



INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON DAILY LIFE OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The use of social media among students has seen unprecedented growth, driven by global communication trends and the surge in using multiple social platforms for education, especially after the pandemic. Social media is rapidly changing how communication occurs in today's society, and its emergence has significantly impacted students' academic lives. Educational institutions and educators are increasingly integrating social media technologies to foster critical thinking, collaboration, and knowledge building among students. The widespread acceptance of social media by higher education institutions has facilitated interactions between students, instructors, and other stakeholders. This study, aimed at exploring the influence of social media on students' academic lives, employed a qualitative approach. Fifty participants were selected through convenience sampling and interviewed over two weeks. The findings highlight the extensive use of social media among higher education students. Furthermore, participants largely agreed that social media positively contributes to the enhancement of their academic experience.

Keywords: Social Media, Higher Education, Online Platforms, Digital Networks, Web-Based Interaction, Cyber Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, technology has played a pivotal role in assisting humanity, creating new avenues for social interaction, teaching, and learning. Social media and networking platforms have a profound influence on the student community in today's modern era, becoming an integral part of daily life. Innovations in information technology are occurring at an ever-increasing pace, often showcased through numerous social media and networking sites. Platforms like Facebook, Messenger, LinkedIn, Twitter, Zoom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp have introduced new forms of communication that are not always directed or reciprocated. Despite this, there is limited discussion about how social media can encourage university students to engage in offline, face-to-face interactions within their campus communities.

The popularity of social media among university students continues to rise, and many rely on these platforms for communication. Virtual communities and virtual learning environments (VLEs) supported by social media promote distributed learning among users (Hussain, 2005). While social media has created numerous opportunities for sharing ideas and emotions, the social support it offers may not always meet students' emotional needs, and its perceived positive effects might be short-lived. Recent studies have examined the potential effects of social media on students' emotional well-being, including stress, anxiety, and depression. This paper reviews key research findings on both the positive and negative impacts of extensive social media



use on students' mental health. The insights gained may be valuable for educators who often overlook the psychological effects of social media. They could benefit from understanding how the excessive use of social media might lead students to develop negative self-images or emotions. These findings have implications for pre- and in-service teacher training programs, as well as for professionals involved in student affairs.

Today, social media serves as a powerful tool for collaboration and knowledge-building among instructors, students, and other stakeholders in the education process. Social media can be defined as "web-based and mobile technologies used to facilitate interactive dialogue among organizations, communities, and individuals." These platforms provide easy and convenient access to information and enable teachers and students to communicate effectively. Teachers can create groups or accounts for students to access educational materials. Social media is not just for global communication but is also an effective means of promoting new ideas and interests..

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Facebook remains the most commonly used platform for communication with students and for other purposes (Mack, Behler, Roberts, & Rimland, 2007).

However, the use of social media depends on available infrastructure and the users' ability to navigate these platforms (Armstrong & Franklin, 2008).

Facebook was predominantly used for maintaining social connections, especially with friends with whom students already had offline relationships. It also served as a platform for developing personal identities and peer relationships (Pempek et al., 2009).

Students were more engaged in off-topic discussions on social media, indicating that these platforms are spaces where students enjoy sharing and discussing non-academic subjects (Arnold & Paulus, 2010).

When businesses engage with individuals via social media, those individuals are more likely to shop with them and respond to promotional offers. However, this research did not identify any academic purpose for using social networking sites (Thoene, 2012).

Some users exhibit inappropriate behaviors such as discourtesy, lack of respect, profanity, or harassment on social media. The ease of sharing explicit, hateful, or discriminatory content without oversight raises concerns about students' full participation and engagement in such platforms (Gurman, 2015).

While there are risks associated with social media, it is crucial to recognize the vast opportunities these platforms offer in enhancing students' learning experiences. Rather than focusing on potential risks, discussions should highlight the potential for expanding the educational landscape through social media (Gurcan, 2015).

Social media usage is rising, with individuals spending an average of two hours per day on various platforms, exchanging pictures, messages, and updates (Abbott, 2017).

Researchers have started investigating the psychological effects of social media on students. According to Chukwuere and Chukwuere (2017), social media can significantly influence individuals' moods. Even passive use of these platforms can alter a person's mood, depending on the content they engage with.

As a result, both positive and negative moods can spread through social media networks (Chukwuere & Chukwuere, 2017). This is increasingly important as students use these platforms more extensively, integrating social media into their daily lives.

The present study aims to investigate students' use of social media in relation to gender, social networking experience, and social networking climate (Alkan & Bardakci, 2017).



One downside of social media is piracy, where users freely upload and share unauthorized content such as movies and TV shows (Kolan & Dzado, 2018).

Social media has become an essential part of students' lives, with its use growing exponentially, particularly in the post-pandemic world, where educational systems have experienced major transformations. Approximately 3 billion individuals globally are now using social media for communication (Iwamoto & Chun, 2020).

Iwamoto and Chun (2020) also describe how students affected by social media posts may develop unrealistic expectations of themselves or others, leading to various emotional outcomes.

3. Methodology

The study employed the following research methods to meet its objectives:

1. Data Collection Instruments: The main tool for data collection was a questionnaire with a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions. This allowed for both quantitative and qualitative insights.
2. Interview Method: Alongside the questionnaires, interviews were conducted to collect in-depth data on student perspectives.
3. Secondary Sources: Information was also gathered from various secondary sources, including university journals, newspapers, and internet resources.
4. Sampling Method: Fifty students were conveniently sampled for the study, focusing on their opinions as the main source of primary data.

4. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to:

- Gain knowledge about the importance of social media.
- Assess awareness of social media tools among students.
- Explore the impact of social media on higher education.
- Investigate the advantages and disadvantages of daily social media usage.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

While the study provides valuable insights into how social media is integrated into students' academic lives, it acknowledges a key limitation—the small sample size of only 50 students, which may affect the generalizability of the results. The findings underscore the need for more research into the psychological effects of social media, as well as the role it plays in both promoting positive academic engagement and potentially contributing to negative emotional states like anxiety and depression.

6. FINDING

The study identified the most commonly used social media platforms among students, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Skype. These platforms were primarily used for academic-related purposes like receiving class schedules, sharing assignments, and communicating with peers and instructors. Notably, students found social media to be an essential tool for managing their academic work, though there were concerns about privacy issues and the risk of inappropriate content.

7. CONCLUSION

The study, centered on the impact of social media on students' academic lives in higher education, concludes that social media is extensively used by students, with all participants engaging with at least one social media platform. The majority of participants acknowledge that social media plays a vital role in enhancing their academic experiences. Findings indicate the widespread use of platforms such as Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp,



YouTube, and LinkedIn for academic purposes. These platforms facilitate various academic activities, including assignment discussions, sharing information related to class schedules and venues, and addressing course-related issues. This observation is consistent with Boyd and Ellison's concept of social media as a tool for fostering connections, exchanging information, and enhancing communication.

The research suggests that social media offers students a new way to engage in everyday activities, allowing them to share real-time feedback and perspectives on different aspects of campus life. However, some concerns are raised about the potential risks associated with social media use, including privacy violations and exposure to inappropriate content. Social media has become an integral part of human communication, entertainment, and other sectors. College students, being part of the younger generation, are active users of these platforms. They use social media through their smartphones for a variety of purposes—education, communication, social interaction, and entertainment. Social media has various impacts on students, both positive and negative.

In certain instances, social media sites are crucial for communicating with others. Moreover, students are more informed about current societal issues through social media and can voice their opinions on these matters. However, while social media has many benefits, there are drawbacks such as time wastage and financial costs. Social media has significant influence over its users, particularly students, who are greatly impacted by it.

In summary, social media has a substantial effect on university students. However, the promises of social support and communication associated with social networking in student life may not always be fully realized in practice. Students may lose self-esteem and gratitude when comparing their lives to the seemingly perfect lives of others on social media, leading to feelings of depression or stress. It's important for students to build self-worth in order to counter the negative effects of superficial social media support. Families, schools, and universities, particularly teachers, must play a key role in assisting students. Counseling programs could be beneficial in raising awareness of the potential psychological risks posed by social media. Given the omnipresence of social media in student life worldwide, it's essential to develop coping strategies to mitigate its harmful psychological effects.

Additionally, it's important to note that the emotional impact of social media should not be universally applied to all students. Instead, these effects must be examined within specific contexts or environments. The emotional experiences of students while using social media are tied to their individual circumstances and interpersonal relationships. This suggests that the same student may experience different emotions at different times while using social media. Therefore, the emotional impact of social media on students cannot be generalized across all individuals in a classroom setting.

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