



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE  
OF THE STUDENTS OF IN A PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITY OF ISLAMABAD

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**Abstract**

*This study explores how social media effects students' academic performance. The last few decades have seen rapid advancement of technology and social change. Emergence of smart phones and social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and various other platforms have effected students, studies around the world. Social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook and Instagram are known to cause procrastination in users, especially the students are affected from social media. The ratio of social media usage is constantly rising in all over the world. Pakistan is no exception to this global issue, the reasons behind this elevated social media usage could be the result of westernization and technological advancement in Pakistan. But it is growing higher and because of it many arenas of life are getting influenced. Researcher seeks to check the impact of social media usage on academic performance. The study was led to determine the effect of use of social media on the academic performance. To check this relationship, researcher has conducted mini thesis in which 150 samples were selected and simple random sampling method was used to collect data. The universe is Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad from where the researcher selected sample and the information was extracted through questionnaire having 15 items that are enough for the required information to check the relationship between social media and academic performance.*

**Keywords:** Social media, Academic Performance, Students, Procrastination, Social Networking Sites (SNS),

**Introduction**

Modern world is known as global village, because the distances among people have been erased partially if not completely through technological advances. These advances also include social media sites that have transfigured the meaning of sociability and friendship. Now people are closely connected together through these networking sites, they can share their voice, messages, photos and videos of their life's moments. The major sources of the social media include Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram etc. These apps of social media are being used in diverse territorial areas among. But here the question arises do they have anything to do with academic performance?

The Internet plays a thoughtful role in the ground of education. The theoretical and radical community has gone through deep revolutions during these years, assuming new measurements partial by technology-driven uses. The tremendous progress in telecommunication has conveyed online facilities, specified electronic networks, Webpages, E-mail, software and global information resources to our family unit as well



as to children. The Internet provides an environment in which loads of people take part and involve in the formation and give-and-take of information which can either be formal or informal.

Academic achievement among learners generally compares to the effort used, and is related to intellectual and ecological issues. Behaviours such as devotion in reading, or excess of means with which to develop basic abilities such as verbal understanding and creation are also an influence. Academic achievement is multidimensional and shaped by variables that are difficult to organize within an exact model. In recent years where usage of social media has increased so far, it has also brought about certain changes in student's academic skills especially the use of slang language has led to many problems. Academic success can be measured from numerous angles: value, for example, categorizing the level of achievement in attainment set aims in a development program, which offers significant information for assessment makers in educational institutions. Therefore, researcher is going to check the influence of social media over academic performance by conducting survey, in which closed ended questionnaire will be used to measure the required comporment.

#### ***Statement of the Problem***

Does social media affects the academic performance of the students of social science of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad? The researcher has tried to analyse whether the use of social media sites play a role in academic performance.

#### ***Objectives of the Study***

The objectives of this research work are as following:

- a. To study the relationship between social media and academic performance
- b. To create a know how about the students tendency towards the social media
- c. To know about the effects of social media on the academic performance
- d. To see how social media influence the life of the students

#### ***Sociological Importance of Study***

Academic performance and social media do descent in the subject matter of the sociology and do have sociological importance when all these are co-related and given an imperative look. It is of no surprise that anything that lay down its influence over more than one individual eventually become a matter of sociological interest. Academic performance of students is in a dynamic state these days as observed by the researcher. It becomes a fact that the use of social media in the contemporary era has become of excessive use. Similarly, the students' performance is also undergoing through evolving phase which are creating numerous changes in society. Thus, social media and academic performance are verily correlated that it furthers to the planning of factors in the social world.

#### ***Literature Review:***

Penetration of social media in almost every pace of life is apparent and this cannot be shorn of on logical ground. This much involvement surely has its influence over multiple errands, but the one that is highly predisposed and of immense importance to researcher is the academic performance of students especially university going students. Students tend to spend their time and energies more in social networking sites that significantly waste their time, which can be measured through their GPA (grade point average). This assumption has been studied in different articles as follows.

Asif and Sandhu (2023) argues that social media has become pervasive in the lives of humans especially, students and teenagers. It has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite long time. Through this teenagers and students can create their persona and display their social life digitally all across the world (Khattak & Asghar, 2024; Shahid & Bushra, 2024).

Mensah and Nizami contends that it's a significant impact on student's academic performance and they fall prey of miss management of time, due to excessive use of these websites that connects individuals online. They tend to spend more time on browsing social media websites lagging behind their education, thus resulting in poor grades. Likewise, another problem that arises is the health degradation, as students engrossed



with social media platform ends up skipping meal which in return leads to several health issues. Such students become malnourished and prone to diseases which have a direct impact over academic performance (Mensah & Nizami, 2016).

Advent of social media websites have opened up new chapters of influence over different walks of life. Major concerns regarding excessive use of social media interferes in performing daily routine tasks, as social media is highly popular among youth therefore casting detrimental effect over academic performances of them. According to the findings of (Alamhar, 2016) Facebook and Facebook messenger are the most popular social media websites among the students of Babylon, Iraq. They checked the CGPA of respondent students who were keen user of social websites and found no correlation between time spent on social media and academic performance.

Owing to technological advancement portable electronic gadgets such as (laptops and mobiles) are easily available at cheap prices and almost everyone can access them. To some of the middle-class student's mobile is the only gadget through which they can build connection to internet either for social networking or for studying purposes. They use social networking sites for raising their voice against current issues prevailing in society. This approachability has led to a current state where students are inseparable from internet. For university going students, these social websites are the primary means of contact, social engagement and communication among friends and relatives. It has been calculated that 85% of young adults (ages 18-19 years old) own a smartphone. It has been proved through studies that use of social media to facilitate learning has a negative effect on study habits, but this incorporation can be made effective through proper training of students and teachers (Bashir et al., 2024; Leyrer-Jackson & Wilson, 2018; Shahid, 2024, March; Shahid et al., 2022).

Hanyun claims that China has the biggest netizen population in the world comprising of 457 million users on internet. Especially youth is quite active in online communication. Approximately 12.1 hours a week are spent online by youth which shows deep penetration of social networking sites in china. This excessive use of social media has atrocious consequences on youngsters. A suicide case of 17 years old boy has been reported in china, because his online girlfriend refused to meet him in daily life (Alizai et al., 2021; Asif, 2021; Asif 2022; Asif et al., 2019; Asif et al., 2025; Asghar et al., 2021; Hanyun, 2011; Rabbani & Bashir, 2022).

Among the general population students and youngsters are those who have strong tendency towards social media which leads to behaviour that harms student's academic career by draining much of their time. These social networking sites are tempting as they offer a lot of entertainment choices alongside of information. Many researches have suggested and proved the negative impact of social media over academic performance but interestingly this is not always the case as per this research suggest a positive impact of social media over studies. Its results proof that the quality of student's work in studies increased through usage of social networking sites (Alwagait et al., 2015; Asif et al., 2023; Giunchiglia et al., 2018).

#### ***Assumptions***

1. Academic performance is affected by penetration of social media.
2. Social media has become quite pervasive in almost everywhere in the world.
3. Social media is excessively used by youth and students.

#### ***Theory of Self Reflexive Identity***

From the viewpoint of Giddens, self is something which is the product of nurture more than nature. It is a reflexive product and individuals incessantly undergo endeavour to modify it and to reach desired results. Thus, a man is not bestowed with certain characteristics that makes up his personality but rather self-identity is a continuous process which is dependent on his life, actions, and influences which makes sense to them. To Giddens's people react creatively to modern commodification culture. Reflexive self is more or less a struggle



against commodified influences. Modernity has also offered many choices to opt lifestyle from, though these choices are limited to common men, but affluent class has plenty of choices and opportunities in this regard.

### ***Application of Theory***

Through this theory of Giddens's it is quite evident that individuals are reflective about their identity and hardly leave any stone unturned in this regard. This modern technological era provides them this opportunity to redefine their identity through social media websites. This creation of identity in turn cast its effect on various facets of life. The aspect of social life about which researcher is interested is academic performance. As students are keenly interested in making and displaying their persona among their acquaintances, they waste much of their time over it, neglecting their duties associated with studies. This ultimately has devastating effect over their academic performance. This research will observe how excessive use of social media impacts academic performances specifically in Quaid-e-Azam university, Islamabad.

### ***Proposition***

Social media impacts academic performances.

### ***Hypothesis H0***

Social media negatively impacts academic performance of the students.

### ***Conceptualization of Social Media***

The words of social media, Mr. Ahn, says. "Social media applications are designed to facilitate interaction and communication through networks." In the same way while it comes to the facilitation of the people around with the notion of the technical approaches, the individual of today is nonetheless having remarks in regards with the interaction and communication.

However Mr. Shepherd Mpofu puts a diverse view in regards with the social media which says that, (2013:119). "The argument made here is that social media have enabled expressions of both popular and unpopular constructions of identity and belonging, in a fashion unimaginable in public media." When it comes to the identification of a self with the loads of loves and fashion that has created a westernized manner in the whole society is the name for the identification.

Furthermore, Patrick R. Mullen (2010:4) gives a more eminent definition of the term that, "Social media is the collection of online platforms that facilitate user-created content and interactive communication between two or more individuals." Whether it an interactive communication or a manner for the dominance and the diffusion of one culture to the other via language exchanges and other means of communicating.

### ***Conceptualization of Academic Performance***

The academic performance is defined by students' reporting of past semester CGPA/GPA and their expected GPA for the current semester. The grade point average or GPA is now used by most of the tertiary institutions as a convenient summary measure of the academic performance of their students. The GPA is a better measurement because it provides a greater insight into the relative level of performance of individuals and different group of student's (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Boyd & Ellison, 2010; Usat, 2022).

The total score or grade points, which is attained by distance learners. It is measured using a trimester's grade point average (GPA) and an academic year's cumulative grade point average (CGPA) (Fatima & Shahid, 2025; Khalid et al., 2016; Khalid & Shahid, 2024; Kithinji, 2022).

As used in the contest of this chapter, the expression academic performance refers to the percentage of marks obtained by the pupils on each of the five compulsory subjects after two terms of study in standard eight class. The overall percentage on five subjects was calculated from this information. Information forms containing columns to enter total marks obtained by the students and the maximum marks on each of the five compulsory subjects were used for the purpose. This information was provided by the school authorities (Asif & Shaheen, 2022; Muthee & Murungi, 2019).



### ***Operationalization of Social Media***

Social media refers to all those websites that connect masses online. This phenomenon has gained much popularity and everyone seems to get affected by it especially students and youth are more prone to this evil. Its excessive use is leading to several upshots. Mismanagement of time, late night surfing and online chatting are leading problems modelling effects on academic performance which is to be checked through this research.

### ***Operationalization of Academic Performance***

Academic performance has various dimensions and can be checked through associated scales. Percentage and grade point average are one of those scopes through which we can take account of academic performance. Time spent on studying and attendance in class are the other factors to judge academic performance of a student.

### ***Research Methodology***

This is a quantitative research in which survey method was used. A questionnaire was designed for the current study to solicit data. Multiple type question was added to check the intensity and frequency of some questions related to behaviour. All the questions were closed ended and no open-ended question was asked in the questionnaire.

### ***Universe***

The universe of this research was somewhat limited to the students of Quaid-e-Azam university MSc students of social sciences only.

### ***Units of Analysis***

Unit of analysis were individual from all departments of social science who were randomly selected.

### ***Sampling Frame***

Sampling frame was the random sampling which was easier for the researcher to collect the data.

### ***Sample Size***

A sample of 150 respondents was studied in the university.

### ***Tool for data collection***

Questionnaire was used for data collection.

### ***Techniques for data collection***

Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents through face to face interaction.

### ***Tools for Data Analysis***

Data were analysed through SPSS.

### ***Ethical Concerns***

The researcher took the respondents in confident and took permission from the respondents before making them fill the questionnaires.

### ***Results and Findings***

The study outcome is that the usage of social media has no impact over academic performance as this has been proved by research. This section presents the findings of the study investigating the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among social science students at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. The analysis of data collected through surveys and questionnaires provides valuable insights into the social media usage patterns and academic experiences of social science students. The analysis of data collected through surveys administered to social science students at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, provides valuable insights into the intricate relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Key findings reveal a nuanced picture, demonstrating that while a significant proportion of students perceive social media as a potential distraction, a considerable number also recognize its potential for academic enhancement. Furthermore, the study uncovered a strong emphasis among students on the



importance of time management and the conscious effort made by many to prioritize academic responsibilities while utilizing social media primarily during their leisure time.

Table 1

Demographics Analysis

Demographics	Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	89	59.33
	Female	61	40.67
Age (years)	18-22	48	32.00
	24-26	51	34.00
	26-30	32	21.33
	Above 30	19	12.67
Education	High School	77	51.33
	Bachelor's Degree	25	16.67
	Master's Degree	33	22.00
	Doctorate Degree	15	10.00
Ethnicity	Punjab	59	39.33
	Sindh	24	16.00
	Baluchistan	10	6.67
	KPK	21	14.00
	Kashmir	16	10.67
	GB	12	8.00

The sample is slightly male-dominated, with 59.33% males and 40.67% females. The majority of participants fall within the 18-26 age range, constituting 66% of the sample. The distribution is relatively young, with only 12.67% of participants being above 30 years old. The highest educational attainment is observed among participants with a High School diploma (51.33%). A significant portion also holds a Bachelor's (16.67%), Master's (22.00%), or Doctorate degree (10.00%). The sample is diverse, with participants from various regions of Pakistan. Punjab has the highest representation (39.33%), followed by Sindh (16.00%), KPK (14.00%), Kashmir (10.67%), Baluchistan (6.67%), and GB (8.00%).

A notable characteristic of the participant pool is its youthful demographic. The majority, a substantial 66%, fall within the 18-26 age bracket, suggesting a strong representation of young adults. This concentration within the younger age groups signifies a potential focus on the perspectives and experiences of this particular demographic within the research context. Conversely, the relatively small proportion of participants aged 30 and above, at only 12.67%, indicates a limited representation of older age groups. This demographic skew towards younger individuals should be considered when interpreting the findings and drawing broader conclusions, as the results may not fully reflect the experiences and viewpoints of older populations.

Table 2

Responses of Item No. 1

Items	Yes	No
Have you ever heard about social media?	150	0

This table presents the responses to a single question: "Have you ever heard about social media?" The second column indicates the number of respondents who answered "Yes" to the question. In this case, all 150 respondents have heard about social media. The last column indicates the number of respondents who answered "No" to the question. In this instance, there are 0 respondents who have not heard about social media. The data in Table 2 suggests that 100% of the surveyed individuals are aware of social media. This finding may not be surprising in today's digital age, where social media platforms are widely prevalent.



Table 3
Responses of Item No. 2

Table with 6 columns: Items, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, SnapChat. Row 1: Which social media are you connected with? (Facebook: 147, Instagram: 124, WhatsApp: 149, Twitter: 29, SnapChat: 80)

This table presents the responses to the question: "Which social media are you connected with?". The numbers in each column represent the number of respondents who indicated they are connected with that particular platform.

Facebook and WhatsApp seem to be the most widely used platforms among this group of respondents. Twitter and Snapchat have a relatively smaller user base compared to Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram.

Table 4
Responses of Item No. 3

Table with 6 columns: Items, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, SnapChat. Row 1: Which social media site do you use most frequently? (Facebook: 35, Instagram: 19, WhatsApp: 66, Twitter: 12, SnapChat: 18)

This table presents the responses to the question: "Which social media site do you use most frequently?". The numbers in each column represent the number of respondents who indicated that the respective platform is their most frequently used social media site.

WhatsApp stands out as the most frequently used social media platform among the respondents. While Facebook remains popular, WhatsApp seems to have overtaken it as the primary platform for many respondents.

Table 5
Responses of Item No. 4

Table with 6 columns: Items, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, SnapChat. Row 1: Which social media have highest screen time in your devices? (Facebook: 63, Instagram: 54, WhatsApp: 17, Twitter: 8, SnapChat: 8)

This table presents the responses to the question: "Which social media have the highest screen time in your devices?". The numbers in each column represent the number of respondents who indicated that the respective platform consumes the most screen time on their devices.



platform. Following closely behind is Instagram, with 54 respondents indicating it as the platform that demands the most attention. WhatsApp, despite being the most frequently used platform (based on Table 4), has a significantly lower number of respondents (17) indicating it as the biggest time consumer. Twitter and Snapchat have the lowest number of respondents indicating them as the most time-consuming platforms, with 8 respondents each.

This table highlights an interesting contrast with Table 4. While WhatsApp is the most frequently used platform, Facebook and Instagram seem to be the biggest time sinks for many respondents. This suggests that while respondents may use WhatsApp often, their interactions on Facebook and Instagram might be more time-consuming due to factors like video consumption, scrolling through feeds, or engaging with longer content.

Table 6

Responses of Item No. 5

Items	Below 50	51-60	61-70	71-80	Above 80
What was your percentage in last semester?	9	46	76	14	5

Table 6 presents the distribution of student's semester percentage in a survey. The columns represent different percentage ranges: Below 50, 51-60, 61-70, 71-80, and Above 80. The numbers in each column indicate the number of students who fall within that particular percentage range. The majority of students (76 out of the total) achieved a percentage between 61 and 70 in the last semester. A smaller number of students scored below 50 (9 students) or above 80 (5 students). The distribution suggests that the majority of students performed moderately well in the last semester.

Table 7

Responses of Item No. 6-15

Item No.	Items	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
6.	Do you think use of social media affects your academic performance negatively?	29	28	47	12	34	2.96	0.75
7.	Do you think use of social media affects your academic performance positively?	17	35	48	19	31	3.08	0.75
8.	Do you think social media has no connection with academic performance?	20	14	37	21	58	3.55	1.06
9.	Do you avoid using social media during your studies?	12	21	17	36	64	3.79	1.25
10.	Do you use social media in free time only?	18	24	21	28	59	3.57	0.99
11.	Do you think social media is wastage of time?	65	33	17	14	21	2.29	1.24
12.	Do you think social media helps in gaining knowledge?	26	14	8	39	63	3.66	1.31
13.	Do you think you give proper time to studies?	11	17	38	47	37	3.55	0.91
14.	Do you think Social Media is a good time pass if you are not at any work?	18	24	20	30	58	3.57	0.97
15.	Do you think Social Media is a tool for communication and getting latest updates?	15	25	12	27	71	3.76	1.42





This table presents the responses to a series of questions related to social media use and its perceived impact on academics. In the above table SDA: Strongly Disagree, DA: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, Mean: Average response score, and Std. Dev: Standard Deviation (measures the variability of responses).

Negative Impact on Academics (Item 6): A considerable number of respondents (29+28=57) either disagree or strongly disagree that social media negatively impacts their academic performance. However, a combined 46 respondents either agree or strongly agree with this statement.

Positive Impact on Academics (Item 7): A relatively smaller number of respondents (17+35=52) believe social media positively impacts their academics compared to those who perceive a negative impact.

No Connection (Item 8): A significant proportion (37+21+58=116) of respondents believe social media has no connection with their academic performance.

Avoiding Social Media during Studies (Item 9): A majority of respondents (17+36+64=117) either agree or strongly agree with avoiding social media during their studies.

Social Media Use in Free Time (Item 10): A substantial number (21+28+59=108) of respondents prefer to use social media only in their free time.

Social Media as a Waste of Time (Item 11): A significant portion (65+33=98) of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree that social media is a waste of time.

Social Media for Knowledge Gain (Item 12): A majority (8+39+63=110) of respondents agree or strongly agree that social media helps in gaining knowledge.

Proper Time for Studies (Item 13): A majority (38+47+37=122) of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they give proper time to their studies.

Social Media as a Good Time Pass (Item 14): A substantial number (20+30+58=108) of respondents agree or strongly agree that social media is a good time pass when not engaged in other work.

Social Media for Communication and Updates (Item 15): A large majority (12+27+71=110) of respondents agree or strongly agree that social media is a valuable tool for communication and getting the latest updates.

Mixed Views on Academic Impact which shows that while some respondents perceive a negative impact of social media on their academics, others believe it has no significant effect or even provides some benefits. Awareness of Time Management is also important and many respondents seem to be aware of the need to limit social media use during study time and prioritize their academics. Recognition of Social Media's Value has been adopted and respondents generally recognize the value of social media as a platform for communication, information dissemination, and entertainment.

This table explains the relation between usage of social media and percentage of university final results. The respondents who reported to use social media always were 3 and those who reported to have used it often were 12. So moderate users of social media were more than frequent are always users. When it was compared with their percentage of last semester we found that 46.7% were those who uses social media often got below 70% marks.

Students hold diverse opinions on social media's influence, with some perceiving negative impacts while others believe it has no effect or even offers benefits. Many students recognize the importance of time management and actively try to limit social media use during study time. Students generally acknowledge social media's value for communication, information access, and entertainment. A higher proportion of students who reported frequent social media use obtained lower grades in the previous semester.

### **Conclusion**

This study investigated the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among social science students at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. While social media has permeated modern life, its impact on academic performance remains a subject of debate. The findings suggest a nuanced



relationship. While a portion of respondents perceived a negative impact of social media on their studies, a significant number believed it had no significant effect or even offered certain benefits. This indicates a diverse range of experiences and perspectives among students regarding social media's influence on their academic pursuits. Furthermore, the study highlights a general awareness among students of the need for time management. Many respondents indicated that they primarily used social media in their free time and actively attempted to avoid excessive usage during study hours. This suggests a conscious effort by students to balance their academic responsibilities with their social media activities.

The findings underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of the social media phenomenon. While excessive usage can undoubtedly have negative consequences, social media also offers potential benefits for learning and communication. Further research is needed to explore these complexities and develop strategies for leveraging the positive aspects of social media while mitigating potential negative impacts on academic performance.

### **Future Directions**

Research based on the findings of the study on social media and academic performance:

- Conduct longitudinal studies to observe the long-term effects of social media usage on academic performance. This could involve tracking students' academic progress over multiple semesters while monitoring their social media habits.
- Examine the differential impact of various social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube) on academic performance. Some platforms may have more pronounced effects than others due to their content, features, and user demographics.
- Conduct in-depth interviews with students to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences with social media and its impact on their studies. This can provide valuable insights into their motivations, challenges, and coping mechanisms related to social media usage.
- Organize focus groups to facilitate discussions among students about their social media habits, academic experiences, and the perceived impact of social media on their lives.
- Design and implement interventions aimed at helping students develop healthy social media habits and minimize the negative impacts on their academic performance. These interventions could include workshops, educational programs, or digital literacy training.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions in improving students' academic performance, reducing social media-related distractions, and promoting responsible online behavior.
- Examine how cultural and socioeconomic factors influence the relationship between social media usage and academic performance.
- Investigate the impact of social media on academic performance in different learning environments, such as online learning, blended learning, and traditional classroom settings.
- Develop and administer assessments to measure students' digital literacy skills, including their ability to critically evaluate information, identify misinformation, and manage their online presence.
- Explore the relationship between students' digital literacy skills and their academic performance, considering factors such as social media usage patterns and online information seeking behaviors.
- By pursuing these future research directions, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between social media and academic performance. This knowledge can be used to develop effective strategies for supporting students in navigating the digital age and maximizing their academic potential.

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