



Social media usage patterns and their influence on academic performance among undergraduate students: A special reference to Bagalkot District

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Abstract

Social media plays a big role in the daily life of undergraduate students. It provides opportunities for conversation, entertainment, information sharing and educational activities. However, overconsumption may reduce study time, cause distraction and negatively affect academic performance. The present study has examined the pattern of social media usage and its effect on academic performance among the undergraduates of Government First Grade College, Rabakavvi-Banhatti. The research sample included 140 undergraduate students. Academic achievement was measured by cumulative grade point average (CGPA). The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics which include frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The statistics showed that WhatsApp and YouTube were the most used social media sites, and a large percentage of students spent two to four hours per day on social media. The respondents had a reasonably high average CGPA, and the respondents with a significantly low average CGPA had extensive daily social media use. The respondents mostly used social media for academic purposes. The findings show that the effect of social media on schooling is highly dependent on the duration and the reasons for its use. Hence, judicious digital use, good time management and purposeful educational use of social media are advocated.

Keywords: Social media, undergraduate students, academic performance, CGPA, digital learning, social networking

Introduction

Social media has swiftly emerged as a crucial element in the social, educational, and personal spheres of students' life. The extensive prevalence of smartphones and cost-effective internet connection has rendered platforms like WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram readily available to undergraduate students. Learners utilize these platforms for correspondence, amusement, disseminating information, obtaining instructional materials, and engaging with peers. Social media can offer numerous educational benefits. Learners may exchange notes, engage in scholarly discussions, see instructional films, utilize online tutorials, and obtain details regarding assessments and tasks. In this regard, social media can enhance classroom instruction and offer students supplementary educational experiences. Simultaneously, overindulgence in social media might lead to academic challenges. Learners might allocate significant durations to recreational media, digital dialogs, and frequent monitoring of social networking platforms. Engaging in such activities could diminish the time allocated for learning and disrupt focus. Utilizing late-night hours may disrupt conventional study routines.

The connection between social media and academic achievement is consequently intricate. The impact may vary according on the length, regularity, and intent of social media engagement. Academic utilization may enhance comprehension, while overindulgence in leisure activities could lead to diversion. The current research investigates their patterns of social media utilization and academic achievement. Quiñonez-Choquecota et al. (2023) ^[8] examined the relationship between social media usage and academic achievement in a sample of 588 undergraduate students from two public universities in Peru. Their research revealed that students allocated significant time to social media for leisure and non-educational activities. The research also revealed signs of excessive social media

engagement that may adversely impact academic achievement. This research is especially pertinent to the current investigation since it analyzed usage trends, objectives of use, and academic achievement among undergraduate students. Khan (2024) ^[4] performed a descriptive analysis involving 60 university students to investigate the beneficial and detrimental impacts of social media engagement on academic performance. The research indicated that social media exerted a dual impact: it facilitated student involvement and digital education, although it also led to adverse academic outcomes when utilized excessively. This discovery underscores the necessity to differentiate between constructive educational engagement and recreational or excessive utilization of social media. Hajazi, Ahmadishah, and Othman (2024) ^[3] examined the impact of social media on the academic achievements of 374 students at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. The research focused on the utilization of social media for educational objectives and the elements influencing students' academic achievements. The researchers utilized quantitative analysis to investigate the correlation between social media engagement and academic achievement. The research emphasizes the significance of evaluating the intent behind social media usage, rather than only assessing the frequency of students' engagement with it.

Kumar and Kumar (2024) ^[5] investigated the utilization of social media to improve academic achievement among Indian university students via the lens of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework. The research examined performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, enabling environments, and perceived playfulness. The results demonstrated that social and peer influences fostered favorable perceptions of utilizing social media for educational purposes, however the potential for misuse

prompted concerns that necessitated suitable institutional oversight. Salari et al. (2025) ^[9] performed a systematic study and meta-analysis examining the effects of social networking addiction on the academic performance of university students worldwide. The research amalgamated findings related to social networking addiction and academic achievement, highlighting that excessive use of social networks may pose educational hazards. The study, as a meta-analysis, offers more robust data than singular descriptive studies and underscores the significance of investigating excessive or addicted social media usage in relation to students' academic performance. Lukose and Agbeyangi (2025) ^[6] investigated the impact of social media on the academic performance of 71 students at Walter Sisulu University, Buffalo City Campus. The research indicated that while social media might aid academic endeavors, it primarily served as a diversion for the study group. A significant percentage of students indicated that they dedicate over four hours daily to social media, with some noting adverse impacts on their assignment completion. The writers advocated for improved time management and intentional incorporation of social media in educational practices.

Methodology

The current investigation employed a descriptive research framework to analyze social media usage trends and their impact on academic achievement among undergraduate students. The research was carried out at selected Degree colleges of Bagalkot Districts. A cohort of 140 undergraduate students was chosen for the research. Primary data were gathered via a structured questionnaire that encompassed students' demographic traits, frequently utilized social media platforms, daily time spent on social media, principal motivations for social media engagement, educational applications of social media, and students' views on its impact on academic endeavors. The evaluation of academic achievement was conducted using the students' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The gathered data were systematically arranged, tabulated, and examined thru descriptive statistical methods, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The results were illustrated via four tables detailing the demographic traits of the respondents, their social media usage habits, CGPA distribution, and a descriptive analysis contrasting daily social media engagement with average CGPA. Given that the research was confined to descriptive analysis, no inferential statistical methods were utilized, and the identified trends were not construed as indicative of a causal link between social media usage and academic achievement.

Result and Discussion

This section displays the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of the participants by the important factors of age and gender. The demographic profile refers to the makeup of the study population.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	No. of Students	Percentage
Age	18–19 years	42	30
	20–21 years	66	47.1
	22–23 years	25	17.9
	24 years and above	7	5
Gender	Male	76	54.3
	Female	64	45.7
Total		140	100

The main age group was 20–21 years with 66 (47.1%) students and 42 (30.0%) students were in the 18–19 years age group as shown in Table 1. Individuals aged 22–23 years accounted for 17.9% and only 5.0% were 24 years or older. In terms of gender, 76 respondents (54.3%) were male and 64 respondents (45.7%) were female. Thus the sample was mainly constituted by persons of the age group 18–21 years.

Table 2: Social Media Usage Patterns among Respondents

Usage characteristic	Category	No. of Students	Percentage
Most-used platform	WhatsApp	49	35
	YouTube	38	27.1
	Instagram	29	20.7
	Facebook	10	7.1
	Telegram/Other	14	10
Daily usage	Less than 1 hour	15	10.7
	1–2 hours	36	25.7
	2–4 hours	52	37.1
	4–6 hours	27	19.3
	More than 6 hours	10	7.1
Main purpose	Entertainment	43	30.7
	Communication	35	25
	Education	31	22.1
	News/information	18	12.9
	Other	13	9.3

As demonstrated in Table 2, the most often used platform was WhatsApp (35.0%), followed by YouTube (27.1%) and Instagram (20.7%). For the everyday use, most of the students, 52 (37.1%) used social media for 2–4 hours daily. Another 27 individuals (19.3%) spent 4–6 hours and 10 persons (7.1%) spent greater than six hours every day. Entertainment (30.7%) was the most common reason for use, followed by communication (25.0%) and education (22.1%). The results show that social media is used for leisure and educational purposes, but the leisure purpose is more dominant.

Table 3: Daily Social Media Usage and Mean CGPA

Daily social media use	Number of students	Mean CGPA
Less than 1 hour	15	7.32
1–2 hours	36	7.18
2–4 hours	52	6.91
4–6 hours	27	6.45
More than 6 hours	10	5.96
Total	140	6.89

Table 3. Detailed comparison between the average CGPA and the daily activity on social media. The study indicated that students who spend less than one hour each day on social media had the highest average CGPA of 7.32. Students spending 1–2 hours had an average CGPA of 7.18 while students spending 2–4 hours had a mean 6.91 CGPA. Those who spent 4–6 hours had an average CGPA of 6.45 and those who spent more than six hours had an average CGPA of 5.96.

This tendency indicates that the current cohort has inferior academic achievement with increased social media use. This implies that excess use of social media can interfere with school focus and study time. However, the observed pattern cannot be taken as the statistically confirmed causal association, since only descriptive statistics were utilised.

The present study was conducted to study the social media usage habits and its impact on academic performance of 140 undergraduate students selected from various degree colleges. The findings suggest that social media plays a big role in the daily lives of students, with WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram being the most frequently used platforms. Many kids said they spend between two and four hours a day on social media, but a smaller, though still considerable, share said they spend more than four hours a day on social media. This means that social media occupies a lot of time of students and it can influence the way they allocate the time between academic activities and recreation. The analysis indicated that WhatsApp was the most used platform (35.0%) followed by YouTube (27.1%) and Instagram (20.7%). The availability of these platforms is due to their usefulness in communication, information distribution, video based education and entertainment. This finding is in line with recent research demonstrating social media has become a major component of college students' academic and social lives. In their comprehensive study, Masalimova et al. (2023) ^[7] mention that social networking platforms offer means for collaboration, information sharing and education, but overindulgence could result in negative academic consequences.

The present study found that 37.1% of students used social media for 2-4 hours every day, 19.3% used it for 4-6 hours and 7.1% spent more than six hours. Therefore, more than half of the participants used social media for more than two hours a day. This finding is crucial since it can decrease the period of study for a long time. The social media behaviors of undergraduate students and the time spent on social networking were identified by Quiñonez-Choquecota et al. (2023) ^[8] as important for academic progress.

The findings showed that the predominant use of social media was for enjoyment (30.7%) followed by communication (25.0%) and educational purposes (22.1%). This implies that while students utilise social media for instructional objectives, its recreational use is still more dominant. Thus social media can have both positive and negative influence on academic life. Al-Rahmi et al. Recent scholars have argued that a purposeful involvement with social media can increase knowledge sharing, collaboration, and education, but unregulated usage may create distractions.

The main finding of this study is the difference in average CGPA in relation to daily usage of social media. The average CGPA of students who spent less than one hour on social media was 7.32 while the mean CGPA of students who spent 1-2 hours on social media was 7.18. The average CGPA of students who spent 2-4 hours was 6.91, students who spent 4-6 hours was 6.45 and students who spent above six hours per day was 5.96. This downward trend suggests greater social media activity is connected with slightly lower academic achievement in the study participants.

This finding is consistent with the work of Salari et al. (2025) ^[9] who in their systematic review and meta-analysis reported evidence of detrimental academic impacts associated with social networking addiction among university students. Their research highlights the consequences of over social networking as a possible threat to academic achievements. Similarly, Lukose and Agbeyangi (2025) ^[6] noted that social media may be a distraction for university students especially when they spend many hours a day on social networking sites.

At the same time, the present results should not be interpreted to mean that all social media activity is harmful. Students that use social media for educational purposes can get useful learning resources. In the present study, 22.1% of respondents stated that education was the main reason for using social media. The result supports the argument of Kumar and Kumar (2024) ^[5] that social media can be an educational tool for the Indian university students if used with a purpose and in the right situations.

The present study also found that pupils experienced academic issues such less time to study, lack of concentration and procrastination. The results are consistent with the findings of Deepa, Sujatha, and Baber (2022) ^[2] who studied the link between social media engagement, academic distraction, and academic performance of university students, and the authors highlighted the significance of attention regulation in understanding students' academic outcomes. The data hint that the problem may not be social media availability, but rather students' ability to control their attention and manage their use.

The findings are in line with the study of Sharma and Behl (2022) ^[10] which indicated that the impact of social media on students' academic performance can change depending on personality attributes and usage patterns. This points to the need of steering clear of simplistic notions of social media as all good or all bad. But its influence depends on the length of use, how it is used and how students manage their online activities.

Conclusion

The study studied the use of social media and academic performance of 140 under-graduates of selected degree College of Bagalkot area. The data indicate that students use WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram a lot. 2-4 hours a day was spent by many students on social media for fun, interaction and education.

The CGPA investigation revealed that students who used social media for less than six hours a day had a better average CGPA than students who used social media for more than six hours a day, who had the lowest. Thus, social media overuse may have negative effects on academic achievement due to time spent on studies, diversions, and procrastination. Social media can be helpful for learning if it is used to share instructive movies, information and intellectual conversations.

The study concludes that the time spent on social media and the reason for its use determine its effect on academic achievement. Students should be prompted to minimise their use of social media, improve their time management, and utilise educational tools. Institutions of higher learning can foster responsible social media use by raising awareness and digital proficiency among their students. The present study used descriptive statistics, thus more research with bigger sample sizes and inferential statistical methods is needed to assess the strength and significance of the link between social media engagement and academic achievement.

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