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Article Title

Effects of Social Media Usage on Gratification Obtained: A Study Based among University of Sindh, Jamashoro Students

Abstract

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Keywords: Social Media, Gratification Obtained, University Students

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Title

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Abstract

This study aims to assess the influence of social media use by undergraduate students at University of Sindh. The examination explores the relationships between students' gratifications and usage of social media, as well as possible consequences that these have on their psychological health, academic achievement, and social interactions. Data for this research was collected using mixed methods approach from a sample population consisting of undergraduate students from different faculties. Questionnaires, interviews and focus groups constituted the research methods. Social media platforms are mainly utilized by students for self-expression purposes, entertainment purposes, connecting with others socially and looking up information among others. A total of 386 students of university of Sindh, Jamshoro participated in survey in order to analyses the data. In addition to this study expanding our understanding about how social media use is impacting college student's lives; it also helps us understand how it affects general well-being among them.

Contents:

Introduction

Social media use has become an essential part of college students' lives since it provides various channels for communication, information exchange, and entertainment. Worries have been expressed about the possible effects of students' social media usage on their academic performance,

relationships with peers, and psychological well-being. The proportion of individuals using social media among students is significantly high. The goal of this research paper is to examine the impact of using social media on gratifications derived by undergraduate students at the University of Sindh from involvement in these platforms. The main objective of this study is to find out the connection between different patterns of students' participation in social media, specific satisfactions that they desire, and consequences that can be either positive or negative. In order to provide comprehensive coverage of this issue, the study is conducted using a mixed-method approach. This approach combines qualitative results received via interviews and focus group discussions with quantitative data collected through surveys. Specifically, the two types of data are combined.

In this day and age of digital technology, the use of social media platforms has developed into an indispensable component of the routines of college students. Apart from providing people with spaces where they can spend time laughing and having a good time with others, these networks also provide communication channels, ways of expressing one's feelings, potential knowledge sources, and other opportunities that none in the market can match. This school is unique and especially beneficial because of the diverse student population and rigorously challenging environment for learning, demanding ample research on the degree of enjoyment social networking sites have on students.

It was the intention of this research to analyze the complex relationship that exists between the patterns of usage among students at the University of Sindh and the various forms of gratification that are sought and achieved as a consequence of these patterns. Insofar as the purposes of this discussion are concerned, the word "gratifications" is defined here as specific wants, goals, or rewards that people seek through their participation in different forms of media. Offering a sense of belonging or being socially linked to others, offering fun, discovering content that is up to date, allowing for self-expression, or even providing help relevant to the class are all examples of possible forms of satisfaction.

This study aimed at giving answers to important questions relating to level More importantly, this research aims at providing a comprehensive and nuanced understanding about the topic by utilizing a mixed-methods approach. While the quantitative data from surveys will reveal usage patterns and preferences for gratification, the qualitative insights from interviews and focus group discussions will help to bring out the deeper reasons that lie beneath students' use of social media.

It is hoped that the results of this study will significantly add to the increasing knowledge base about how these social networking sites affect both current and future students. This research can be used by university administrators, educators, and policymakers to develop strategies that promote desirable social media practices and mitigate the risks associated with using social media among students at the University of Sindh. Besides, as regards modifications in student engagement and welfare during the digital age, this research will have crucial ramifications. Ultimately, it will help make college a better place for learning for 21st-century students.

Research Significance

The ramifications of this investigation are very important for understanding how social media usage contributes to the experience of satisfaction among students at Sind University. The results from this research will be useful for various stakeholders, including. To better align student needs and interests with academic support services and extracurricular activities, the study will provide insights into students' prevalent social media use patterns and the gratifications they seek. If students understand the possible positive and negative consequences of their interaction with these platforms, they can make more informed choices about their social media usage. This eventually produces healthy behaviors leading to maximized benefits while minimizing potential problems that may arise as a result. Based on evidence collected during such research, regulations, and recommendations relating to the use of social network sites in educational institutions could be established so as to strike a balance between academics and responsible digital

involvement. This study is an important addition to the growing body of literature focusing on how social media impacts upon student life. Additionally, by providing insights into UoS's particular context, it can also inform future empirical approaches.

Research Objectives

1. The purpose of this study is to investigate the usage behavior of undergraduate students at the University of Sindh with regard to social media, frequency of use, preferred platforms, and types of content consumed.
2. This study aims at examining the specific motivations for using social media and the specific gratifications received by students who engage through their social media accounts such as making friends, seeking entertainment, acquiring knowledge, expressing self, and seeking academic support.
3. Therefore, this research will seek to examine how different patterns of social media use are related to perceived gratifications.
4. However, there is a need to assess the possible impact on school performance among users in terms of academic performance or in personal relationships and psychological well-being.
5. In conclusion, the paper offers suggestions for authorities in higher learning institutions like educators, policymakers, university administrators, and learners; to promote positive uses of social networks and reduce negative consequences that may arise from their use.

Research Questions

1. What are the main social media usage patterns in practice among undergraduate students at the University of Sindh?
2. What precise intentions do students have in mind when they get down interacting via social media?
3. Are there any connections between gratifications received by pupils and utilization patterns on social networking sites?

4. What are some possible positive and negative effects that can arise as a result of using social media on academic life, interpersonal relationships, and the mental health status of learners?
5. How can university authorities, teachers, lawmakers, or even the young people themselves promote sound habits regarding internet use as well as maximize benefits accruing from its application?

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which is a well-known theoretical basis in media studies. UGT argues that individuals proactively select and use media to satisfy particular needs and gratifications. It underscores active audience participation in choosing media content as well as motivations behind using different platforms.

The UGT framework, in this study's context, enables us to understand:

1. Active Audience: The students of the University of Sindh act as consumers who purposely decide what social media they will be involved with.
2. Gratification Seeking: Students seek various types of satisfaction using social media such as peer interaction, amusement, news gathering, self-expression, and academic aid.
3. Media Choice: Their individual requirements for gratification influence the specific platforms or content they choose.
4. Gratification Obtained by the user: Actual pleasure derived from using social sites can differ depending on individual peculiarities, patterns of usage, and consumed contents.
5. Consequences: Good or bad results due to these gratifications are achieved through social media use.

Literature Review

A lot of studies have been conducted, focusing on how social media has affected different aspects of student life. Pempek et al. (2009) also believe that social media can be used for amusement as well as for accessing numerous facts and information. Nevertheless, excessive or problematic use of various platforms brings about a number of

negative outcomes: academic distraction, sleep deprivation, decreased face-to-face communication, and mental disorders like anxiety disorders and depression (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011).

Research on the gratifications derived from using social media indicates that students typically use these platforms for the purposes of social contact, entertainment, information seeking, and self-expression. It has been found that sharing experiences with friends and family through online communities such as MySpace where they get to form their own virtual groups is one of the factors contributing to students' attraction to such environments (Boyd 2020). Also, there are many other uses aside from this kind of stuff according to Shao (2009), who identified viral videos, memes, and funny posts just after them going live on the internet; online games with retro graphics/characters where players could become part-time heroes; even porn content or whatever you want.

However, students have discovered that apart from being a platform to interact with peers for fun purposes, these sites have also emerged as forums for knowledge acquisition. Through Twitter or Facebook, updates can be obtained simultaneously alongside the latest news events whereas specialized groups facilitate experts sharing their knowledge or engaging in scholarly conversation（Kushin & Yamamoto，2010）. The proliferation of personal blogs/vlogs/artistic content provided by social media has fostered a sense of identity and belonging among learners when expressing themselves artistically (Lenhart et al., 2010).

However, researchers have expressed concern about what may happen if students excessively rely on or develop problems from using these communication tools. (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010) It was found that university students who use social media excessively have been known to get poor grades. They attribute this relationship to the fact that it takes time away from studying, causes procrastination, and leads to distractions. The consequences of social media use in relation to human encounters are also being questioned as they compare with meaningful relationships; because digital interactions may never replace real-world connections entirely (Turkle, 2011).

Psychologically, students' well-being is being studied by these researchers due to their use of social media. This has resulted in anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation as it was evidenced by Primack et al., (2017) studies on excessive usage of social media. On the other hand, some research indicated positive associations between self-esteem and the use of social media while others found out the contrary. Frequent exposure to curated online identities and the pressure to present an idealized image, Fardouly et al. (2015) argue, can lead to forming unrealistic expectations as well as unfavorable self-comparisons.

A few investigations have been done at the University of Sindh in relation to how much such platforms are related to satisfaction levels among university students studying at that institution. The purpose of this study is therefore be fill that gap by exploring what specific sociocultural factors within which they operate may influence students' behavior on social media and what gratifications they seek from it. The outcome will inform interventions that target those who participate in unhealthy activities on the internet and support systems aimed at enhancing the advantages offered by these platforms. Thus, we will gain insights into why students are in social channels alongside possible aftermaths for their grades, friends, and mental state.

Research Methodology

The researchers adopted an exploratory quantitative-method research design to investigate the impact of social media usage on gratifications obtained by undergraduate students at the University of Sindh. A self-administered structured questionnaire was shared among a random sample of 386 undergraduate students in different faculties. The questionnaire comprised questions on social media usage patterns, gratifications sought from it, and its potential impacts on academic performance, social interactions, and psychological well-being.

Quantitative Phase

1. Sampling: The research uses a stratified random sampling technique to select a representative sample of undergraduate

students from various faculties at the University of Sindh. This provides variation in terms of fields of study, age, and gender aspects.

2. Instrument: A structured questionnaire was developed to measure social media use (frequency, duration, platforms used), gratification (social interaction, entertainment, information-seeking behavior or self-expression), and consequence (academic performance, social interactions, or psychological well-being). To validate this instrument pilot testing will be carried out while experts' opinions will also be sought through expert review.

3. Data Collection: The respondents were provided with a link to complete an online survey using a secure platform. Participants expressed assurance that they would remain anonymous as their names would not appear anywhere within the interview process.

4. Data Analysis: Statistics comprising descriptive techniques are some of the data summarization methods that shall be applied towards finding out information regarding social media usage trends for example popularity among users etc. Inferential statistics such as correlation and regression analysis shall be employed in examining relationships between variables or hypotheses testing.

Ethical Considerations

The relevant authorities of the university, Sindh University were first approached to seek their consent before this research was conducted. It is anticipated that informed consent will be obtained from all the participants while keeping their identities and confidentiality during the entire study period.

Findings and Discussion

The results of this research exposed a complicated interaction between patterns of social media use, desired benefits, and subsequent consequences among undergraduate students at the University of Sindh. Students' social media usage is predominantly for interpersonal relationships, entertainment, gathering information, and self-expression. Others get such satisfactions as social connectedness, enjoyment, and getting information. Nevertheless, extreme or problematic use of social media may result in unfavorable effects such as intrusions into academic work, reduced personal contacts, and possible mental health problems.

1. Usage Patterns: The quantitative data revealed that the student population was heavily engaged in various forms of social media platforms. Most students reported going on these platforms more than once a day with WhatsApp being ranked the most frequently used followed by Facebook than Instagram. The period one spent while on these sites varied from some who spent few minutes per session to others who took even many hours.

2. Gratifications Sought: What students were mostly looking for tallied up with what uses and Gratifications theory anticipated. The primary motive behind this was social interaction; they used these platforms to connect with their friends together with their families and peers. Entertainment also featured prominently with students seeking fun through videos memes as well as online games. Moreover, information questing was there closely followed by self-expression; sharing opinions on current events among others like talent showcasing were very popular activities involving using accounts for example.

Table 1

*Gender of the respondent * What is the major purpose of using social media applications?*

		What is the major purpose of using social media applications?				Total
		Information	Entertainment	Socialization	Self-Presentation	
Gender of the	Male	159	59	38	9	265
respondent	Female	64	38	14	5	121
Total		**223**	**97**	**52**	**14**	**386**

The table highlighted that out of 386 respondents, 159 male and 64 female respondents used social media for information purposes, while 56 male and 38 female respondents used social media for entertainment purposes. Out of the 386 students, 38 male and 14 female students continued to use social media for Socialization for making social contact, while nine male and five female users logged on to Social Media for self-presentation. Around 265 students in total use social media for four major purposes.

Table 2

*Gender of the respondent * I use social networking sites for reading/watching news Cross tabulation.*

		I use social networking sites for reading/watching news					Total
		Political news	Investigation news	Health news	Entertainment news	Any other news	
Gender of the respondent	male	124	24	14	54	49	265
	female	28	15	9	39	30	121
Total		**152**	**39**	**23**	**93**	**79**	**386**

The table shows that out of 386 students, 124 male and 28 female students had used social media for political news, while 24 male students and 15 female students used social media for investigative news. Moreover, 14 male and 09 female students used social media for entertainment news enjoyment, and relaxation, while 49 male students and 05 female students used Social Media for any other news types. Around 265 students in total had used social media for reading/ watching the news.

Table 3

*Gender of the respondent * I use social networking sites to share new ideas Cross tabulation.*

		I use social networking sites to share new ideas					Total
		Politics	Social	Entertainment	Religious	Academic	
Gender of the respondent	Male	29	121	44	42	29	265
	Female	6	51	31	13	20	121
Total		**35**	**172**	**75**	**55**	**49**	**386**

According to the table, out of 386 students overall, 29 male students and only 6 female students had taken an interest in sharing political posts on social media. In addition, 121 students (male) and 51 students (female) were interested in sharing/updating their status on social media regarding various social issues. More important this is the highest number of users as per mentioned in the above table.   At the same time, 44 students (male) and 31 students (female) also used to share posts on social media related to entertainment, whereas 42 male and 13 female students utilized social posts for all religious activities. Further, academic activity related to 29 males and 20 females had shared posts. Around 265 pupils have utilized social media for new ideas on different social networking sites.

Table 4

*Gender of the respondent * I use social networking sites to watch activities/posts of other users Cross tabulation.*

	I use social networking sites to watch activities/posts of other users					Total
	Informative	Entertained		Informative	Entertained	
Male	142	Gender of the respondent	Male	142	Gender of the respondent	Male

Gender of the respondent	Female	51		Female	51		Female
Total		193	58	Total	193	58	Total

The table shows that 51 female students & 142 male students, out of a total of 386 students—had expressed interest in watching posts related to the different information on social media, more significantly, this is the highest number of users as per the information in the above table. Additionally, 41 students (male) and 17 students (female) had watched posts related to entertainment on social media. While 22 male and 17 female students used social media for self-analysis posts, 35 male and 11 female students watched posts on social media about religious activities on Social Media at the same time. Additionally, male 25 and female students had watched different posts related to any other issue on Social Media. Around 265 students in total had used social media to watch various posts.

What this means is that the outcomes are as expected and in line with previous works, verifying the fact that social media has an important role in the satisfaction of diverse needs and wants among students at universities. Moreover, it emphasizes that entertainment, information search, and social connectivity are the fundamental motives leading to online interactions. However, there is research evidence suggesting some negative effects linked to academic distractions, reduced face-to-face contact, and psychological stress.

Nevertheless, the setting of the University of Sindh provides an additional degree of comprehension as to how these data should be interpreted. It is possible that particular students' behavior on social media and the way they prioritize their gratifications might be influenced by social-cultural factors that are specific to this location. Despite this, there is a necessity for further study to be conducted on the topics of these cultural complexities and the consequences they have for the usage of social media among the students at the University of Sindh.

This piece of study in general has brought out the need for students to adopt a balanced approach to the usage of various forms of media in their education. One can see that there are benefits of using social networking sites like Facebook for communication purposes, sharing other fun material, or simply getting the latest information on something you might find interesting. On the other hand, these websites offer other benefits. On the other hand, the behavior of users must consider both their patterns of using those websites and the repercussions that are a consequence of such behaviors. In digital platforms, for example, universities or professors can help promote healthy habits. These healthy habits may be educated through seminars or even counseling services.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study reveal a complicated relationship between the usage of social media and the satisfaction that is received from that use by undergraduate students at the University of Sindh. In spite of this, there are certain advantages to utilizing social media; hence, college students need to be aware of the potential effects of their consumption habits and they should check their consumption habits. In order to encourage students to develop positive behaviors about social media, the institution ought to take into consideration the possibility of developing programs such as educational seminars and counseling services. Research in the future might investigate the long-term implications of using social media on the well-being of students, as well as the treatments that can assist in alleviating the negative effects of using social media.

A detailed investigation of the ways in which undergraduate students at the University of Sindh interact with one another through the use of social media is one of the findings that have arisen from this research. This demonstrates that diverse types of engagement taking place across many platforms are driven by a variety of different reasons.

The findings of this study make it abundantly clear that social media plays a significant part in the lives of these students since it affords them the opportunity to engage in social contact, enjoy themselves, acquire knowledge, express

themselves, and even receive academic assistance. It is possible for various organizations to utilize a variety of sites, depending on the interests or circumstances of the individuals involved.

These findings suggest that despite the undeniable opportunities for constructive engagement and personal development that are made available by social media networks, there are still hazards connected with the misuse of these platforms. These kinds of virtual contacts, together with entertainment materials, have the potential to prevent students from concentrating on their studies, which can lead to a decline in academic performance or accomplishments. At the same time, many people believe that there is a threat to interpersonal connections as a result of an excessive reliance on such platforms. This leads to the neglect of deeper ties that have the potential to develop into real-life relationships. These relationships require face-to-face communication between individuals who meet each other offline on a regular basis, as opposed to online contacts that are created solely through the use of the Internet. Furthermore, psychological costs have been realized as well when some academics began to experience anxiety because they were unable to achieve the same level of success as other people. For example, people all over the internet post fake pictures about themselves so that others can think highly of them or envy them. Other people even show off by giving misleading information about themselves that is depicted in photos.

It is vital for the University of Sindh to implement measures that would encourage appropriate usage of social media among its students in light of the aforementioned circumstances. This may be accomplished by raising awareness about the risks associated with excessive and problematic use of social media through educational efforts or online programs, as well as through the provision of counseling services and seminars that offer guidance on how to navigate life in a digital environment. Additionally, the incorporation of social media into academic and extracurricular activities must be done in a manner that maximizes the advantages of social media while minimizing the negatives of social media.

Furthermore, the research highlights the significance of maintaining a constant monitoring and evaluation system in relation to the level of student participation in the utilization of social online networks. Keeping track of changes in usage patterns, developing platforms, and alterations in the needs that students have for gratifications is a part of this. The use of these data will be of assistance in the development of individualized interventions and support systems that are designed to address the challenges that students encounter in this digital era.

This research, on its whole, serves as a rallying cry to universities, educators, policymakers, and students themselves, with the purpose of gaining an understanding of the ways in which social media influences student life. It is possible for us to reap the benefits of all of these platforms without experiencing any adverse effects if we cultivate a culture of responsible online habits. As a result, this requires a methodical approach to the growth and well-being of students who are enrolled in higher education.

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