible digital conduct. Students' dedication to using polite language and making sure their messages are appropriately toned and interpreted is highlighted by the highest mean scores, 4.66. Other actions that demonstrated careful and cautious online practices, like avoiding misleading information, protecting privacy, and proofreading messages, also received high scores. The overall weighted mean of 4.60 demonstrates that students continuously behave in a considerate and positive manner online in a variety of contexts, encouraging a civil and accountable online community.

The mean values for all items measuring awareness and behavior are high, indicating a strong understanding and practice of responsible digital conduct among respondents. The results are generally positive, but the lowest mean (4.56) was found in formal education or training on social media etiquette, indicating a possible area for improvement. The students' dedication to considerate online conduct is demonstrated by higher-scoring items, such as those pertaining to mindful practices like taking breaks and speaking politely (4.66).

Items that rank in the middle, like avoiding all caps (4.51) and conducting routine privacy checks (4.56), show steady but somewhat different degrees of adherence to online etiquette. The study's focus on moral and considerate online interactions is supported by the overall weighted mean of 4.60, which highlights how well-adjusted and digitally aware all students are.

With a significant p-value of 0 and a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.814, the correlation analysis between behavior and awareness shows a strong positive relationship. This suggests that students who are more aware constantly behave better online, highlighting the crucial role awareness plays in determining behavior. These results show that raising awareness is essential to encouraging students to behave responsibly online. The statistically significant correlation emphasizes how crucial it is to combine educational programs with awareness campaigns to improve comprehension and behavior in the digital sphere.

**Table 3.** Relationship between awareness on social media netiquettes and online behavior among college students

| Variables | r | Interpretation | p-value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Awareness vs Behavior* | *0.814* | *Strong Linear* | *0* | *Significant* |

The relationship between behavior and knowledge of social media netiquette is shown in this table. There is a strong positive linear relationship between awareness and behavior, as indicated by the correlation coefficient (r) of 0.814. The observed relationship is unlikely to be the result of chance, as indicated by the p-value of 0, which indicates that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This implies that people are more likely to behave appropriately if they are more conscious of social media netiquette. Forty-two people made up the sample size for this analysis.

The relationship between students' actual behavior and their awareness of social media netiquette is examined using the Pearson correlation coefficient, which is shown in table 3. The robust positive correlation indicates a close relationship between practice and knowledge, suggesting that social media behavior is significantly influenced by awareness.

## 4. Conclusions

This study concluded that college students are highly aware of social media netiquette, recognizing their importance in fostering responsible and respectful online interactions. The findings revealed that students not only understand netiquette principles, but also actively apply them to their online behaviors, such as respecting opinions, sharing credible information, and maintaining professionalism in digital communication. Netiquette awareness has a strong positive correlation (r = 0.814, p < 0.05) with behavior, indicating its significant impact on promoting ethical and mindful online practices.

## 5. Recommendations

Based on these findings, colleges and universities should incorporate social media netiquette education into their curricula to help students develop greater digital responsibility. Regular workshops and awareness campaigns can help you gain practical knowledge on topics like content verification, cultural sensitivity, and personal information

protection. Institutions should also provide reliable digital etiquette resources and promote peer-led initiatives to foster a collaborative learning environment. Regular monitoring and evaluation of these programs will help identify areas for improvement, ensuring their continued relevance and effectiveness. These measures will not only raise awareness among students, but will also foster a culture of safe, ethical, and respectful digital interactions.

## Declarations

### Source of Funding

This study did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not–for–profit sectors.

### Competing Interests Statement

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

### Consent for publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

### Authors' contributions

All the authors took part in literature review, analysis, and manuscript writing equally.

## References

[1] Paternoster, A. (2022). Historical etiquette. Etiquette Books in Nineteenth-Century Western Cultures, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

[2] Soler-Costa, R., Lafarga-Ostáriz, P., Mauri-Medrano, M., & Moreno-Guerrero, A.J. (2021). Netiquette: Ethic, education, and behavior on internet—a systematic literature review. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(3): 1212. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18031212.

[3] Kim, K.T. (2019). The structural relationship among digital literacy, learning strategies, and core competencies among South Korean college students. Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 19(2): 3–21.