



Effects of Social Media Use on Educational Performance Among Secondary School Students In District Faisalabad

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ABSTRACT

Technological improvements have led students and young people to dominate the internet, particularly social media. One wonders how they balance using social media and being up to date on schoolwork. The impact of media on educational performance can be both positive and negative, and it is important to consider various factors when assessing its influence. Educational programs and content delivered through media can positively influence students' learning experiences. Platforms like educational television programs, online courses, and interactive learning apps can provide supplementary resources that enhance students' understanding of academic subjects. This research analyzed the effects of social media use on educational performance among secondary school students (SSS) in the district Faisalabad. For the present study, all secondary school students of the district Faisalabad who were studying in 9th and 10th classes were selected. A multistage sampling technique was used for data collection. At first, two tehsils were selected randomly; at 2nd stage, 6 secondary schools (3 from each tehsil) were selected randomly. At the 3rd, 120 (20 from each school) secondary school students (9th/10th class) were selected randomly. The information was gathered through the use of an interview schedule. The collected data were examined using descriptive statistics, and the chi-square and gamma tests were used to test the hypothesis. The study revealed several key insights regarding students' use of smartphones and social media. About 45.0% of respondents exhibited high smartphone usage, and a majority (56.7%) frequently used the internet. Less than half (48.03%) of the students spent 3-5 hours daily on social media. The most popular social media sites among students were YouTube (91.7%), WhatsApp (85.8%), Facebook (75.8%), Instagram (74.2%), Snapchat (66.7%), TikTok (54.2%), and Twitter (54.2%). Over half (54.2%) of students used social media for educational purposes, and 38.3% found it motivational for recreation and entertainment. Most of the students agreed that social media creates awareness of new trends (3.82±1.05), provides the latest knowledge and information (3.79±1.19), is essential for learning and skill acquisition (3.77±1.11), and facilitates global cultural awareness (3.73±). Students acknowledged some negative impacts of social media, including health issues due to addiction (3.47±1.21), diminished academic performance (3.33±1.20), and deteriorating writing abilities (3.14±1.13). Study results indicated that around half of the students used >3-5 hours daily on social media networking sites. So, parents and school teachers should encourage students to balance their time on social media with other activities to prevent addiction and adverse health effects. Encourage parents to engage with their children's social media use, setting healthy boundaries and promoting positive online behavior.



Introduction

Social media has become a crucial part of students' lives in the modern digital era, serving as a medium for communication, sharing information, and enjoyment. Social media platforms have become widely integrated into the everyday routines of young people due to the widespread use of smartphones and simple internet access (Sun, 2023). Therefore, it conserves different human resources such as money, time, and effort, leading to a remarkable influence on social interactions in their everyday lives (Alnjadat *et al.*, 2019). From an educational standpoint, it is utilised for sharing and gathering knowledge, as well as supervising study and experimentation. It enhances student learning and family connections by enhancing the performance of electronic books through the integration of students using social media tools for collaboration. It enhances students' abilities and enhances communication skills with experts through the use of social media (Nurudeen *et al.*, 2023).

Many individuals are of the opinion that the fast growth of social media may be attributed to technological advancements. The growth of social media has been made possible by technical improvements, which have made it feasible for individuals from all over the globe to readily use these platforms by making them more accessible. The rapid growth of social media can be attributed, in part, to the proliferation of laptops, advanced computers, and smartphones equipped with contemporary software tools. Social media platforms have been incorporated into modern technology, which has made it possible to interact with people from all over the world, even when they are not physically present. During the 1990s, the internet gained significant traction and experienced rapid expansion. The inception of social media platforms can be traced back to 1995, when classmates.com was introduced with the primary objective of enhancing students' connectivity to the internet. Following the inauguration of SixDegrees.com, a sequence of websites emerged. The proliferation of advanced technology and the exponential expansion of social media platforms have garnered a substantial user base (Khan *et al.*, 2021).

The majority of individuals in today's world have become much more connected thanks to social media, particularly members of the Z generation or the iGen, who are more used to and drawn to this medium due to their familiarity with it and the fact that it is utilised extensively around the globe. Among them are students at colleges and universities, the majority of whom choose to spend their time on it; as a consequence, it may have either favourable or bad consequences on their academic studies (Uddin *et al.*, 2022).

Social media, an overwhelming force in our existence, has completely transformed the manner in which we establish connections, communicate, and get information. Although it has several benefits, it has also resulted in countless detrimental effects on education. In an era where screens dominate our lives, it is essential to recognize and address the harmful impacts they have. An evident and significant drawback of social media on education is its tendency to cause distraction. Especially students, find it hard to resist the lure of social networking platforms when learning or working on tasks. The constant pings, alerts and the urge to constantly check the feed, may significantly disrupt concentration and reduce the productivity as a result. This constant back-and-forth between study and social media use also means that studying time is shortened and time management is not properly done. Consequently, pupils might struggle to complete work, remember information or perform well on assessments. Social media enables information to be consumed quickly in bite-sized chunks. It may be useful to stay informed about

current events, but can also make it difficult to cultivate deep critical thinking and research skills. Students accustomed to reading headlines and relying on summary information provided in a web page may find it challenging to conduct in-depth research and critical thinking, which are essential components of a well-rounded education. Furthermore, the spread of misinformation or bias on social media can lead to pupils taking this information at face value without conducting the proper critical analysis (Saini and Mir, 2023).

The literature review revealed that the research focus on the impact of social media on the educational performance of secondary school students in District Faisalabad is scarce, which in turn gives rise to a significant gap in the research literature. While many research has been conducted globally, little specific research is available on the impact of social media on students' academic performance in the context of District Faisalabad, Pakistan. As social media is a universal phenomenon and has become part of daily life, especially among youth, the impacts of social media on educational performance are important to understand. Furthermore, the socio-cultural context of District Faisalabad could impact how social media is used and the outcomes of that use on students' academic performance. The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between the use of Social Media and academic performance among secondary school students in District Faisalabad. The aim is to create strategies and guidelines for students' academic success in the contemporary information society.

Problem Statement

Social media has become an integral component of the lives of secondary students and has shaped their communication, information and learning practices, as well as their academic duties and responsibilities. While social media offers a number of advantages for learning – including access to educational resources, ability to collaborate with peers and access the most up-to-date information – it can also be a huge distraction, steal study time and even take attention away from academics. The pros and cons of social media give rise to a need for educators, parents and policymakers to grasp the implications of social media use for academic outcomes. Social media is widely used among Pakistani students and it is increasing day by day, but there are not many empirical studies conducted at a district level to see the specific impacts of social media on educational performance, especially in District Faisalabad. Schools and families have not received evidence-based information for designing effective interventions because they do not understand how factors like time spent on social media, ownership of a smartphone, family structure, or household income relate to its educational impact. This study, therefore, sought to examine the effects of social media use on the educational performance of secondary school students in District Faisalabad.

Research Gap

The effect of social media on academic performance has been well documented in different parts of the world, with some research showing that it can enhance learning while others indicate that it can be a distraction from academic work (Sun, 2023; Nurudeen et al., 2023; Saini & Mir, 2023). However, most of this evidence originates from settings outside Pakistan, or from broad national-level assessments that do not account for localized socio-cultural and economic conditions. In the context of Pakistan, studies on the impact of social media on academic achievement among secondary school students have been limited and no study so far has

explored the relationship between social media use and academic achievement in District Faisalabad in a systematic way. Findings from other areas should not be assumed to apply to Faisalabad as it has a unique socio-economic and educational environment due to its semi-urban and rural nature. Furthermore, previous research has infrequently investigated the moderating role of structural factors like family type, household income, and the possession of a smartphone on the link between the use of social media and school outcomes in secondary school settings. The current study addresses this gap by providing district-specific findings that are based on empirical evidence.

Objectives

1. To investigate the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.
2. To investigate different social media platforms used by the respondents.
3. To evaluate the extent of social media usage among respondents.
4. To study the effect of the internet on students' academic achievement.
5. To suggest some policy measures to enhance the usefulness of social media.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent and pattern of social media use among SSS in District Faisalabad?
2. What benefits do students see in social media with regard to their studying?
3. What are the negative effects that students feel the social media has on their studies?
4. Is the time students spend on social media associated with its positive impact on their educational performance?
5. Does smartphone ownership influence the positive impact of social media on students' educational performance?

Hypotheses

1. Spending more time on social media is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance.
2. Smartphone ownership is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance.
3. The family structure of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance.
4. The economic status of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance.

Review of Literature

Social media is an important digital tool that is affecting students' learning behaviours, communications, and learning outcomes. While overuse or misuse of social media can have negative impacts on students' behaviour, focus, and learning, academic engagement on these platforms can offer opportunities for knowledge sharing and engagement in learning activities (Rafiq-uz-Zaman & Malik, 2025). Furthermore, digital technologies and data-centric educational

strategies have deepened the knowledge of the learning patterns of students and how to enhance their learning outcomes through sophisticated educational analytics (Rafiq-uz-Zaman & Ameer, 2025). Furthermore, as the exposure of digital platforms for children and young people has increased there has been concern about how to manage screen-time, developmental outcomes and the need for effective guidance and support from parents and education stakeholders (Bukhari et al., 2026). The study results indicate that the pattern of using social media and its correlation with educational performance should not be overlooked, especially in secondary schools.

Chen and Xiao (2022) observed a significant increase in social media usage among students due to globalized communication and the post-pandemic trend of utilizing various social media platforms for educational purposes across different areas. Social media is a place to express thoughts and feelings, but its emotional support may not be sufficient for students' needs, and any positive outcomes may be fleeting. A comparison of the findings of the studies investigating a correlation between social media and pupils' emotional characteristics revealed both positive and negative results. However, the latter were more apparent, and negative psychological impacts, such as hopelessness, worry and stress have been profound. The results were interpreted and linked to theories such as the social comparison theory, which proposed that a lot of the issues that cropped up among the youth's issue of too much social media use could be attributed to unfair comparisons they make between their lives and the unrealistic lifestyles they see on social media.

The findings by Dhiman (2022) revealed that there was a negative correlation between the use of social networking sites and mobile applications and students' academic performance. The study revealed that there is high correlation between these variables. He suggested that students should use their cell phones to do library work rather than social media or texting. Reducing the amount of time children spend on social media is essential, and getting them to read more literature, including novels and books. Students' use of social media has been linked to a decline in their school performance. Therefore, students need to be immediately introduced to the library's wide range of learning tools.

Haider (2023) found that students utilized social media networks primarily for educational purposes (65.3%) and information-seeking (63.3%), while a considerable proportion of the students also had some extent purpose of entertainment (78.7) and time passing (62.0). There was a high level of awareness (60.0%) regarding the high value of information acquired from social media networking sites. He found that 40.0 % of the students were in agreement that social media is making awareness among students of new trends, and 32.7 % were in agreement that is a source to get latest knowledge and information among students. Excessive use of social media has been linked to negative outcomes, such as social media addiction, which has been shown to negatively impact people's wellbeing (47.3%). Also, it is noted that high engagement with social media (37.3%) negatively affects the students' academic performance. The findings of the study show that social media use for three hours or less had a positive effect on the academic performance of university students. Children are advised to use social media in a limited and effective way.

Masalimova et al. (2023) studied the effects of social networking sites (SNS) on the academic performance of university students. The results showed that the beneficial effects of social

networking sites (SNS) on academic performance have been consistently and statistically significantly reported in studies. However, some studies have reported negative effects of social networking sites (SNS) on academic performance. The results related to the year of publication of the articles analyzed showed a gradual increase from 2019 to 2022. The results also showed that all the research used quantitative data collection techniques, and the majority of participants were in the range of 100 to 300. Moreover, the main source of data used to determine academic performance was the Grade Points Average (GPA), and most of the studies were conducted in Saudi Arabia. The results of this research present new insights to the literature and have important implications for researchers investigating the effect of social networking sites (SNS) on academic success.

Zhang et al. (2024) found that university students participate in a range of social media activities on a regular basis, which may contribute to their growth. This positive potential involves the contact and mental well-being involvement among family members, instructors, and classmates, which enhances their educational achievement. This study aims to examine the relationship between the use of social media and their significant contribution to academic success. This study has four key findings. The research revealed that social media had a positive effect on students' academic performance. Academic success and the use of social media are strongly affected by collaborative learning. Use of social media is a factor that has a significant influence on the relationship of family bonding and academic performance. Mental health plays an essential part in affecting the connection between working together in school, family cohesiveness, and academic outcomes. This study is mainly focused on the usage of social media in students' growth. The present findings contribute to the students' awareness of their own educational achievements. Students that utilize Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and websites for educational purposes likely to have more success. They solve their issue through the use of social media. This is a good example of the positive effects of social media on performance and on the life of people. Pupils are increasingly more engaged and self-directed.

Methodology

The present study adopted a descriptive survey research design in order to study the effect of social media use on academic performance of secondary school students. Descriptive research is used to provide a detailed description of what occurred, what features are involved, and what characteristics are related to a person, organization, or incident. The present design not only provided descriptions and explanations, but also identified and predicted relationships between the variables under examination. The objective of the design is to discern the components that are associated with specific occurrences, consequences, and patterns of behavior (Kothari, 2006).

The district Faisalabad served as a site for the current investigation, which was conducted there. District Faisalabad consisted of six tehsils. Out of six tehsils, 2 tehsils, Faisalabad Sadar and Jaranwala, were selected conveniently. The current research was conducted in two conveniently selected tehsils of district Faisalabad, and secondary school students of district Faisalabad who were studying in 9th and 10th classes were included in the study's population.

Multistage sampling techniques were used for data collection. At first, two tehsils (Tehsil Faisalabad Sadar and Tehsil Jaranwala) were selected conveniently; at 2nd stage, 6 secondary

schools (3 from each tehsil) were selected randomly. At 3rd stage, a total of 120 (20 from each school) respondents were selected from the selected schools.

Sr. No.	Tehsil	Selected schools	Selected students
1	Faisalabad Sadar	1. GHS Chak 48/JB	20
		2. GHS Chak 60/JB	20
		3. GHS Chak 58/JB	20
2	Jaranwala	4. GHS Chak 77/RB	20
		5. GHS Chak 69/RB	20
		6. GHS Chak 98/GB	20

The researcher designed his own interview schedule in order to accomplish the goal of data collection. The data collected were analyzed with SPSS-22 and descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied in analyzing the data.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics

Table 1: Classification of the participants concerning the use of social media networking sites ($n = 120$)

Social media sites	Response				Extent of use						Mean
	Yes		No		Low		Medium		High		
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
YouTube	110	91.7	10	8.3	34	28.3	58	48.3	18	15.0	1.85
Facebook	91	75.8	29	24.2	37	30.8	42	35.0	12	10.0	1.73
WhatsApp	103	85.8	17	14.2	12	10.0	47	39.2	44	36.7	2.31
Instagram	89	74.2	31	25.8	31	25.8	33	27.5	25	20.8	1.93
TikTok	65	54.2	55	45.8	20	16.7	26	21.7	19	15.8	1.98
Facebook Messenger	56	46.7	64	53.3	28	23.3	22	18.3	6	5.0	1.61
Snapchat	80	66.7	40	33.3	35	29.2	36	30.0	9	7.5	1.68
Snap videos	42	35.0	78	65.0	28	23.3	13	10.8	1	0.8	1.36
Pinterest	46	38.3	74	61.7	22	18.3	20	16.7	4	3.3	1.61
Twitter	65	54.2	55	45.8	30	25.0	26	21.7	9	7.5	1.68
Any other	8	6.7	112	93.3	6	5.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	1.38

The above table represents the use of social media networking sites. As per the above mentioned table, students used the most popular social media networking sites which are YouTube (91.7%), WhatsApp (85.8%), Facebook (75.8%), Instagram (74.2%), Snapchat (66.7%), TikTok (54.2%) and Twitter (54.2%). There was also a significant number of participants who used Facebook Messenger (46.7%), Pinterest (38.3%) and Snap videos (35.0%) though.

Conversely, the table shows the level of use of social media. The mean values indicated that the students used WhatsApp (2.31), TikTok (1.98), YouTube (1.85) and Facebook (1.73) extensively.

According to Stat Counter (2020), there are multiple social media platforms which are popular among students in Pakistan. Note however that the popularity of social media platforms may vary over time, and new platforms may appear in the future. They said that Facebook is one of the most popular social media platforms in Pakistan, and it has a large user base. It offers various features such as creating profiles, connecting with friends, sharing posts, and joining groups. Statcounter reported that Facebook held a substantial market share of approximately 96% in Pakistan in 2020 (Statcounter, 2020). WhatsApp is a messaging application with social media features that enables users to send text messages, make voice and video calls, and share media items. It is highly popular among students in Pakistan for its ease of use and wide availability. According to the survey conducted by Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) in 2021, WhatsApp is the most widely used messaging application in Pakistan (PTA, 2021).

Table 2: Classification of the participants concerning their purpose of using social media networking sites

Purpose	Not at all		To some extent		To a great extent		Mean	S.D.	Rank
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%			
For education	8	6.7	34	28.3	78	65.0	2.58	.65	1
For information	10	8.3	37	30.8	73	60.8	2.53	.63	2
For enjoyment e.g., playing games, SMS, Facebook, etc.	32	26.7	57	47.5	31	25.8	1.99	.70	3
For entertainment i.e. drama, film, song. etc.	22	18.3	94	78.3	4	3.3	1.85	.42	4
Just time passing	33	27.5	74	61.7	13	10.8	1.83	.53	5

Table 2 shows the students' primary reasons for using social media networking sites. It can be seen from the table that majority of pupils reported using social media for educational and information purposes. 78.3% and 61.7% of the students reported their use of social media for entertainment (i.e., drama, film, songs, etc.) and just for time-passing purposes, respectively. However, a large percentage (47.5%) used social media to some degree and 25.8 percent used them a lot for leisure activities such as playing games, text messaging, Facebook, etc.

According to the average scores, the top five activities were: educational activity (2.58), information-seeking (2.53), enjoyment (1.99), entertainment (1.85), and leisure (1.83), from first to fifth, respectively.

Chu (2020) also found that there was a significant portion of students utilizing social networking sites (SNS) in their daily life. In addition, digital technologies give students the opportunity to engage in social and educational activities, which will be valuable for communication and the sharing of knowledge for creative and productive inputs. Social media (USM) is a prominent phenomenon in the educational arena and covers a wide range of applications such as e-learning, software programming systems, web servers, data storage, multimedia, and more (Junco et al., 2011).

Table 3: Students' views about the educational benefits of social media
(*n* = 120)

Educational benefits	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	S.D.	Rank
	%	%	%	%	%			
Social media is creating awareness among students of new trends	6.7	1.7	23.3	40.0	28.3	3.82	1.05	1
Social media is the source to get the latest knowledge and information	8.3	5.0	20.0	32.5	34.2	3.79	1.19	2
Social media is essential for youth to get learning and skills	9.2	5.0	8.3	55.0	22.5	3.77	1.11	3
Social media is a great facilitator to create awareness among youth to develop global cultural	9.2	1.7	20.0	45.8	23.3	3.73	1.10	4
Social media have a positive impact on students achievements	8.3	1.7	25.0	43.3	21.7	3.68	1.06	5
Students submitted their assignments through social media	7.5	11.7	11.7	48.3	20.8	3.63	1.13	6
Social media is a cheap way to connect people all over the world	10.0	5.0	21.7	45.0	18.3	3.57	1.12	7
Social media is a basic need of students	13.3	5.0	18.3	46.7	16.7	3.48	1.20	8

Table 3 shows the participants' viewpoints on the positive impact of social media on academic performance. The findings of the study showed that a significant number of respondents agreed with the statements “social media is creating awareness among students of new trends” (Mean = 3.82, SD = 1.05); “social media is the source to get latest knowledge and information” (Mean = 3.79, SD = 1.19); “social media is essential to get latest learning and skills” (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.11); and “social media is a great facilitator in creating awareness among youth to develop global cultural” (Mean = 3.73, SD = 1.10). The top four statements that received the highest level of agreement from participants are listed here. The average scores of the above impacts ranged between the answers labeled ‘neutral’ and ‘agree’, with a leaning toward ‘agree’.

The social media positively affect students' achievements (3.68 ± 1.06), students submitted their assignments using the social media (3.63 ± 1.13) and social media is a cheap method to connect people from all over the world (3.57 ± 1.13) were ranked 5th to 7th, respectively. The mean values of these impacts were also in the ‘neutral’ to ‘agree’ range but leaning towards ‘agree’.

However, mean value of social media as a basic need of students (3.48 ± 1.20) was in the lowest rank and tended towards a neutral value.

From the study it can be concluded that there are many students who believe that social media platforms are important in raising awareness among students about the new trends and also useful for providing them with the latest knowledge and information. It was noted that social media serves as an important tool for the dissemination of knowledge and skills to young people. Moreover, it is a useful method for sensitizing the young people and promoting cultural awareness globally.

The results discussed above are supported by Latif et al. (2019) that revealed social media platforms have a high influence on creating awareness among students about new trends. These platforms offer a readily available and engaging arena for students to remain informed and up to date. Students can find and learn about topics, ideas or trends in real-time via social media. Social media sites enable users to share and distribute information rapidly. Students can follow accounts, pages or groups of their interest and be updated about new trends, innovations, and developments in different fields.

Table 4: Students’ views about the bad effects of social media on education
($n = 120$)

Negative impact	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	S.D.	Rank
	%	%	%	%	%			
Social media addiction poses many health issues.	11.7	9.2	15.8	47.5	15.8	3.47	1.21	1
The students' performance suffered because they spent so much time on	8.3	22.5	15.0	36.7	17.5	3.33	1.20	2

social media.								
Writing abilities among students have suffered because of social media.	11.7	15.8	30.0	31.7	10.8	3.14	1.13	3
Online social networks distract me from my studies.	15.8	20.8	31.7	21.7	10.0	2.89	1.20	4
Students utilize social media even in class.	15.0	22.5	30.8	26.7	5.0	2.84	1.10	5
The use of social media is nothing more than a waste of time.	10.8	31.7	35.0	18.3	4.2	2.73	0.98	6
My academic performance has suffered as a result of my addiction to social media websites.	21.7	27.5	21.7	27.5	1.7	2.60	1.13	7

The above table shows that the participants believe that social media negatively affects the academic performance of the students. Participants' thinking of “social media addiction poses many health issues” (3.47 ± 1.21), “The students' performance suffered because they spent so much time on social media” (3.33 ± 1.20) and “Writing abilities among students have suffered because of social media” (3.14 ± 1.13) was ranked 1st to 3rd, respectively. The average responses of the above mentioned impacts were in between ‘neutral’ and ‘agree’ but towards neutral.

Online social networks distract me from my studies (2.89 ± 1.20), students use social media even in class (2.84 ± 1.10), use of social media is nothing more than a waste of time ($2.73 \pm .98$) and academic performance has suffered as a result of their addiction to social media websites (2.60 ± 1.13) were ranked as 4th to 7th, respectively. The mean values of these impacts also ranged between the ‘disagree’ and ‘neutral’ responses and tended towards the neutral responses.

Akhtar (2013) highlighted social media addiction can lead to different health problems and affect the quality of students' lives. Too much time on social media has been shown to negatively affect students' academic performance. Social media platforms are made to be extremely engaging and addictive, causing a great deal of distractions. When students are constantly checking in, swiping through their feeds, or chatting online, it can be hard to focus on their studies. This disorientation can hinder the ability to concentrate, comprehend, and finish school work on time.

Testing of Hypotheses

Title: EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DISTRICT FAISALABAD

Hypothesis 1: Spending more time on social media is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance

Table 5: The relationship between the time spent on social media by the students and the positive role of social media on educational performance

Time spent on social media (hours)	Positive impact of social media on educational performance			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Up to 3 hours	8 24.2%	10 30.3%	15 45.5%	33 (27.5%) 100.0%
3-5 hours	5 8.6%	15 25.9%	38 65.5%	58 (48.3%) 100.0%
Above 5 hours	13 44.8%	11 37.9%	5 17.2%	29 (24.2%) 100.0%
Total	26 21.7%	36 30.0%	58 48.3%	120 (100%) 100.0%
Chi-square = 22.18 d.f. = 4		P-value = .000**		
Gamma (λ) = -0.263		P-value = .043*		

* = significant, ** = highly-significant

Table 5 depicts the correlation between time spent on social media by the students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis, specifically the chi-square test (χ^2), indicates a significant association ($\chi^2 = 22.18$, $p = .000$) between time spent on social media by the students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis revealed a significant and negative association between the variables, as indicated by the Gamma statistic ($\lambda = -0.263$, $p = .043$). The data suggests that students who spent 3-5 hours daily on social media observed a more positive impact on their education. So, the hypothesis “Spending more time on social media is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance” is accepted. Similar results were presented by Abuzar and Hussain (2024), who found that sharing academic information with classmates on social media significantly enhanced academic performance of the students, even though social media usage overall showed no statistically significant effect on study habits.

Hypothesis 2: Smartphone ownership is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance

Table 6: The relationship between ownership of smartphones and the positive role of social media on students' educational performance

Smartphone ownership	Positive impact of social media on educational performance			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
No	19 34.5%	14 25.5%	22 40.0%	55 (45.8%) 100.0%
Yes	7 10.8%	22 33.8%	36 55.4%	65 (54.2%) 100.0%
Total	26 21.7%	36 30.0%	58 48.3%	120 (100%) 100.0%
Chi-square = 10.57 d.f. = 2		P-value = .014*		
Gamma (λ) = 0.318		P-value = .023*		

* = significant, ** = highly-significant

Table 6 depicts the correlation between ownership of smartphones by students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis, specifically the chi-square test (χ^2), indicates a significant association ($\chi^2 = 10.57$, $p = .014$) between ownership of smartphones by students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis revealed a significant and positive association between the variables, as indicated by the Gamma statistic ($\lambda = 0.318$, $p = .023$). The data suggests that students who had personal smartphones observed a more positive impact on their education. So, the hypothesis "Smartphone ownership is associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance" is accepted. Yousfani et al. (2024) also reported similar results. They found that students' smartphone use influenced their academic outcomes both positively and negatively, with most students considering smartphones useful for obtaining academic content.

Hypothesis 3: The family structure of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance

Table 7: The relationship between family type and the positive role of social media on students' educational performance

Family type	Positive impact of social media on educational performance			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Nuclear	14 22.2%	17 27.0%	32 50.8%	63 (52.5%) 100.0%
Joint	12 21.1%	19 33.3%	26 45.6%	57 (47.5%) 100.0%
Total	26 21.7%	36 30.0%	58 48.3%	120 (100%) 100.0%
Chi-square = 0.59 d.f. = 2		P-value = .746 ^{NS}		
Gamma (λ) = -0.055		P-value = .722 ^{NS}		

NS = Non-significant

Table 7 depicts the correlation between the family type of the students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis, specifically the chi-square test (χ^2), indicates a non-significant association ($\chi^2 = 0.59$, $p = .746$) between family type of the students and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The statistical analysis revealed a non-significant association between the variables, as indicated by the Gamma statistic ($\lambda = 0.055$, $p = .722$). The data suggests that the students' family structure had no association with the positive impact on their education. So, the hypothesis "The family structure of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance" is rejected.

Hypothesis 4: The economic status of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance

Table 8: The relationship between the household income and the positive impact of social media on students' educational performance

Household income (PKR)	Positive impact of social media on educational performance			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Up to 50000	14 46.7%	11 36.7%	5 16.7%	30 (25%) 100.0%
50001-75000	6 12.0%	8 16.0%	36 72.0%	50 (41.7%) 100.0%
Above 75000	6 15.0%	17 42.5%	17 42.5%	40 (33.3%) 100.0%
Total	26 21.7%	36 30.0%	58 48.3%	120 (100%) 100.0%
Chi-square = 29.72 d.f. = 4		P-value = .000**		
Gamma (λ) = 0.256		P-value = .033*		

* = significant, ** = highly-significant

Table 8 shows the correlation between students' household income and the positive impact of social media on educational performance. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 29.72$, $p < .001$) indicates a significant association between these variables. Additionally, the Gamma statistic ($\lambda = 0.256$, $p = .033$) reveals a significant and positive relationship. This data suggests that students from higher-income families experience a more positive impact of social media on their education. Therefore, the hypothesis that "the economic status of the students will be associated with a positive impact of social media on educational performance" is accepted. Similarly, Akhtar (2012) reported that household income of the students had a positive and significant impact of social media on educational performance.

Discussion

The outcomes of this survey show that social media is crucial in the life of secondary school students of District Faisalabad as a majority of the respondents have stated that they use social media a lot and access the internet quite a lot and they also stated that they use their mobile phones a lot. The social networking sites were also important platforms, with YouTube, WhatsApp and Facebook reported as the most dominant, and students were found to use these

sites for education and information as noted by Chu (2020) and Junco et al. (2011) that these sites were being integrated more into students' educational experiences. The results of the hypothesis tests add to this picture in a number of ways: time on social media, smartphone ownership, and household income were all significantly linked to feeling social media had a positive impact on their educational performance, with no significant relationship between family structure and the same outcome. Specifically, students who used social media 3-5 hours daily reported the highest educational outcomes suggesting a threshold effect with moderate exposure to learning compared to low and high exposure. Meanwhile, the students noted obvious negative aspects like health problems (addiction) and bad writing skills, which align with the study conducted by Akhtar (2013) regarding distractive and addictive features of these platforms and bad writing skills. The results suggest that the overall effect of social media on educational performance is not necessarily negative or positive, but rather depends on the amount of time spent on social media, the resources students will have available to them, and their home economic circumstances, which argues for the need to guide the use of social media for educational benefit and not prohibit or leave it uncontrolled.

Conclusions

The study highlights the extensive use of smartphones and the internet among students, with nearly half exhibiting high smartphone usage and a majority frequently accessing the internet. Social media like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram are especially popular, and students spend more than three hours a day on these platforms. Social media is mainly being used for educational and information purposes, but many students are using it for entertainment purposes as well. However, the benefits of social media in education are also clear, such as increased exposure to new ideas and trends, real-time information, and world views. But there are also issues to consider regarding what social media is doing harm. These can range from health issues arising from social media addiction to a decline in academic performance and writing ability. Therefore, students are recommending that social media can be better used for learning, teaching, to gain new knowledge and for leisure. Furthermore, they recommended the establishment of a computer lab under the guidance of a teacher to help them integrate the use of social media into their academic work.

Recommendations

Promote Balanced Usage: Study results indicated that around half of the students used >3-5 hours daily on social media networking sites. Therefore, efforts should be made by parents and school teachers to help students use social media in a balanced manner so as not to fall into the trap of social media addiction and its negative impacts on health.

Educational Integration: The majority of the students indicated that they used social media for learning and information purposes, while some of them also used it for entertainment. Therefore, it is suggested that social media should be incorporated as part of the curriculum to take advantage of it for educational purposes, providing students with relevant and up-to-date information.

Time Management Workshops: Offer workshops on effective time management to help students allocate appropriate time for social media, academics, and leisure.

Support Positive Content: Encourage the production and dissemination of positive, educational and informative content on social media platforms.

Research and Monitoring: There should be continuous research to track the effects of social media on students' health and academic achievement, and policies should be revised accordingly as issues are identified.

Future Direction

These findings need to be extended in a number of ways. The positive and negative correlations found here could be better understood in the context of relationships if they could be confirmed in longitudinal studies that follow the individuals beyond the cross-sectional approach taken in this study into secondary and higher education. In addition, future studies may include objective assessments of academic achievement (e.g., grades, test scores) along with students' self-reported perceptions of impact. The study area may be extended to the two tehsils of Faisalabad and other tehsils and districts of Punjab, for generalization of results to the rural-urban setting. Also, qualitative methods, such as focus group discussions or in-depth interviews, might provide insights into how the observed “sweet spot” of 3-5 hours for social media usage comes about, and why no significant relationship was found with the factor family structure, while a significant association was found with the factor household income. Lastly, future research could investigate how parental mediation strategies and school-based digital literacy intervention moderate the effect of social media on academic outcomes, which would offer more concrete and specific recommendations on the ones found in this study.

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