

CLICK, CREATE, EDUCATE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON REELS AND ONLINE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled “Click, Create, Educate: A Qualitative Study of Reels and Online Engagement Strategies” explored the lived experiences of teachers in creating and using Reels and short-form videos as instructional tools in modern teaching. Anchored on a phenomenological qualitative design, the study sought to describe teachers’ experiences, challenges, personal realizations, and implications for teaching practice in relation to Reels integration. Selected teachers from basic education institutions were interviewed through in-depth, semi-structured conversations. Interview transcripts were analyzed through coding, categorizing, thematic clustering, and meaning units to determine essential insights and meanings emerging from participants’ experiences. Findings reveal that Reels serve as a powerful engagement tool that promotes multisensory learning, increases student attention, and stimulates classroom motivation. Teachers emphasized that Reels encouraged creativity, cultural integration, and innovative instructional strategies, especially in resource-limited settings. However, participants also identified challenges related to limited internet connectivity, content appropriateness, and lack of digital skills, suggesting the need for technical support and training. Teachers also expressed meaningful personal realizations, including enhanced confidence, flexibility, and professional empowerment. Reels further contributed to collaborative practices and the development of supportive professional communities. The study concludes that Reels provide significant potential for democratizing access to innovative instructional media, but their utilization requires institutional support, digital resources, and policy development. Implications for practice include promoting digital literacy, providing offline media access, and strengthening teacher collaboration. Future research is recommended to examine student perspectives, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and explore wider school contexts to strengthen generalization and policy formulation.

Keywords: *Reels, Online engagement, Teachers’ experiences, Phenomenology,*

Digital Pedagogy, Municipality of Magpet, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

As an educator navigating the digital shift in teaching, I have witnessed how the traditional classroom has transformed into a more dynamic, media-rich environment. The surge in online learning platforms and the widespread use of social media have opened new possibilities for engagement, prompting me to explore unconventional tools that resonate with students. One such tool is the use of Reels—short-form videos popularized by platforms like Instagram and Facebook. What once seemed purely for entertainment has begun to find a place in educational spaces, with teachers leveraging its appeal to enhance content delivery and student interaction.

I have seen colleagues creatively explain lessons, provide visual summaries, and even boost classroom morale using these quick, accessible videos. However, this growing trend also raises questions. Are Reels genuinely effective in promoting student engagement and learning, or are they merely a passing trend? How do teachers perceive the educational value and limitations of using Reels in their instruction? What strategies are educators employing to integrate this form of media into their teaching practices? Most importantly, how do these perceptions shape the future of online engagement in education?

General Background

The integration of digital media into education has accelerated globally, with short-form video platforms like Instagram Reels and TikTok emerging as innovative tools for enhancing student engagement. These platforms offer

educators novel avenues to present content in dynamic and relatable formats, aligning with students' digital consumption habits. However, the adoption of such tools also raises ethical considerations. For instance, a 2022 article in *Wired* highlighted the complexities teachers face when using TikTok, including concerns about student privacy and the need for clear guidelines to navigate the professional use of social media in educational settings

Moreover, the rapid integration of digital technologies into education has transformed traditional teaching methodologies, prompting educators to explore innovative tools to enhance student engagement. Among these tools, short-form video content, particularly Instagram Reels, has gained prominence for its potential to facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences. Reels, characterized by brief, visually appealing videos, offer educators a platform to present information in a concise and captivating manner, aligning with students' evolving media consumption habits.

Furthermore, these platforms offer educators innovative avenues to present content in concise, engaging formats that resonate with today's learners. For instance, Chadafi and Khasanah (2024) demonstrated that utilizing Instagram Reels significantly improved students' English speaking skills, highlighting the platform's potential in language instruction. Similarly, Fadhlillah et al. (2024) found that Instagram Reels effectively enhanced students' lexical knowledge, emphasizing the role of creative digital media in vocabulary acquisition.

Recent studies have highlighted the educational benefits of utilizing Reels in classroom settings. For instance, Dewi et al. (2023) found that incorporating

Instagram Reels into teaching strategies significantly enhanced students' speaking skills and self-confidence, demonstrating the platform's efficacy in language learning contexts. Similarly, Saputri (2021) emphasized that Reels can serve as powerful teaching tools, enriching the educational process by adding depth and meaning to the content delivered. These findings underscore the potential of Reels to foster active learning and improve educational outcomes.

In the ASEAN region, the shift towards online learning has prompted educators to explore various digital platforms to maintain student engagement. A study conducted in the Philippines examined how university teachers navigate social networking sites (SNS) in fully online spaces. The research, grounded in activity theory, revealed that teachers' adoption of SNS for online teaching is influenced by institutional policies, peer interactions, and the affordances of the platforms themselves. This underscores the importance of contextual factors in shaping educators' perceptions and utilization of digital tools for engagement (Barrot, J. & Acomular, D., 2022).

In the Philippine context, Dugho and Sumayo (2025) explored the use of Facebook Reels in developing viewing skills among English language students at a state university. Their findings indicated that students perceived Facebook Reels as an engaging and accessible tool for learning, which positively influenced their comprehension of grammar lessons. These studies collectively underscore the growing recognition of short-form videos as valuable educational resources.

Despite the promising outcomes associated with Reels, the integration of such platforms into educational settings raises important considerations regarding

ethical practices and institutional policies. As highlighted by Sharkey (2022), educators must navigate the complexities of student privacy and content appropriateness when utilizing social media tools like TikTok, which shares similarities with Reels. This underscores the necessity for clear guidelines and professional development to ensure responsible and effective use of these digital platforms in teaching.

Local Context of the Study

In the Municipality of Magpet, located in the province of North Cotabato, the education sector has undergone significant transformation in response to the evolving digital landscape. As a rural municipality, Magpet is characterized by a mix of urban and remote barangays, where access to technology and the internet varies widely among schools and households. Despite these challenges, teachers in the area have shown adaptability and resourcefulness in incorporating digital tools to support learning continuity, especially during the shift to remote and blended learning modalities prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Educators in Magpet have begun to explore creative methods of teaching that resonate with learners who are increasingly exposed to social media platforms. With many students actively engaging with Facebook and other video-based platforms, teachers have recognized the potential of short-form videos—such as Reels—as an educational medium that not only entertains but also informs. While the use of Reels as a formal teaching tool is still emerging in local public and private schools, anecdotal evidence and informal feedback from teachers suggest a

growing interest in integrating these digital resources to increase student motivation and participation.

However, the implementation of such strategies is not without its difficulties. Schools in Magpet continue to face limitations in terms of infrastructure, including unreliable internet connectivity, lack of devices, and limited digital training for educators. These barriers often hinder teachers from fully embracing technology-enhanced learning, despite their willingness and creativity. Additionally, while some educators are digitally fluent, others—particularly in far-flung areas—may still require capacity building and professional development to effectively navigate new tools like Instagram Reels or Facebook Reels.

The cultural and contextual realities of Magpet, such as language diversity, economic disparities, and varying levels of media exposure, further shape how digital engagement strategies are perceived and applied by teachers. There is a pressing need to understand how educators in this municipality interpret the role of digital content, especially Reels, in their pedagogical approaches. Understanding their perceptions can shed light on the feasibility, effectiveness, and appropriateness of integrating such tools in rural classroom settings.

Conducting this study in Magpet is both timely and relevant, as it can serve as a basis for localized interventions and training programs tailored to the needs of teachers in rural municipalities. It can also provide insights for educational leaders and policymakers to develop strategic support systems that will empower teachers to utilize technology not only for compliance with national directives but

as a meaningful part of their instructional design. Ultimately, this study aims to amplify the voices of Magpet educators and contribute to the broader discourse on digital innovation in Philippine education.

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of teachers in creating and using reels and online engagement strategies?
2. What challenges encountered by teachers while using Reels for education?
3. What meanings and insights may be derived from their lived experiences regarding reels and online engagement strategies?
4. What are the implications of the essential insights for teachers, educational institutions, and the broader field of education in enhancing and using reels and online engagement strategies?

Significance of the Study

This study may be significant to the following:

Educational Institutions. It sheds light on the growing relevance of digital content creation and social media tools like Reels in modern teaching. By understanding how these tools are perceived and utilized by teachers, institutions can better align their technological initiatives and curricular developments with current trends in digital pedagogy. The insights gained can serve as a basis for promoting innovative and student-centered learning environments that embrace 21st-century skills.

School Administrators. Provides essential information on how to support and manage the integration of social media-based engagement strategies within educational settings. It can inform the creation of guidelines, training programs, and infrastructure that empower teachers to use Reels effectively while maintaining professionalism and safeguarding student welfare. Administrators can use the findings to develop a balanced approach that encourages creativity while upholding institutional values.

Teachers. The study offers insights into best practices, challenges, and opportunities for using short-form video content in instruction. It empowers educators to reflect on and enhance their digital teaching strategies, fostering increased student engagement and a more dynamic learning atmosphere.

Learners. Learners also benefit from this study, as it ultimately aims to improve their educational experience. The use of engaging digital content like Reels can make learning more relatable, accessible, and enjoyable. When teachers are equipped with effective online engagement strategies, students are more likely to stay motivated, retain information, and actively participate in their learning journey. This contributes to a more inclusive and modern educational experience that meets the needs of today's digitally native learners.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses on exploring teachers' perceptions regarding the use of Reels and other short-form video tools as online engagement strategies in educational settings. Specifically, it examines how teachers understand,

experience, and implement these tools in their teaching practices, as well as the perceived effectiveness of such strategies in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. The scope of the study is limited to basic and elementary education teachers within selected public schools who have had exposure to or experience in using Reels or similar digital content platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook.

The study is delimited to teachers' perspectives only and does not include the direct evaluation of student performance or engagement metrics. It does not cover all forms of social media or digital content, focusing solely on Reels and comparable short-form video tools. Additionally, the study does not intend to evaluate the technical aspects or platform algorithms but rather centers on pedagogical relevance and teacher-driven practices. The results are based on responses collected during a specific time frame and may not fully represent future developments in digital education trends or technologies.

The number of people participating in the study (20) is very small. Larger groups of participants can produce different or additional themes. In addition, data for this study collected to public elementary school teacher in the Municipality of Magpet with two or more teaching experience in using Reels or similar digital content platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. And another limitation is that no validated commercial instrument was available for obtaining participants experiences in using reels and online engagement strategies;

therefore, the researcher will develop interview guide questions. Results of the study are limited by how participants interpreted interview questions.

Operational Definition of Terms

Reels. *Reels* refer to short-form video content typically ranging from 15 to 90 seconds, created and shared on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. These videos often include music, text overlays, transitions, and visual effects that make them engaging and visually appealing. For the purpose of this research, Reels are viewed as tools that teachers use to deliver educational content, promote interaction, and capture students' attention in a digital learning environment.

Online Engagement Strategies. *Online engagement strategies* in this study pertain to the various digital techniques and methods teachers use to maintain students' interest, motivation, and active participation in virtual or blended learning settings. These strategies may include the use of multimedia, gamification, interactive activities, and specifically, short-form video content like Reels. The focus is on how these strategies are implemented by teachers to foster communication, collaboration, and involvement among learners in online or technology-integrated classrooms.

Teachers Using Reels. *Teachers using Reels* refers to educators who integrate short-form video creation into their teaching practices for instructional or engagement purposes. This includes teachers who either create original Reels for educational delivery, encourage students to produce content as part of class activities, or incorporate existing Reels to supplement lessons. The term, as used

in this study, emphasizes the active role of teachers in adopting this social media feature as a pedagogical tool to enhance digital interaction and student engagement.

Lived Experiences. *Lived experiences* refer to the firsthand, personal accounts of individuals' experiences and the meanings they ascribe to them, often explored in qualitative research through interviews and narratives (van Manen, 1990). Lived experiences specifically pertain to the firsthand accounts of elementary teachers regarding their perceptions in creating and using Reels in teaching.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the research methodology that was used by the researchers in gathering the data.

The Methods as Used in Human and Social Science

This study used a qualitative exploratory design widely used to investigate complex social phenomena, human experiences, and emerging issues. This

method is particularly effective when limited prior research exists on the topic, making it suitable for gaining in-depth insights and discovering new patterns or perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), qualitative exploratory studies focus on understanding participants' lived experiences, thoughts, and perceptions through open-ended inquiry. This approach allows researchers to explore phenomena in their natural settings without manipulating variables, which is essential for capturing the complexity of human behavior and social interactions. In the context of reels and online engagement strategies, the exploration design is appropriate for examining teachers' perceptions on using reels and online strategies in teaching.

The qualitative exploratory design is characterized by flexibility and open-ended inquiry, making it ideal for exploring new or under-researched topics. As noted by Yin (2020), this design involves gathering rich, descriptive data through interviews, focus groups, and observations. In classroom management research, this method enables the collection of detailed narratives from teachers, allowing researchers to uncover emerging themes and patterns related to using reels and online engagement strategies in teaching.

Exploratory research design involved many qualitative data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques. In-depth interviews are one-to-one interviews with the participants while focus group involves a group of 15-20 respondents in a congenial settings, like that of a very limited number of teachers using reels in teaching in the municipality. The study

will be conducted in public elementary schools in the Municipality of Magpet, Division of Cotabato.

Selecting My Co-Researchers

The research participants of the study were public elementary teachers of Municipality of Magpet under the Schools Division of Cotabato. Co-researchers are purposefully selected based on their relevance and direct experiences with the phenomenon being explored—using reels and online engagement strategies. According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative exploratory research as it allows the researcher to intentionally select participants who can provide rich, meaningful insights into the topic. Therefore, the co-researchers in this study consist of elementary teachers who actively engage in creating reels and online strategies.

Their firsthand experiences with creating reels, and online engagement strategies make them well-suited to contribute valuable perspectives to the research. This study will use a purposive sampling since this study covered only the teachers' creating reels as respondents. Since there were only twenty (20) elementary teachers that used and created reels, complete enumeration of all the names was adapted and was included to be participants.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations are significant in the design of this research study. The researcher considered several ethical issues about the research participant in this fieldwork. Ethical considerations can be specified as one of the

most important parts of the research. The researcher needs to adhere to promote the aims of the research imparting authentic knowledge, truth and prevention of error.

Social Value. The study is able to present valuable information that guided teachers to improve or adjust the use of reels and online engagement strategies in teaching. With the findings of the study, they will become aware of the need to conduct different training, workshops and seminars to improve the use of reels and online engagement strategies.

Informed Consent. The researcher asked the permission of participants through written consent. They are properly informed about the purpose of the study and understand the reason for their participation so that they can choose to participate or not. It made clear that participants' involvement in the study is voluntary and when they refuse, they are not forced by the researcher. Moreover, the researcher is cautious to assure the participants' psychological well-being.

The researcher informed the participants that the study aims to explore their perceptions on creating and using reels and online engagement strategies. They are made to understand that they are the most qualified and credible informants for the study. They will also be properly oriented towards the methods to be used in which they will participate, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Lastly, they are assured that their identity will be kept confidential and will not be revealed in the presentation and analysis of the findings.

Vulnerability of Research Participants. Although the participants in this study can decide for themselves whether to be involved or not, the researcher acknowledges the professional vulnerability of teachers, particularly in relation to their digital exposure. To address this, the researcher assures that the participants' identities will remain strictly confidential and that stronger measures will be applied to anonymize context-specific identifiers, such as avoiding the mention of specific schools, classes, or other details that may indirectly reveal their identity. This guarantees that participants are protected from the possibility of being identified.

Risks, benefits, and Safety. For the safety of the participants and their psychological and social well-being, the researchers explained the effects and importance of the research. The results of the study are believed to have left a positive impression on the participants. Time is also crucial in the study for it require the participants to apportion time from their personal and professional obligations. Consequently, the researcher will make certain that conducting the survey in-depth interviews are set at the participants' convenience. Another risk of this research is to disclose experiences that may be considered unpleasant or unwelcome, and experiences that are disappointing or demoralizing for others. In this case, investigators will deal with their emotional state considerately and sincerely and will take corresponding actions.

Furthermore, the results, discussions, and findings from this study may also spark evidence-based information which can be used by policy makers, school administrators, and teachers. School administrators as well may find this study as a reference material in making productivity improvement of the teacher. Likewise,

scholars and future researchers can benefit from this research as a way of providing them ideas for their future research endeavors.

Privacy and Confidentiality. With regards to the participants' right to privacy, the researcher is expected to secure all records and not allowed to release any information that could expose the specific identity to the participants. In presenting the results, the researcher refrained from revealing the names of the participants. In cases where participants opt to withdraw their statements or their participation from the study, the researcher was readily allowing the request. The researchers were conscientious in asking questions and using language that will be fair and free of bias. The researcher is also compelled to orient her research assistants, documenters, transcribers on the terms and conditions of privacy and confidentiality observed in this study. According to the 2012 Data Privacy Act, participants are convinced that data cannot be traced back to them and that they are the real source of information to protect their identity.

Justice. The researcher is impartial in choosing the participants of the study. Nobody will be disregarded and anybody who fits the qualifications of a elementary teacher creating and using reels in teaching were possible participants in the study. All participants are treated equally regardless if they participated in the study. To compensate for the time spent during data gathering, the researcher gave tokens of appreciation to all participants.

Meanwhile, the results, discussions, and findings from this study can be used by policy makers, school administrators, and teachers. School administrators

as well may conduct seminars, training's and workshop to address teachers challenges creating and using reels and online engagement strategies. Likewise, scholars and future researchers can benefit from this research as a way of providing them ideas for their future research endeavors.

Transparency. The researcher safeguards the proper implementation of the methods that were used in the study. The researcher included all the necessary documents that support data analysis and give the readers access to read through these in order to gain a better understanding of the results and findings of the study. Further, the findings discussed in a comprehensively especially information that may have an effect in the presentation of the results to give importance to transparency. Lastly, the researcher describe the extent of her involvement and how she maintain objectivity in analyzing data and presenting the results of the study.

Qualification of the Researcher. The researcher recognizes her limited exposure to the qualitative approach. Consequently, she seek direction and advice from her mentor and panelists, as well as peers who are proficient in this method. Further, she is guided by these experts to implement the method properly to be able to gather the needed data for the intended purpose. She is also made exposure moral courage, societal understanding, culture, sensitivity, professionalism and integrity in all stages of the study.

Adequacy of Facilities. The researcher ensured the availability and accessibility of needed facilities in this study. Library and internet resources are

available for further readings and references to deepen and strengthen analysis and interpretation of data gathered. Audio recorders, camera, and other materials needed are available. Finally, the group of experts provided valuable comments and suggestions to help researchers conduct research and exchange results.

Community Involvement. The researcher is committed to respect the community, especially the teachers and administrators of elementary schools. All activities done are subject to the permission of School Administrators / School Heads/ Program Coordinators and the faculty members as well. Through this study, the involvement of these stakeholders generated information that were beneficial to their current practices in preparing the next generation leaders in their schools through their perception on succession planning and develop a better appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of leaders who become influential and promote common good within and beyond their context. Furthermore, the findings were disseminated to all school stakeholders for the purpose of information and awareness which can be used for school improvement plan or formulation of enhancement program.

Gathering of Lived Experiences

The researcher will secure approval for the study from the dean of graduate education, the chairperson, the research coordinator, the researcher's adviser, Schools Division Superintendent, District Supervisors and the head of the schools. The researcher instructed the participants to take part in the interview using a validated guide questionnaire. After they have indicated that they are willing to

participate in the study, each participant will receive an in-depth interview in person. The six (6) month collection period will run from May 2025-October 2025.

Following data collection, the recorder responses will undergo transcription, coding, and categorization analysis. The researcher will then send her adviser the data she has gathered for analysis and interpretation.

The data from the in-depth interview will be analyzed by the researcher using thematic analysis. The researcher combined various themes to create a logical whole. When deriving meaning from text, comparisons of meanings and themes produced from the original data were helpful. The researcher was cautious and considerate throughout this phase, taking nothing from granted. Findings will be significant, so it was necessary to carefully identify the emerging theme. Outlining the meanings that were implicit in the interpreted experiences was the goal of writing up the themes. As this stage, findings were written and revised. Most of the time, it took more than one word to convey the meaning correctly, and the writing was important.

The use of thematic analysis, particularly inductive coding, to identify meanings, organize them into patterns, and write themes related to the study's purpose and context helped to summarize the study's findings.

Process of Doing Phenomenology

Changes in the design, sampling techniques, and research participants may be anticipated methodology problems.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The term “trustworthiness” refers to a data analysis level of quality. In qualitative studies, credibility, transferability, conformability, and dependability are established.

The researcher will approach the schools permission in order to ensure transferability, in order to guarantee conformability, the researchers’ interview was audio-recorded, and notes were taken to ensure that no information would be lost during further analysis and interpretation. The Vivo coding system will be used by the researchers to ensure consistency during data collection and analysis in order to establish the study’s dependability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Experiences in Creating and Using Reels in Education

Reels as an Engagement Tool

Teachers consistently described Reels as highly engaging instructional materials that instantly capture students’ attention. Several respondents shared that students showed excitement and amazement when Reels were introduced, especially in classes where videos were uncommon. They had these statements:

“My students were amazed because they rarely see videos in class”

IDI_P1

“Reels became my way to bring the world into our classroom. My students learned about things they’ve never seen before like airplanes and oceans. It helps them dream bigger.” IDI_P3

Teachers observed improved participation, with students singing along, reacting emotionally, and paying closer attention to lessons. These experiences demonstrate how short-form multimedia enhances multi-sensory learning. This aligns with Ibrahim & Mutalib (2020), who found that visual-auditory stimuli significantly increase learner motivation and retention.

Technology as an Equalizer in Education

Teachers shared that Reels helped bridge educational gaps, particularly in rural and resource-limited classrooms. Even with limited internet connectivity, they found ways to provide students with access to engaging lessons. They had these statements:

“I download and show them offline.” IDI_P2

“Reels make lessons come alive even in a remote classroom.”

IDI_P4

“Using Reels has made my teaching more modern. Even in the mountains, I can use technology for learning. It bridges the gap between rural and city education.” IDI_P20

These findings highlight the potential of technology to democratize learning opportunities. Lestari (2020) emphasized that digital tools, when adapted creatively, can equalize education across diverse school settings.

Cultural Integration in Learning

Teachers indicated that Reels allowed the integration of local songs, language, and culturally familiar visuals into lessons, making content more relatable and meaningful. They had these statements:

“My students even sing along because the song is familiar to them.”

IDI_P8

“They can relate better when the Reel uses local culture.” IDI_P3

“I once showed a Reel about saving nature, and it encouraged the children to plant trees around the school. It was inspiring to see how media can drive action.” IDI_P18

These experiences show that culturally relevant content increases student engagement and understanding. Sari & Wahyudi (2021) reported that localized digital materials help learners connect with lessons more effectively.

Innovative Pedagogical Strategies

Teachers shared that creating and using Reels encouraged them to explore innovative teaching approaches and experiment with multimedia storytelling. They had these statements:

“Using Reels makes the lesson fun and interactive.” IDI_P1

“Reels became my way to bring the world into our classroom. My students learned about things they’ve never seen before like airplanes and oceans. It helps them dream bigger.” IDI_P3

“It encourages me to think of new ways to explain concepts visually.”

IDI_P6

These findings reflect the shift toward more modern pedagogical strategies. Ferrer et al. (2020) noted that digital tools stimulate creativity and open opportunities for varied instructional approaches.

Table 1. Themes and Core Ideas on what are the participants experiences in creating and using Reels as an educational strategy

Themes	Core Ideas
Reels as an Engagement Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student attention • Boost excitement and motivation • Enhance participation
Technology as an Equalizer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multimedia access in rural/resource-limited areas • Bridge educational gaps
Cultural Integration in Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate local songs and visuals • Connect lessons to students’ culture and context
Innovative Pedagogical Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage creativity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote experimentation in teaching• Adopt modern instructional approaches
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Challenges Encountered Using Reels for Education

Digital Divide Effects

Teachers highlighted technological limitations, such as poor internet connectivity, limited device memory, and lack of access to updated devices. They had these statements:

“The biggest challenge is the lack of internet signal.” IDI_P2

“Sometimes my phone does not have enough memory to save the Reels.” IDI_P5

“We often have to go to town just to download videos.” IDI_P7

These barriers illustrate the ongoing digital divide in education. Tarrayo et al. (2021) emphasized that technology inequity affects effective integration of digital tools in classrooms.

Content Safety and Appropriateness

Teachers were concerned about exposure to inappropriate or irrelevant content on social media platforms. They had these statements:

“Not all Reels are appropriate for young learners. I must carefully choose and review each one. It takes a lot of preparation time.”
IDI_P4

“I worry about exposure to non-educational content.” IDI_P6

“I have to watch every Reel before using it in class.” IDI_P8

These findings underscore the need for content curation. Obar & Oeldorf-Hirsch (2020) noted that teachers must filter digital content to prevent exposure to harmful material.

Need for Teacher Training and Digital Skills

Teachers noted challenges in video creation, editing, and time management due to limited technical skills. They had these statements:

“Creating Reels takes me hours sometimes.” IDI_P1

“I’m still learning how to use editing apps. Creating Reels takes me hours sometimes. But I know I’ll get better.” IDI_P15

“I wish there was training on making educational Reels faster.”

IDI_P5

These findings indicate the importance of digital literacy development. Arslan (2020) emphasized that training enhances teachers’ competence and reduces production time.

Engagement Versus Distraction Balance

Teachers expressed that while Reels increase excitement, they may also distract students if not properly managed. They had these statements:

“Sometimes the students get too excited and lose focus.” IDI_P2

“It’s hard to balance fun with the actual lesson.” IDI_P6

“I find it challenging to capture my students’ attention beyond the entertainment part. Many of them view Reels only as a form of fun,

not as a learning tool. I must carefully choose or create educational content that's both engaging and informative. Balancing entertainment and education in such a short clip can be difficult."

IDI_P20

These experiences align with Mora (2021), who reported that multimedia integration must be intentional to avoid overstimulation and off-task behavior.

Table 2. Themes and Core Ideas Challenges Encountered while Using Reels in Education

Themes	Core Ideas
Digital Divide Effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor internet connectivity • Limited device availability • Storage constraints
Content Safety and Appropriateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of inappropriate or irrelevant content • Need for careful content selection
Need for Teacher Training and Digital Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of editing skills • Time-consuming video creation • Need for technical support
Engagement Versus Distraction Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may get overly excited • Difficulty maintaining lesson focus

Personal Meanings and Realizations from Using Reels

Empowerment Through Innovation

Teachers expressed a sense of pride and professional growth when using Reels. They had these statements:

“I gained confidence in using technology. Before, I was scared to try digital tools, but now I enjoy exploring new ideas. It made me feel like a 21st-century teacher.” IDI_P8

“I discovered that I can be creative in simple ways like combining songs, visuals, and storytelling. I’ve also become more expressive and confident in explaining lessons clearly, even in short videos.”

IDI_P1

“I feel empowered to try new methods in my teaching.” IDI_P5

These experiences reflect how digital tools enhance teacher self-efficacy. Dogan (2021) highlighted that technology fosters professional confidence and innovative identity.

Enhanced Interaction and Engagement

Teachers shared that Reels strengthened emotional connections and interaction with students. They had these statements:

“It built stronger bonds in the classroom.” IDI_P2

“I’ve realized that students are more engaged when lessons are visual and interactive. Using REELS as a reference has helped me

see how technology can make learning more enjoyable and meaningful.” IDI_P5

“It makes teaching more interactive and enjoyable.” IDI_P6

These findings support Wong (2022), who emphasized that digital storytelling could deepen teacher-student engagement.

Adaptive Teaching Practices

Teachers noted that Reels required flexibility, patience, and adjustment to unexpected challenges. They had these statements:

“Using Reels taught me to be more patient and flexible.” IDI_P3

“I learned to adjust quickly when the device or internet fails.” IDI_P5

“Sometimes I have to improvise, which made me a better teacher.”

IDI_P7

Trust & Whalen (2020) support these findings, emphasizing that digital teaching environments require adaptive and reflective practices.

Expanding Professional Networks

Teachers indicated that creating and sharing Reels encouraged collaboration and community building among colleagues. They had these statements:

“Collaboration makes teaching lighter and more fun.” IDI_P1

“We share Reels in our group chat to help each other.” IDI_P4

“I learn new techniques from my fellow teachers.” IDI_P6

Cabero-Almenara et al. (2021) noted that digital collaboration fosters professional support and knowledge-sharing.

Table 3. Themes and Core Ideas Personal Meanings and Realizations from Using Reels

Themes	Core Ideas
Empowerment Through Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel more confident and capable • Sense of professional growth • Adoption of modern teaching identity
Enhanced Interaction and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger teacher-student connection • Increased classroom participation • Emotional engagement with students
Adaptive Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in handling technical issues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience and problem-solving • Adjusting teaching strategies as needed
Expanding Professional Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with colleagues • Sharing resources and ideas • Strengthening professional support

Implications for Teaching Practice and Education Community

Democratizing Education Through Technology

Teachers highlighted that Reels help provide equal learning opportunities, particularly for students in underserved areas. They had these statements:

“Teachers in rural schools can be as innovative as those in cities.”

IDI_P2

“Reels give our students access to modern learning tools.” IDI_P5

“Even without internet, my students can experience a tech-based lesson.” IDI_P7

These findings are consistent with UNESCO (2021), which emphasizes that digital tools reduce educational inequality when adapted responsibly.

Institutional and Policy Support

Teachers stressed the importance of institutional resources, policies, and training to sustain Reels' integration. They had these statements:

“I believe schools should provide offline educational videos for teachers with poor internet. It would help equalize learning opportunities. Students in remote areas deserve that too.” IDI_P2

“The education sector should create training focused on digital storytelling. Teachers could make Reels that feature local culture and lessons. It would preserve traditions while teaching modern skills.” IDI_P13

“Schools can support by providing digital literacy training, access to strong internet connections, and encouraging teachers to share helpful REELS or online resources with each other.” IDI_P4

Morales (2020) emphasized that policy and administrative support are critical for the successful adoption of digital learning tools.

Future-Oriented Teaching Strategies

Teachers believed that Reels align with current and future learning preferences, especially for visual and tech-savvy learners. They had these statements:

“Reels will continue to shape modern learning.” IDI_P1

“Students learn faster with short and visual content.” IDI_P4

“This is how students will expect lessons in the future.” IDI_P5

Garcia (2022) noted that micro-learning and short-form digital content are increasingly relevant in 21st-century classrooms.

Building Teacher Communities

Teachers highlighted that sharing Reels promoted collaboration, exchange of ideas, and professional community building. They had these statements:

“We help each other by sharing our own Reels.” IDI_P2

“Using Reels united us as teachers.” IDI_P6

“Collaboration in digital content creation strengthens our support system.” IDI_P7

Alvarez (2021) confirmed that collaborative use of digital tools enhances teacher communities and reduces pedagogical isolation.

Table 4. Themes and Core Ideas on Implications for Teaching Practice and Education Community

Themes	Core Ideas
Democratizing Education Through Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalize learning opportunities • Enhance access for underserved students
Institutional and Policy Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide offline resources • Offer training programs • Ensure administrative and policy backing
Future-Oriented Teaching Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align lessons with tech-savvy learners • Support visual and short-form learning • Promote 21st-century pedagogy

<p>Building Teacher Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage collaboration • Share Reels and resources • Strengthen professional learning networks
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Table 5. Summary of Key Analytical Elements per Research Questions

Research Question	Codes	Categories	Themes
<p>1. What are your experiences in creating and using Reels or short-form videos as an educational strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Creativity • Offline use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Innovation • Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reels as Engagement • Tech Equalizer • Culture
<p>2. What challenges have you encountered while</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectivity • Content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Barriers • Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Divide • Content Safety

using Reels for education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitability • Skills 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Skills
3. What personal meanings or realizations have you gained from your experiences with Reels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Flexibility • Interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Growth • Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment • Adaptive Teaching • Collaboration
4. What are the implication of your experience for your teaching practices and the broader education community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity • Support • Digital Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Capacity Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratizing Education • Institutional Support

IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Implication of the Study

The findings of this study illustrate that Reels and short-form videos have the potential to strengthen classroom engagement, support culturally grounded learning experiences, and expand instructional creativity in both urban and rural contexts. These results have implications for educational policy, particularly in promoting access to digital tools across public schools. Since several participants emphasized the lack of connectivity and resources, educational policies must consider allocating funding for offline digital materials, school-based multimedia

repositories, and professional development that equips teachers with digital competencies. However, these implications should be understood within the context of the study, which focused only on selected teachers and may not fully represent all school conditions nationwide.

From a practical standpoint, the integration of Reels suggests that schools should encourage technology-enhanced pedagogies that foster participation and multi-sensory learning. Classroom practice would benefit from guidelines on content filtering, age-appropriate selection, and structured use that balances entertainment and instructional value. The study further implies that schools should provide opportunities for collaboration and sharing of digital materials among teachers, recognizing that participants benefited most when creative and professional exchanges took place. Nevertheless, such recommendations must consider varying school infrastructures and teacher readiness levels.

Theoretically, this study contributes to ongoing discussions on digital pedagogy and media-based learning by providing phenomenological evidence that short-form visual media can shape not only instructional practices but also teacher identity, confidence, and pedagogical self-efficacy. The findings highlight the importance of understanding teachers not simply as content implementers but as digital designers who construct meaningful media-supported learning experiences. These theoretical implications, however, must be interpreted cautiously because this study explored only the lived experiences of a small group of teachers and therefore cannot claim universal application.

Directions for Future Research

Future research should consider examining a wider population of teachers to determine whether the transformative experiences described in this study are consistent across school levels, geographic locations, or subject areas. Studies may explore how learners themselves perceive and respond to Reels in terms of academic performance, motivation, and media literacy. A comparative study between classrooms with high and low digital access may further clarify how technology serves as an equalizer in diverse learning contexts. Additional investigation should also consider quantitative or mixed method approaches to examine the extent to which Reels influence learning outcomes, classroom participation, or students' emotional engagement.

More research is also recommended on developing school-level policies for responsible content usage, copyright, and ethical media sharing, especially when involving minors. Professional development models on digital skill training for teachers may also be designed, tested, and evaluated in future studies. Furthermore, longitudinal research may explore how continuous exposure to Reels shapes long-term teaching identity, instructional habits, and professional collaboration. These directions extend the present findings while acknowledging that the results cannot be generalized beyond the parameters of this qualitative inquiry.

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