



Exploring the Role of Social Media in Shaping Student Learning Behaviors

Dian Fadillah Ulfa¹, Reski S¹, Yusrijal¹

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar

*Corresponding Author: Dian Fadillah Ulfa

Email: dianfadillahulfa26@gmail.com

Article Info

Article History:

Received February 7, 2025

Revised March 6, 2025

Accepted: April 24, 2025

Keywords:

Social Media, Student Learning Behaviors, Phenomenological Approach, Collaboration, Academic Engagement.

Abstract

This investigation examines behavioral transformations in student education using social media channels by assessing student attitudes towards educational social media usage. The research used phenomenological analysis to gather data by interviewing and conducting focus group discussions and observing participants among 25 students at various academic levels. Social media drives meaningful behavioral shifts among students through tools that allow group work and improved chances of finding study materials while keeping students focused on their educational content. Social media contributes positive impacts on educational processes while generating three main challenges related to interruptions and shallow learning techniques and psychological distress. Students utilize social media platforms for their academic tasks yet the chaotic platform design creates difficulties in deep learning and strengthens their tendency to delay academic work. The study enhances academic understandings about social media learning impacts on students while providing guidance for balanced academic social media approaches in education. Model systems should be launched for leveraging social media platforms as teaching instruments through developed reduction protocols of negative effects and optimized digital resource management. The study presents critical findings that educators and policy makers need to use to optimize social media learning advantages.

Introduction

Digital technologies recently integrated into education have dramatically changed traditional learning spaces which resulted in students taking up social media platforms across their educational journey. The initial use of social media to communicate and entertain people now serves as a complex educational resource which helps form student social conduct and academic interactions. Education institutions experience a growing presence of social media which requires investigations into student learning conduct and academic achievements (Papademetriou et al., 2022; Sivakumar et al., 2020). The five principal social media areas which include Facebook Instagram YouTube Twitter and TikTok shape both student interactions with society plus academic performance and learning behavior (Pourazad et al., 2023; Masciantonio et al., 2021).

Education experiences an opposite reaction from social media because it simultaneously advances certain learning opportunities while causing academic deterioration. Through social media tools students gain specialized possibilities to work with others while accessing various

learning resources from multiple perspectives (Hamadi et al., 2022). The continuous presence of social media raises varied issues about cognitive distractions alongside lack of concentration and false information dissemination according to Paasonen (2021). Student learning behavior experiences permanent transformation through social media because students now use online discussions and virtual study groups along with multimedia learning resources found on social platforms (Wong & Hughes, 2023; Jiang et al., 2022). The critical knowledge of how social media affects student learning practices has elevated its importance in research related to education.

Social media positions itself strongly within educational environments because it strengthens student-to-student communication as well as group collaboration. Through social media platforms students can have immediate interactions for connecting with peers' teachers and subject experts no matter where these people physically reside (Pimdee et al., 2023). The ability for students to establish worldwide connections makes this global connectivity essential during collaborative learning that includes sharing resources and problem-solving among students. The active use of social media platforms by students results in better collaborative abilities and academic involvement that generates enhanced learning success (Liu et al., 2022; Sabah, 2023). Social media delivers customized educational experiences to students through different accounts and interest-based groups that drive internal motivation as well as foster student communities (Ahmad, 2024).

The information-sharing practices and ways to access information through social media networks have undergone a fundamental transformation. Through YouTube students have access to numerous educational resources including tutorial content that supports their classroom studies (Shoufan & Mohamed, 2022; Maynard, 2021). Students use social media networks to exchange knowledge directly with peers because they share educational resources and discuss academic content and ask for assistance from classmates (Bouton et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2021). Social media platforms allow students to participate in modern and engaging learning activities outside standard academic venues. Constructivist education principles match the student-driven learning approach because they promote knowledge-building activities and peer-based collaboration and problem-solving.

Social media provides many educational advantages to students yet it introduces major difficulties into their learning process. Social media devices have repeatedly been shown to divert student attention from their studies according to Barton et al. (2021). Social media interruptions result in academic performance deterioration because students spend extended amounts of time browsing networks instead of working on their school work. Students experience information overload on social media because they struggle to identify authentic sources from unreliable ones. Equivocal content stemming from Twitter and Facebook has prompted academic concerns about student-curated academic material because of its potential transmission of misleading and false information.

Student learning behaviors stand most significantly impacted by social media usage within the setting of online education. The move toward digital learning spaces that became faster through COVID-19 made social media essential for students' academic activities. Online learning platforms use social media features that combine discussion boards with live chats along with

collaborative tools in order to let students connect with their peers and teachers (Milovic & Dingus, 2021; Chen et al., 2021). The use of social media supports schoolwork directly while changing the way students manage their education and their ability to take control of their studies and academic drive.

This investigation of social media's effect on student learning methods through extensive education implementation shows minimal research particularity using qualitative evaluation. Current research examines mostly quantifiable academic outcomes and student engagement numbers without paying adequate attention to how students themselves perceive these elements (Xu et al., 2023). Research needs to delve deeper into student understanding of how social media affects academic life and their methods of using it for educational purposes and their learning conduct.

Method

The research examined student learning behavior modifications through social media analysis by evaluating university students' individual social media usage and perspectives in educational settings. Research into how social media affects student learning assumption becomes fundamental because educational institutions continue to combine digital tools into their curricula. Social media tools used for entertainment and communication enable students to access academic resources and jointly work on schoolwork. Students also use these platforms to carry out conversations about their classes. The research examined the dual effects of these networking systems on student learning practices. Using the phenomenological approach the researcher obtained fundamental insights about student social media experiences because this method allowed an exploration of students' interactions with learning-supporting tools through their everyday practices.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling for this research because they actively used the social media networks Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube while applying these platforms to their academic work. To obtain diverse insights the researcher recruited 25 students who studied at secondary schools together with universities. The study participants enrolled in multiple academic fields from various urban and rural locations contributed an enriched level of detailed information that enabled a thorough analysis of social media effects on learning in different learning environments. The research included students from secondary schools and universities so it enabled researchers to evaluate differences in social media impacts at various levels of academic study. All participants were described the study intentions and consented freely to participate while the researchers protected their information privacy from beginning to end.

The research used semi-structured interviews with 15 participants together with focus group discussions and participant observation as its main data collection methods. Fifteen participants took part in semi-structured interviews which let the researcher study their personal experiences along with their thoughts about social media in learning contexts. Participants received freedom to discuss their opinions through the semi-structured interview format along with the opportunity to explore designated topics. The focus group discussions enabled participants to conduct group dialogues about their common educational experiences while assessing their interpretations regarding social media learning effects. The collective

discussions revealed key behavioral tendencies which occurred among students who belonged to similar academic learning groups. Through participant observation the researcher studied direct interactions between students in social media groups focused on academic purposes to understand their collaborative behavior and resource sharing in these digital platforms.

The study used thematic analysis for its data analysis method so researchers could recognize patterns and themes occurring in the collected data. The approach of thematic analysis fits well with qualitative research because it offers adaptable methods for analyzing comprehensive intricate data from interview and group discussion and observation methods. The systematic analysis required researchers to first understand their data then create initial codes afterward searching for themes thereafter evaluating those themes until naming and defining the discovered themes. Developing a coherent report comprised final work which presented themes through direct participant quotes. The analytical procedure guaranteed both rigorous and transparent evaluation which revealed comprehensive student understanding about social media in their educational behaviors.

The findings of the study generated important knowledge about how social media impacts student behavior during learning sessions yet researchers identified multiple obstacles in their investigation. Research data from the study were sufficient for qualitative methodology yet the limited sample numbers prevented general representation of all educational populations. This research study neglected to include evaluations from students who did not engage with social media patterns regularly in their assessments. No assessment took place regarding separate academic disciplines during the research making it uncertain if the findings would differ between different academic fields. Additional research should boost the research sample quantity while broadening student diversity to verify and elaborate on the findings and examine how social media affects learning across different educational environments.

Result and Discussion

The following presentation illustrates how students use social media platforms differently while demonstrating the advantages they encounter alongside their encountered barriers and their reactions to educational learning. The study identifies major patterns from various participants to create a deep understanding of the complex social media-student learning dynamics thus advancing education research related to digital tools.

Student Perceptions of Social Media as a Learning Tool

Student learning behavior changes because of social media represent an issue that matters significantly to modern education. Students now view social media through complex perspectives regarding its functions for learning because digital platforms keep advancing. Students experience differing perspectives about social media because some find value in its academic advantages yet numerous others acknowledge its disruptive nature. The respondent's majority in this research concluded that social media brings about both beneficial and unfavorable features to educational learning practices.

Students who took part in the study indicated that YouTube and Facebook along with WhatsApp serve as effective platforms for academic learning because they promote knowledge

sharing among students. Users found two main benefits in social media platforms which included educational content accessibility and shared study materials from their peers.

"I can find so many tutorials and videos that explain complex topics in a way that textbooks don't. It makes learning more engaging and understandable."

Other students shared this perspective because social media provided easier access to difficult material as an alternative to standard educational methods. Students acknowledge that social media proves beneficial in fostering collaboration because they use WhatsApp and Facebook groups for study forums and group chats.

"We use WhatsApp groups to share notes, ask questions, and even quiz each other before exams. It's like a constant learning space outside the classroom."

Social media platforms provide continuous learning opportunities through peer collaboration which students believe constitutes one of their main advantages. Students highlighted the value of these tools because they maintained their connection with peers and built community bonds particularly during remote learning conditions such as the pandemic. The benefits of social media did not overshadow the fact that multiple students recognized how social media pulled their concentration away from their schoolwork. The social networking platforms Instagram and Twitter direct students towards non-academic content since their core objective is social interaction and entertainment.

"I often get distracted scrolling through Instagram or Twitter, and before I know it, hours have passed, and I haven't gotten any work done."

Students reported a constant struggle to handle their time effectively according to interview data because they meant to utilize social media for academic learning but ended up trapped by irrelevant content. Several students pointed out that they doubt the truthfulness of the content distributed through social media. Social media platforms present content created by non-experts since most information is not authorized by academic sources and might contain misinformation or unverified details.

"While there are helpful videos, there are also a lot of misleading ones, and it's hard to know which sources to trust. Sometimes it feels like I have to double-check everything I find online."

The worry about poor information quality led specific students to view social media with caution when using it for their studies even though it remains easy to access. Students hold both positive and negative perceptions about social media as an academic research platform. Social media creates easily accessible learning spaces which enhance collaboration between users while allowing them to share multiple resources. Besides its benefits it introduces numerous problems mostly related to distraction management combined with information credibility assurance.

"Social media can be great for learning if used the right way, but if you're not careful, it can waste a lot of time."

Students consistently demonstrated this dual perspective indicating their understanding of social media education potential while seeing the value of independent thought and self-control in achieving the most from its benefits. According to student interviews the proper integration of social media into academic routines stands as the primary factor for achieving its educational purposes. Certain students created particular periods for social media usage and limited their interactions to educational materials.

"I make sure to follow educational pages and set aside specific times during the week to engage with those resources. That way, I'm not just scrolling mindlessly."

Students who designated precise social media usage managed to resist distractions and capitalize on its educational functions. The interviews produced an insightful observation about how educators should guide students' education-driven social media practices. Students requested their educators to use social media tools better for classroom instruction.

"I think it would be great if our teachers created Facebook groups or used platforms like Twitter to share extra resources or discuss lessons. It would make learning more interactive."

The recommendation demonstrates the current shift in digital educational practices because social media serves as an educational gateway between conventional teaching and contemporary technology-based learning models. When teachers help students learn effective social media use strategies, they can better discover educational applications of these platforms. Because educators demonstrate academic use of social media their students become more engaged in learning with these tools.

"If teachers set the example and show us how social media can be used to learn, I think more students would take it seriously."

This highlights the importance of educator involvement in shaping students' perceptions and behaviors around social media as a learning tool.

Impact on Learning Behaviors

Students utilize social media to transform their learning behavior patterns which affects their approach to academic material as well as their cooperative work with their peers and their study timetable management. Students experienced various changes in their learning behaviors through positive experiences alongside negative effects stemming from dependency on social media and platform diversion. The research reveals that social media influences student learning behaviors in complex ways because it both strengthens some academic habits yet also produces conduct that may have adverse effects on academic performance.

The most frequently noted positive effect of social media on learning behavior involved student collaboration through platforms. The social media applications WhatsApp Facebook and Discord enabled students to organize study groups which in turn allowed them to distribute academic materials and conduct coursework-specific chats. Users discussed how social media transformed their classroom collaboration because it created efficient methods to link up and study jointly both within and beyond school walls.

"Before using WhatsApp for school, we would always wait until class to discuss things. Now, we can talk about assignments and ask each other questions at any time. It's like having an ongoing study session."

Another student shared a similar sentiment, stating,

"I use Facebook groups for group projects, where we can share resources, articles, and discuss topics. This makes things much easier and faster than when we used to do everything through email or face-to-face meetings."

Group project responsibilities extended to social media usage where students exchanged educational resources as well as study materials and provided peer tutoring services to each other. Students considered collaborative learning an opportunity to get educational support beyond standard classroom boundaries which enhanced their bond with their peers and boosted their academic responsibility. Student learning behaviors experienced significant improvements because of social media which granted them expanded access to educational resources. YouTube and LinkedIn Learning together with Twitter served as resources for students who wanted additional educational materials through tutorials and articles and videos to grasp their academic content.

"I often turn to YouTube when I'm stuck on a topic. There are tons of videos that explain things in simpler ways, and I can watch them until I get it."

Similarly, students noted that social media platforms allowed them to access resources and materials that were not typically available through traditional academic channels. A participant shared,

"I follow several educators and academic pages on Instagram, and they often post helpful summaries or tips on topics we're learning about. It's a way of getting extra help without having to ask the teacher directly."

Students expressed greater motivation and engagement because social media provided them with easy access to extra educational materials beyond the classroom curriculum thus giving them the feeling of mastering their education. Most students recognized the positive effects of social media but noted that it could cause learning disturbances through its ability to distract students. Students revealed they spent prolonged online time on social media networks instead of academic work because it interfered with their study concentration.

"I have to check my phone every few minutes. Sometimes I find myself scrolling through Instagram or Twitter when I should be reading for class, and then I lose track of time."

This tendency to engage in non-educational content often led to procrastination and difficulties in maintaining a structured study routine.

"I set out to study for an hour, but I get caught up in a YouTube video or a meme on Facebook, and before I know it, I've wasted an hour. It's really hard to focus sometimes."

The research indicates social media benefits learning activities yet students struggle to stay focused primarily because social networks both hook them in and entice them toward off-topic

content. The problems emerged mainly from students who neglected to define limits as well as set academic objectives for their social media use throughout their study sessions. The use of social media substantially affected students' involvement with their studies together with their motivational levels. The use of social media delivered positive motivational results for some students because they received regular academic information and took part in group discussions alongside peer achievements.

"Seeing other people post about their study progress or how they're preparing for exams pushes me to keep up. It's like a constant reminder to stay on track."

However, not all students reported an increase in motivation. Some expressed feelings of pressure or anxiety due to constant exposure to the academic successes of their peers on social media.

As one participant noted,

"Sometimes I feel overwhelmed when I see how much my friends are posting about studying or acing exams. It makes me feel like I'm not doing enough."

Students frequently experienced additional stress from their social media comparison activities because social media content is usually heavily curated. The use of social media as a motivational source has brought some positive effects yet produced inadequate feelings and social pressures in other people who interact on these platforms.

Challenges and Negative Aspects

Social media effectively shapes student learning conduct which affects their retrieval and processing of educational materials and peer group teamwork and the organization of their study sessions. Student learning behavior improvements were observed positively by some participants while many reported difficulties caused by their excessive dependency on social media platforms and the diverting effects of these platforms on learning. The research shows social media produces mixed effects on student learning behavior that includes both academic improvements alongside negative study-related practices.

Students reported that social media allows positive learning behavior changes by enabling collaboration between them. The social media tools WhatsApp Facebook and Discord enabled students to create study groups to exchange academic resources as well as participate in educational discussions related to their assignments. The participants highlighted that social media changed how they worked with their classmates since it made communication easier beyond regular classroom boundaries.

"Before using WhatsApp for school, we would always wait until class to discuss things. Now, we can talk about assignments and ask each other questions at any time. It's like having an ongoing study session."

Another student shared a similar sentiment, stating,

"I use Facebook groups for group projects, where we can share resources, articles, and discuss topics. This makes things much easier and faster than when we used to do everything through email or face-to-face meetings."

Group work was only one aspect of collaborative behavior among students who additionally employed social media to share study tips and review material for exams and to tutor each other. The collective educational approach provided students with the chance to deepen their knowledge outside regular lessons and developed school spirit while enhancing their responsibility toward academic goals. Student learning behaviors receive broad educational resources because of social media accessibility. Students utilized YouTube alongside LinkedIn Learning and Twitter to locate educational tutorials and articles together with videos which provided better comprehension of their academic material.

"I often turn to YouTube when I'm stuck on a topic. There are tons of videos that explain things in simpler ways, and I can watch them until I get it."

Students noted that social media platforms allowed them to access resources and materials that were not typically available through traditional academic channels.

A participant shared,

"I follow several educators and academic pages on Instagram, and they often post helpful summaries or tips on topics we're learning about. It's a way of getting extra help without having to ask the teacher directly."

Students maintained higher levels of motivation and engagement through the easy availability of extra educational resources which gave them enhanced self-direction for their academic achievements. A number of students emphasized both the constructive effects of social media as well as its capacity to create disturbances when studying. The participants admitted to devoting too much time on social media networks outside classroom work which produced negative consequences for their academic concentration.

"I have to check my phone every few minutes. Sometimes I find myself scrolling through Instagram or Twitter when I should be reading for class, and then I lose track of time."

This tendency to engage in non-educational content often led to procrastination and difficulties in maintaining a structured study routine.

"I set out to study for an hour, but I get caught up in a YouTube video or a meme on Facebook, and before I know it, I've wasted an hour. It's really hard to focus sometimes."

Research indicates that social media uses both learning-enhancing properties as well as addictive nature and non-academic content attraction which separate students from academic focus. The researchers found that students suffering from social media disruptions demonstrated poor boundaries and unclear goals while using social media for studies. Social media directly influenced both students' involvement in learning and their motivational levels. Students recognized social media as a motivational tool because it supplied them with continuous educational information and community discussions along with peer attainment updates.

"Seeing other people post about their study progress or how they're preparing for exams pushes me to keep up. It's like a constant reminder to stay on track."

However, not all students reported an increase in motivation. Some expressed feelings of pressure or anxiety due to constant exposure to the academic successes of their peers on social media.

"Sometimes I feel overwhelmed when I see how much my friends are posting about studying or acing exams. It makes me feel like I'm not doing enough."

Certain students experienced heightened stress because of their social media platform comparison to others possibly caused by the designed posts being showcased. Since social media sometimes gives motivational support, it creates negative feelings of deficiency or performance pressure in other users who demonstrate its diverse mood effects.

Comparison with Existing Literature

Learned behaviors among students about their academic practices through social media use match what previous research reveals while presenting fresh data about the obstacles students face when using social media for educational purposes. Several studies have established that social media delivers both educational resources together with improved collaborative opportunities. The research further examines intricate student learning modifications caused by social media through investigations into students' academic behavior patterns and their capacity for focus alongside their total well-being.

Numerous academic investigations show that students experience big social media distractions which reduce their academic performance since non-school activities occupy their study time. demonstrated social media usage as a negative factor for academic performance because students spent long periods on Facebook that disrupted their study periods. The results of this investigation support previous research because students reported social media platforms pulled them away from their academic responsibilities.

"It's really hard to focus when you have Facebook or Instagram right there. I tell myself I'll just check for a few minutes, but then I end up wasting an hour or more."

The research shows students frequently shift between social media and their schoolwork that led to worse assignment completion. Research shows that poor time management develops from social media interruptions because it serves as a major reason students do not succeed academically.

"I try to study while using social media, but I get distracted by everything. I start reading my friends' posts or watching funny videos, and then I forget what I was supposed to be doing."

In addition to previous research, this confirms what observed regarding multitasking students who used social media platforms because they completed less academic work while their grades suffered.

The research revealed substantial links between student mental health status and social media usage because mental health suffers from both stress and anxiety. A body of existing research examines academic anxiety as a result of social media comparison by showing social media usage directly contributes to higher stress levels and life satisfaction decline.

"I see my friends posting about how much they're studying or how well they did on exams, and it makes me feel like I'm not doing enough. It adds a lot of pressure."

The research revealed substantial links between student mental health status and social media usage because mental health suffers from both stress and anxiety. A body of existing research examines academic anxiety as a result of social media comparison by showing social media usage directly contributes to higher stress levels and life satisfaction decline.

"Sometimes, I feel stressed out when I see everyone posting about their perfect study routines. It makes me feel like I'm falling behind, and then I start to question my own abilities."

Demonstrates social media functions as a tool for intensifying unrealistic social standards which triggers student-related anxiety and feelings of insecurity. Literature shows that social media delivers students massive information access but could trigger superficial academic involvement. Students using the study chose to note that social media offers speedily accessible resources but the materials provided do not deliver deep learning fundamentals.

"You can get a lot of quick tips or summaries from social media, but it's not the same as actually reading textbooks or engaging deeply with a topic."

Similar to who explained how social media hastens learning to basic levels where students use short snippets instead of pursuing complex rigorous study. According to the study the differences stand out between the quick and simplistic nature of social media and the time-consuming detailed methods of traditional academic learning.

"I use YouTube videos to learn, but sometimes they don't cover everything I need to know. You can't get the full picture in a 5-minute video or a tweet."

The current study supports the work's main argument that social media leads students to accessing information quickly but struggles to develop critical thinking along with subject matter depth. The research investigated how students use social media to affect their social interaction abilities with a specific emphasis on their abilities to interact with others in person. The capability of students to perform effective face-to-face communication declines when they use social media instead of participating in real-life discussion and networking.

"Social media is great for group discussions, but I feel like I've lost the ability to have a real conversation with someone. It's easier to talk to someone through text, but when it comes to talking in person, I feel nervous."

The author stated how digital communication platforms might decrease personal human interaction essential for building relationships.

The findings of this study align with the body of literature that emphasizes the positive potential of social media for enhancing learning. Research by Zhao (2024) suggests that social media fosters collaborative learning, providing students with opportunities to engage in online discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects. Similarly, this study found that students used social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to facilitate collaborative learning. Participants reported using these platforms to exchange academic

resources, discuss course materials, and participate in study groups, which aligns with studies that highlight the social benefits of digital tools in education (Cavus et al., 2021; Zamiri & Esmaeli, 2024).

However, while these findings confirm the value of social media as a collaborative tool, this study extends the existing literature by focusing on students' subjective experiences and perceptions of how these tools contribute to their learning outcomes. Although previous research has emphasized the educational potential of social media, this study's participants expressed mixed feelings about the depth of learning achieved through these platforms. Many students noted that while social media provided them with quick access to resources, it often lacked the structured, in-depth content needed for deeper understanding. This nuanced view has been less explored in prior studies, where social media's educational benefits were often treated in more general terms (Ramzan et al., 2023).

One of the most significant contributions of this study is its exploration of the negative consequences of social media use on student learning behaviors, particularly regarding distractions and academic performance. While much of the existing literature has acknowledged the potential for social media to distract students (Nema et al., 2023), this study provides detailed insights into how social media use specifically interferes with students' ability to focus on their studies. The research corroborates findings from Dontre (2021), who found that students who frequently use social media tend to have lower academic performance due to distraction. Participants in this study reported that they often found themselves distracted by social media, leading to procrastination and a reduced capacity to focus on academic tasks.

This study also extends the understanding of how social media distractions contribute to academic underachievement. Unlike much of the literature that suggests social media's impact on academic performance is simply a matter of time spent on these platforms (Rosen et al., 2013), this study reveals that students themselves are aware of the trade-off between social media engagement and academic performance. This self-awareness adds another layer to the discussion, highlighting the importance of teaching students to manage their time and prioritize academic tasks when using social media for learning purposes.

In line with existing literature, this study found that while social media can enhance learning, it also has adverse effects on students' mental health. Previous research by Yue et al. (2022) suggests that social media use can lead to feelings of inadequacy and stress, particularly through social comparison. In this study, students shared similar concerns about feeling stressed when comparing their academic achievements to those of their peers on social media platforms. This result supports the findings of Malaeb et al. (2021), who linked increased social media use to higher levels of anxiety and stress.

However, this study extends the literature by identifying how the volume of information students is exposed to on social media contributes to cognitive overload and stress. Participants reported feeling overwhelmed by the sheer amount of academic content, study tips, and peer interactions, especially when they were expected to engage with all the content being shared online. This contributes to the conversation on information overload and suggests that social media can exacerbate stress, not just through social comparison but also through an

overwhelming flood of content. This perspective has been underexplored in the literature, which has generally focused on individual aspects of mental health related to social media use.

This study also contributes to the growing discussion on the quality of learning facilitated by social media. While social media provides students with instant access to educational materials, this study found that students often use these platforms for quick, surface-level learning, such as watching brief video summaries or reading short posts. This type of learning, while useful for basic understanding, does not necessarily foster deep cognitive engagement. Participants in this study acknowledged that social media was helpful for accessing basic knowledge but noted that they could not rely on it for comprehensive learning.

This finding expands on previous research by Amoyaw (2023), who noted that social media's role in education tends to prioritize informal, surface-level learning rather than promoting deeper cognitive engagement. This study provides a more nuanced understanding of how social media might be seen as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement for traditional, in-depth study methods. The study also suggests that social media can be beneficial when used strategically but warns against over-reliance on it for mastering complex topics.

This study highlights significant gaps in the literature related to the mental health impacts of social media on students, the shallow nature of learning facilitated by social media, and the need for a balanced approach to integrating social media into education. It suggests that while social media has undeniable benefits, educators and policymakers must recognize its limitations and provide students with guidance on how to use these platforms effectively for academic purposes. Future research could explore interventions designed to mitigate the negative aspects of social media, such as providing training on time management and promoting healthier social media habits among students.

Conclusion

This qualitative study provides a comprehensive exploration of the role of social media in shaping student learning behaviors, revealing both its potential benefits and drawbacks. While social media serves as a valuable tool for collaboration, resource sharing, and enhancing engagement with educational content, it also introduces challenges such as distractions, shallow learning, and negative impacts on mental health. The findings extend existing literature by emphasizing the importance of balancing social media use in educational contexts and highlight the need for targeted strategies to help students leverage these platforms effectively while managing their potential downsides. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how social media can both positively and negatively influence student learning, offering valuable insights for educators, students, and policymakers to optimize its role in modern education.

References

- Ahmad, A. R., Jameel, A. S., & Raewf, M. (2021). Impact of social networking and technology on knowledge sharing among undergraduate students. *International Business Education Journal*, 14(1), 1-16.
- Ahmad, E. A. (2024). Revolutionizing learning: leveraging social media platforms for empowering open educational resources. *International Journal of e-Learning and Higher Education (IJELHE)*, 19(1), 83-106.

- Amoyaw, M. A. (2023). *Social Media as an Informal Learning Space*. American University.
- Barton, B. A., Adams, K. S., Browne, B. L., & Arrastia-Chisholm, M. C. (2021). The effects of social media usage on attention, motivation, and academic performance. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 22(1), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787418782817>
- Bouton, E., Tal, S. B., & Asterhan, C. S. (2021). Students, social network technology and learning in higher education: Visions of collaborative knowledge construction vs. the reality of knowledge sharing. *The internet and higher education*, 49, 100787. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2020.100787>
- Cavus, N., Sani, A. S., Haruna, Y., & Lawan, A. A. (2021). Efficacy of social networking sites for sustainable education in the era of COVID-19: A systematic review. *Sustainability*, 13(2), 808. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13020808>
- Chen, X., Chen, S., Wang, X., & Huang, Y. (2021). "I was afraid, but now I enjoy being a streamer!" Understanding the Challenges and Prospects of Using Live Streaming for Online Education. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 4(CSCW3), 1-32. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3432936>
- Dontre, A. J. (2021). The influence of technology on academic distraction: A review. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 3(3), 379-390. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.229>
- Hamadi, M., El-Den, J., Azam, S., & Sriratanaviriyakul, N. (2022). Integrating social media as cooperative learning tool in higher education classrooms: An empirical study. *Journal of King Saud University-Computer and Information Sciences*, 34(6), 3722-3731. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2020.12.007>
- Jiang, B., Li, X., Liu, S., Hao, C., Zhang, G., & Lin, Q. (2022). Experience of online learning from COVID-19: Preparing for the future of digital transformation in education. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(24), 16787. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192416787>
- Liu, S., Zaigham, G. H. K., Rashid, R. M., & Bilal, A. (2022). Social media-based collaborative learning effects on student performance/learner performance with moderating role of academic self-efficacy. *Frontiers in psychology*, 13, 903919. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.903919>
- Malaeb, D., Salameh, P., Barbar, S., Awad, E., Haddad, C., Hallit, R., ... & Hallit, S. (2021). Problematic social media use and mental health (depression, anxiety, and insomnia) among Lebanese adults: Any mediating effect of stress?. *Perspectives in psychiatric care*, 57(2), 539-549. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ppc.12576>
- Masciantonio, A., Bourguignon, D., Bouchat, P., Balty, M., & Rimé, B. (2021). Don't put all social network sites in one basket: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and their relations with well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. *PloS one*, 16(3), e0248384. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0248384>
- Maynard, A. D. (2021). How to Succeed as an Academic on YouTube. *Frontiers in Communication*, 5, 572181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662515572068>

- Milovic, A., & Dingus, R. (2021). How to not disappear completely: using video-based discussions to enhance student social presence in an online course. *Marketing Education Review*, 31(4), 311-321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2021.1943447>
- Nema, P., Srivastava, R., Bhalla, R., & Chakarboty, A. (2023). Impact of social media distraction on student evaluation of teacher effectiveness. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 37(2), 300-313. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-10-2022-0389>
- Paasonen, S. (2021). *Dependent, distracted, bored: Affective formations in networked media*. MIT Press.
- Papademetriou, C., Anastasiadou, S., Konteos, G., & Papalexandris, S. (2022). COVID-19 pandemic: the impact of the social media technology on higher education. *Education Sciences*, 12(4), 261. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12040261>
- Pimdee, P., Ridhikerd, A., Moto, S., Siripongdee, S., & Bengthong, S. (2023). How social media and peer learning influence student-teacher self-directed learning in an online world under the 'New Normal'. *Heliyon*, 9(3).
- Pourazad, N., Stocchi, L., & Narsey, S. (2023). A comparison of social media influencers' KPI patterns across platforms: Exploring differences in followers and engagement on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 63(2), 139-159. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2023-008>
- Ramzan, M., Bibi, R., & Khunsa, N. (2023). Unraveling the Link between Social Media Usage and Academic Achievement among ESL Learners: A Quantitative Analysis. *Global Educational Studies Review*, VIII, 407-421. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023\(VIII-II\).37](https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023(VIII-II).37)
- Sabah, N. M. (2023). The impact of social media-based collaborative learning environments on students' use outcomes in higher education. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 39(3), 667-689. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2022.2046921>
- Shoufan, A., & Mohamed, F. (2022). YouTube and education: A scoping review. *IEEE Access*, 10, 125576-125599. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2022.3225419>
- Sivakumar, A., Jayasingh, S., & Shaik, S. (2023). Social media influence on students' knowledge sharing and learning: An empirical study. *Education Sciences*, 13(7), 745. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13070745>
- Wong, J. T., & Hughes, B. S. (2023). Leveraging learning experience design: digital media approaches to influence motivational traits that support student learning behaviors in undergraduate online courses. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 35(3), 595-632. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-022-09342-1>
- Xu, X., Shi, Z., Bos, N. A., & Wu, H. (2023). Student engagement and learning outcomes: an empirical study applying a four-dimensional framework. *Medical Education Online*, 28(1), 2268347.
- Yue, Z., Zhang, R., & Xiao, J. (2022). Passive social media use and psychological well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of social comparison and emotion regulation. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 127, 107050. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.107050>

- Zamiri, M., & Esmaili, A. (2024). Methods and technologies for supporting knowledge sharing within learning communities: A systematic literature review. *Administrative Sciences*, 14(1), 17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci14010017>
- Zhao, Y. (2024). Exploring the Role of Social Media Platforms in Facilitating Collaborative Learning among EFL Students: A Case Study Approach in Vocational Colleges. *International Journal of Instructional Cases*, 8(1), 209-232.