

Social Media Use and Its Association With Academic Performance Among School Students of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal

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Abstract

Introduction

Social media is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities. The main purpose of social media platforms is to share, learn, and value creation, and participation and tend to break the barrier of geographical diversity and connect citizens who are not even connected by roads. Similarly, Academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Teachers and education officials typically measure achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates, and results from standardized tests. This study is to assess the use of social media and its association with academic performance among school students of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal

Methodology

An Inferential Cross-Sectional descriptive Study was carried out at the secondary level school students in Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu schools from July to September 2023. A total of 280 students were selected from three schools constituting the study's sample size. The selection was based on stratified random sampling, where each school was considered a stratum. A pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data by using a self-administered questionnaire distributed to students who met the inclusion criteria with clear instructions of the researcher.

Result

The mean age of the total respondents was 15.13 years where 51.8% were male and 48.2% female. There were positive aspects of social media 51.8% compared to the negative aspects of social media which was 48.2%. where TikTok was the most used social media by the respondents which was 74.8% followed by Facebook and Instagram which were 68.7% and 41.4% respectively. There was no association between socio-demographic characteristics and academic performance of the school students. Frequent social media use (4-7 times a day) was linked to good academic performance, as was moderate use (1-4 hours daily). Students were using social media for a good purpose and this could be the reason that there was a positive aspect of social media on academic performance.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that students are utilizing social media for positive and constructive purposes, which may explain the observed positive impact on their academic performance. The study suggests that the amount of time spent on social media influences educational performance, indicating that educators and policymakers should consider these patterns in efforts to improve student outcomes.

Keywords: Social media, Academic Performance, Students, Nepal.

Introduction

Social media is a collective term for websites and applications that focus on communication, community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration [1]. Digital technology known as social media makes it possible to share text and multimedia content through online networks and communities [2]. According to

Merriam-Webster, social media is “forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content [3]. In less than a generation, social media has evolved from direct electronic information exchange to a virtual gathering place, retail platform, and

vital 21st-century marketing tool [4]. Academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Student performance can be measured using a variety of benchmarks, including grade point average (GPA), high school graduation rate, annual standardized tests, and college entrance exams [5].

Social media offers excellent connectivity, providing opportunities and breakthroughs for students in academic and creative fields, as well as entertainment. It enables innovative teaching methods and facilitates student-teacher interactions. However, excessive use can lead to addiction, negatively impacting mental and physical health. Additionally, social media can be a breeding ground for cyberbullying and expose young users to inappropriate content. [6]. Deshmal (2017) concluded that social media causes a loss of attention among many students, which may lead to a decline in their academic performance [7]. Exposure to social media learners depend on social media sites without referring to other sources to do their assignments. Additionally, most of the students spent 4-5 hours at least on social media sites daily [8]. 82.5% of students in a study reported that they mostly use social media to download videos or pictures and chat, while the remaining 17.5% utilize it for academic purposes [9].

In contrast to a negative effect, social media also positively impacts students' academic performance. Oberiri (2017) supported form a study that 68% of respondents utilize social media to participate in academic discussions with coursemates and lectures. Furthermore, they showed that 50.7% use it to obtain information for assignments and 86% to obtain and disseminate information associated with class activities. This shows that social media has a significant impact on student's academics [10]. Alamri (2019) also indicated that social media sites help students connect with their teachers, thereby encouraging flexible learning modes such as E-lear [11]. Students who used most of their spare time on social media sites for academic purposes reported improved GPAs. [8]

A descriptive cross-sectional study conducted on Medical Students" concluded that excessive use of these sites decreases respondent's academic performance [12]. The study conducted among master's level management students of Kathmandu Valley revealed that there exists a negative relation between the use of social media and the academic performance of students, with more than 80 percent of students reporting a decline in their academic performance due to the use of social media [13]. The study conducted by Ambika Rathi and Anukur Budhiraja revealed that usage of social networking sites is considered to be an addiction that affects individual students in different ways [15].

Based on the survey conducted on, "The effects of social media on pharmacy students' academic performance" among 60 students, concluded that the majority of the students feel that social media affects their academic performance positively, and about half of them feel that social media affects their performance negatively [16].

International Journal of Science and Technology Education Research published a study on, "Effects of social media on undergraduate students' achievements and interest in chemistry in North-central geo-political zone of Nigeria" Extracting data from 240 undergraduates shows that social media has a positive influence on the academic performance of students if appropriately used [17].

School students are increasingly prone to excessive use of social media, making it essential for them to understand its positive and negative impacts. There has been insufficient research on this topic, especially after COVID-19, particularly in the context of Nepal. This study aims to address this gap by examining the use of social media and its association with academic performance among school students in Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Methodology

Study Design: An Inferential Cross-Sectional Study with a quantitative research methodology was used to determine social media use and its association with academic performance among the students of schools scattered among Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal

Study Area: Different schools of Kirtipur Municipality were taken as a study area for this research study.

Study Population: The study population consisted of grade 9 and 10 students from schools in Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, with more than 100 students in each class.

Sample Size: The final sample size for this study was 278 by using the following calculation.

Confidence Interval (Z): 95% (i.e. 1.96)

Prevalence (p): 0.47 (Taken from previous studies, social media affects academic performance.)

q: 1-p: 1-0.47 = 0.52

The margin of error (d): (5% = 0.05)

By using formula

Sample size

$$(n) = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.47 \times 0.52^2}{(0.05)^2} = 375.55 \sim 376$$

For finite population, let's consider our n as

Now,

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0}{N}}$$

N= 741 (The total number of students studying in grades 9 and 10 in the selected schools of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu)

Therefore,

$$n = \frac{376}{1 + \frac{376}{741}} = 249.4 \sim 250$$

With 10% non-response rate, The required sample size was:

$$\frac{\text{sample size}}{1 - \text{expectancy of nonresponse}} = \frac{250}{1 - 0.1} = 277.7 \sim 278$$

The students sampled from each school were calculated using a proportionate allocation sample.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The sampling fraction (K) was calculated as, } K &= n/N \\ &= 278/741 \\ &= 0.37 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, K will be 0.37, so this value was used to find our sample size from each school which can be shown as:

Sampling Strategy:

Using Stratified Random Sampling based on a proportionate sampling technique, this study includes a sample of 280 students selected from three Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu schools named Puspa Sadan Boarding High School, Janasewa Ma Vi, and Laboratory Secondary School. First, a sampling frame was prepared, listing schools in Kirtipur Municipality with the names and numbers of students. Schools with more than 100 students in grades 9 and 10 were considered as strata. All students from a section of each class were included in the sample for each stratum.

Tools and Technique for Data Collection:

For self-administered data collection, A pretested semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the students, following clear instructions from a researcher who met the inclusion criteria. The questionnaire includes three sections. socio-demographic characteristics, general information on social media usage, and covers various aspects of social media. It consists of 16 Likert scale questions, with items adapted from previous studies, such as Sudha and Kavitha (2016), who conducted their research among undergraduates at Salem University in the USA.

Ethical considerations: The ethical approval was taken from the Institutional Review Committee (Ref. No: 080/81/215) and the administrative approval was taken from the Department of Public Health, Nobel College. Permission was taken from the school authority for a favorable time to collect data. Written assent was also obtained from schools and parents to conduct the study, ensuring the confidentiality of all information and maintaining the respondent’s privacy.

Inclusion Criteria:

Students from grades 9 and 10 in selected schools of Kirtipur Municipality, who had parental consent to participate, were included as research participants.

Validation and Reliability of Tools:

To ensure validity and reliability, the study includes an extensive literature review, questionnaire verification by the supervisor and lecturer, and pretesting of tools. Data collection was conducted in a suitable environment with parental consent, and immediate field editing minimized errors during data entry. Collected data were entered on the same day, rechecked to minimize errors, and coded into SPSS Software, with 10% of entries randomly selected for manual verification and the error rate documented.

Data Management and Analysis: IBM-SPSS V Software was used for data entry and further analysis. The chi-square test was applied to measure the association between categorical variables. A level of significance of 5% was used, where a p-value less than or equal to 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Operational Definition

Social Media: A platform where you can share ideas, information, facts, feelings and communicate with one another with the help of internet use.

Aspects: The positive and negative effects of using social media. From the 13 statements of Likert scale, a total score of 46 and above is interpreted as a “positive aspect” and below then 46 as a “negative aspect”.

Likert Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree

The mean score will be computed and dichotomized into high/positive and low/negative.

Academic Performance: It is a GPA (Grade Point Average) obtained by a student in the previous examination and is categorized as:

Table 2: Categories of Academic Performance

Description	GPA
Excellent	A
Good	B
Satisfactory	C
Poor	D

Findings

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 3: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Number (n=280)	Percentage (%)
Age in years		
13.00	1	.4
14.00	83	29.6

15.00	94	33.6
16.00	80	28.6
17.00	22	7.9
	Mean age =15.13	S.D. =0.95
Gender		
Male	145	51.8
Female	135	48.2
Grade		
Grade 9	148	52.9
Grade 10	132	47.1
Religion		
Hindu	211	75.4
Buddhist	49	17.5
Christian	16	5.7
Muslim	3	1.1
Others	1	.4
Ethnicity		
Brahmin	55	19.6
Chhetri	80	28.6
Janajati	124	44.3
Madhesi	8	2.9
Dalit	9	3.2
Islam	3	1.1
Others	1	.4
Family type		
Nuclear	164	58.6
Joint	96	34.3
Extended	20	7.1

Table 3 represents the socio-demographic characteristics of the 280 respondents, among which the average age of 15.13 years (SD= ±0.95). The age distribution was as follows: 13 years (0.4%), 14 years (29.6%), 15 years (33.6%), 16 years (28.6%), and 17 years (7.9%). The gender distribution was nearly balanced, with males (51.8%) and females (48.2%) respondents. Similarly, (52.9%) respondents were in grade 9 followed by grade 10 (47.1%). Most respondents identified as Hindu (75.4%), followed by Buddhist

(17.5%). The ethnic composition included Brahmin (19.6%), Chhetri (28.6%), Janajati (44.3%), Madhesi (2.9%), Dalit (3.2%), Islam (1.1%), and others (0.4%). Around half of the respondents i.e. 58.6% were from the nuclear family, 34.3% were from the joint family whereas, 7.1% were from the extended family. This diverse demographic representation provides a comprehensive overview of the population studied.

General Information and aspect of social media usage

Table 4: General Information and aspect of social media usage

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Most used social media site (MR)		
TikTok	208	78.8%
Facebook	191	68.7%
Instagram	115	41.4%
Snapchat	60	21.6%
Viber	51	18.3%

WhatsApp	48	17.3%
Others	8	2.9%
Age of social media use by the respondents		
Before 5 years of age	90	32.1%
After 5 years of age	190	67.9%
Use of social media regularly		
Yes	164	58.6%
No	116	41.4%
Frequency of Social media use on a day		
Less than 4 times	167	59.6%
4-7 times	83	29.6%
More than 7 times	30	10.7%
Duration of Social media use		
Less than 1hour	113	40.4%
1-4hours	137	48.9%
5-9hours	24	8.6%
More than 9hours	6	2.1%
Spend a day without social media		
Yes	177	63.2%
No	103	36.8%
Purpose of social media use (MR)		
To organize catch-up with friends	206	77.2%
To access content from articles and videos	204	76.4%
To express thoughts and opinions	197	73.8%
To play online games	152	56.9%
To be updated with new information	150	56.2%
To keep in touch with family and friends	113	42.3%
For entertainment purpose	62	23.3%
Aspect of social media use on academic performance		
Positive	145	51.8%
Negative	135	48.2%

Table 4 represents the study revealing significant insights into social media usage among the respondents. TikTok emerged as the most used social media site, with 78.8% of participants favoring it, followed by Facebook (68.7%) and Instagram (41.4%). A substantial 67.9% of respondents began using social media after the aged of five. Regular use of social media was reported by 58.6%, while 59.6% used it less than four times daily, and 48.9% of respondents spent 1-4 hours on it. Notably, 63.2% could spend a day without social media. Social

media was primarily used to organize catch-ups with friends (77.2%), access content (76.4%), and express opinions (73.8%). Despite diverse usage purposes, the impact of social media on academic performance was nearly balanced, with 51.8% reporting a positive effect and 48.2% a negative effect. This data highlights the pervasive yet varied role of social media in students' lives, influencing both their social interactions and academic outcomes.

Academic Achievement of the Respondents (Dependent Variable)

Table 5: Academic Achievement of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	78	27.9%
Good	137	48.9%
Satisfactory	47	16.8%
Poor	18	6.4%

The above table number shows the academic achievement of the respondents. The majority of the respondents perform well academically, with 48.9% classified as having "Good" performance and 27.9% achieving an "Excellent" level. A smaller proportion, 16.8%, have "Satisfactory" academic performance, while 6.4% fall

into the "Poor" category. These findings suggest that over three-quarters of the respondents are performing at a good or excellent level, indicating a generally high academic achievement among the respondents. However, there remains a notable minority that requires attention to improve their academic outcomes.

Association Between Academic Performance with Independent Variables

Table 6: Association Between Academic Performance with Independent Variables

Age	Academic Performance				Total n=280	P-value
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor		
14	33(39.2%)	35(41.6%)	12(14.2%)	4(4.8%)	84	0.12
15	26(27.6%)	46(48.9%)	17(18.1%)	6(6.3%)	94	
16	16(20%)	47(58.8%)	11(13.8%)	6(7.5%)	80	
17	4(18.2%)	9(40.0%)	7(31.8%)	2(9%)	22	
Gender						
Male	36(24.8%)	71(48.9%)	24(16.6%)	14(9.6%)	145	0.11
Female	42(31.1%)	66(48.9%)	23(17%)	4(2.97%)	135	
Grade						
9	41(27.7%)	72(46.6%)	25(16.9%)	10(6.7%)	148	0.99
10	37(28%)	65(49.2%)	22(16.6%)	86(65.1%)	132	
Religion						
Hindu	64(30.3%)	97(45.9%)	36(17.1%)	14(6.6%)	211	0.70
Buddhist	8(16.3%)	29 (59.1%)	9(18.3%)	3(6.1%)	49	
Christian	4(25%)	9(56.2%)	2(12.5%)	1(6.25%)	16	
Muslim	-	1	-	-	1	
Family Type						
Nuclear	51(31.1%)	83(50.6%)	23(14%)	7(4.2%)	164	0.15
Joint	27(21.4%)	54(42.8%)	24(19%)	11(8.7%)	126	
Age of Social Media Use						
>5 years of age	21(23.3%)	38(42.2%)	24(26.6%)	7(7.7%)	90	0.16
<5 years of age	57(30%)	99(52.1%)	23(12.1%)	11(5.8%)	190	
Regular use of social media						
Frequency of Social Media Use	44(26.8%)	84(51.2%)	28(17%)	8(4.8%)	164	0.56
Less than 4 times /day	57(34.1%)	80(47.9%)	19(11.3%)	11(6.6%)	167	
4-7times/day	16(19.2%)	42(50.6%)	20(24.1%)	5(6%)	83	0.04
More than 7 times/day	5(16%)	15(50%)	8(26.6%)	2(6.6%)	30	
Duration of Social Media Use						
less than 1 hr	41(36.2%)	50(44.2%)	15(13.2%)	7(6.2%)	113	0.03
1-4 hrs	32(23.3%)	75(54.7%)	21(15.3%)	9(6.5%)	137	
5-9 hrs	4(16.6%)	11(45.8%)	7(29.2%)	2(8.3%)	24	
more than 9 hrs	1(16.6%)	1(16.6%)	4(66.6%)	0(0%)	6	
A day without social media						
Yes	57(48.7%)	86(73.5%)	26(14.6%)	8(4.5%)	177	0.06

No	21(20.3%)	51(49.5%)	21(20.4%)	10(9.7%)	103	
Aspect						
Positive	39(26.9%)	69(47.5%)	29(20%)	8(5.5%)	145	0.48
Negative	39(28.8%)	68(50.4%)	18(13.3%)	10(7.4%)	135	

Table number 6 examines the relationship between various demographic and social media usage factors on academic performance among 280 respondents. The analysis revealed no significant differences in academic performance based on age ($p=0.128$), gender ($p=0.118$), grade ($p=0.996$), religion ($p=0.703$), family type ($p=0.153$), age of social media use initiation ($p=0.16$), regular use of social media ($p=0.557$), ability to spend a day without social media ($p=0.064$), or perceived aspect of social media ($p=0.484$). However, the frequency ($p=0.038$) and duration ($p=0.032$) of social media use showed significant impacts. Those using social media less than four times per day had 34.1% Excellent, 47.9% Good, 11.3% Satisfactory, and 6.6% Poor. Those using it 4-7 times per day had 19.2% Excellent, 50.6% Good, 24.1% Satisfactory, and 6% Poor. Those using it more than seven times per day had 16% Excellent, 50% Good, 26.6% Satisfactory, and 6.6% Poor. The duration of social media use also significantly affected academic performance ($p=0.032$). Students using social media for less than one hour per day had 36.2% Excellent, 44.2% Good, 13.2% Satisfactory, and 6.2% Poor. Those using it for 1-4 hours per day had 23.3% Excellent, 54.7% Good, 15.3% Satisfactory, and 6.5% Poor. Those using it for 5-9 hours per day had 16.6% Excellent, 45.8% Good, 29.2% Satisfactory, and 8.3% Poor. Students using it for more than nine hours per day had 16.6% Excellent, 16.6% Good, 66.6% Satisfactory, and none rated Poor. Students using social media less than four times a day or for less than one hour daily performed better academically compared to those with higher frequency and longer duration of use.

Discussion

This study conducted among 280 school students aged 13-17 years from Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu showed that there were a positive aspect of social media on the academic performance of the school students. This result was similar to the previous cross-sectional study by K. Victoria Fatokun on 18th March 2019 which indicates that the use of social media has a slight positive influence on the students' academic performances [18].

Although in previous study, conducted by Ahmad Jahed Mushtaq nearly one third of the respondents had very good academic performance [18], but in this study, it was discovered that around half of the respondents had good academic performance.

In a study conducted by K. Victoria Fatokun among 240 undergraduate chemistry students randomly selected from north-central geopolitical zone of Nigeria also showed that social media has positive influence on the academic performance of students if appropriately used. [17].

A study conducted by Hari Prasad Upadhyay and Prativa Sedain among 230 students from College of Medical Sciences and Shree Medical & Technical College reflected that overall perception of students towards social networking sites is positive [12].

However, despite the positive influence of social media, it was discovered that there are some negative impacts. Research conducted among 55 adolescents aged 10 to 19 years at Guheshwori Higher Secondary School, Sinamangal, Kathmandu concluded that, adolescence is attracted to social networking sites very deeply. They know the drawbacks of it. Besides that, they ignore it. [14]

From the survey conducted in 2020 among 176 students studying in the second semester of master's level under the management stream in Kathmandu Valley., it is seen that social media is harming the academic performance of students. The study on undergraduate level students covering large scope of study would further recommend the suggestions and ideas for innovative ideas to build-in use of social media in the pedagogy [13].

A study conducted by Mohammed Habes, Mahmoud Alghizzawi, Rifat Khalaf, Said A. Salloum and Mazuri Abd. Ghani to identify the social networks that the students are heavily involved in and that affect their academic performance concluded that social media can positively assist students in developing themselves, enhancing their knowledge and creativity, leveraging their knowledge exchange, and increasing their technical skills [19].

A thousand students were randomly collected in a study to determine the social media's impact on school students' academic performance by Dr. R. Sivakumar revealed that most students use social media sites to chat for academic purposes and it helped to improve their academic performance [20].

Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings of the study showed that, there was positive aspects of social media 51.8% compared to the negative aspects of social media which was 48.2%. There was no association between socio-demographic characteristics and academic performance of the school students. The frequency of social media use was associated with academic performance, the majority of the students who use social media 4-7 times a day had good academic performance. Similarly, the duration of social media use was also associated with academic performance. Students who use social media 1-4 hours a day were seen to have good academic performance. The study revealed that the majority of students use social media primarily to connect with friends, followed by expressing their thoughts and feelings. Only a minority use it for entertainment purposes. These findings suggest

that students are utilizing social media for positive and constructive purposes, which may explain the observed positive impact on their academic performance.

The study suggests that the amount of time spent on social media influences academic performance, indicating that educators and policymakers should consider these patterns in efforts to improve student outcomes.

Limitation

The study was conducted among selective school students of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal being a cross-sectional, it was difficult to make causal inferences. The study relied on self-reporting, there was a chance that the results could be influenced by social desirability and recall bias might affect the precision of findings. However, efforts were made to minimize such bias.

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