UNVEILING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Social media is a type of service that enables people to set up their own personal profiles and connect with others in a completely public setting containing elements like blogging, video conferencing, talking, reposting, tweeting, photographs, and content sharing. People use social media more frequently to download photos, seek entertainment, and communicate with friends in order to stay in touch. Social media is more popular among college students. They consequently become distracted from their studies

Keywords: Social Media, Impact, College Students

INTRODUCTION:

This study will examine at the different ways that social media affects college students, including the way it affects their social connections, communication styles, academic achievement, mental health, and general well-being. Using a mixed-methods approach involving qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys, this study attempts to offer an in-depth understanding of the complex relationship between social media and college life. Informing the creation of tactics and interventions that encourage college students to practice responsible and healthy digital citizenship, the study's findings will advance our knowledge of the potential and problems posed by social media

OBJECTIVES:

1.   To assess the impact of social media on college students' academic performance, study habits, and productivity.

2.   To analyze the relationship between daily social media consumption and the perceived emotional well-being of college students

3.   To identify the most frequently used social media platforms and the primary reasons students engage with them.

4.   To assess the awareness and practices of college students regarding privacy risks, data security, and the consumption of fake news or misinformation on social media.

5.   To investigate the impact of social media on the social interactions and real-life social skills of college students, including changes in friendship formation and comfort in online versus in-person expression

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Usman Rufai Fakai, et.al., (2024) The study examines the impact of social media on college students' academic performance using a descriptive survey approach. It reveals a complex relationship between social media engagement and academic outcomes, with both positive and negative impacts. The study suggests that while social media provides convenience and connectivity, it can also be addictive and distract from academic tasks. Recommendations include structured time management, digital literacy, balancing online and offline activities, advocating for educational content usage, and promoting responsible online conduct. The paper also calls for collaboration between educational institutions, policymakers, and technology firms to encourage healthy social media use while prioritizing academic goals.

Arunkumar Sivakumar., et.al., (2023) attempted to examine the effectiveness of social media as an educational tool and its impact on knowledge sharing among college and university students. The study used social cognitive and connective theories to develop a model that examines the influence of personal motivations (such as reputation) and social networking features (such as file sharing and student engagement) on information sharing. The study concluded that social media can promote knowledge sharing and can increase student motivation and performance. The findings suggest that social networking is a valuable method of information dissemination and can be used to encourage student engagement. The article also provides implications, restrictions, and future research directions for using social media in education. This study provides valuable insights for educators and institutions looking to incorporate social media into their teaching and learning strategies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study was undertaken in Coimbatore city. The study requires both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. Secondary data was collected from journals, articles, books, internet and works of similar nature related to Unveiling the impact of social media on college students

A sample of 105 respondents was included for the purpose of the study. In this study the sample units represent unveiling the impact of social media on college students. As a method of sampling, convenience sampling techniques was used to collect the data from the respondents. The data was analysed using statistical techniques to identify key trends

FINDINGS AND RESULT:

Age:

S.NO	PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	P...
1	18 - 20	32	30%
2	21 - 23	31	30%
3	24 - 26	24	23%
4	27 - 30	18	17%
	TOTAL	105	100

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION:

From the above table, it is observed that the majority of respondents (30%) fall in the 18–20 and 21–23 age groups. A smaller proportion of respondents are aged between 24–26 (23%) and 27–30 (17%). This indicates that most of the respondents are younger, likely students or early-career individuals.

Majority 30% + 30% of the respondents were between the age group of 18 – 20 years and 21 – 23 years

YEAR OF STUDY:

S.NO	PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	First Year	17	16%
2	Second Year	32	30%
3	Third Year	39	37%
4	Fourth Year or above	17	16%
	TOTAL	105	100%

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

It is found that the highest number of respondents are in their third year of study (37%), followed by second-year students (30%). Both first year and fourth-year or above students make up 16% each, suggesting a balanced mix across all academic years with a concentration in mid-level years.

ANOVA:

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Average, spending hours per day on social media	105	254	2.419048	1.572711
Social media impacted academic performance (grades, focus, etc.	105	196	1.866667	0.616667

Source Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	16.01905	1	16.01905	14.63343	0.000173	3.886555
Within Groups	227.6952	208	1.094689			
Total	243.7143	209				

INTERPRETATION:

- Since the P-value (0.00017) is less than 0.05, and the F-value (14.63) is greater than the F critical value (3.88), we reject the null hypothesis.

- This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the average time spent on social media and the perceived impact on academic performance.

- In other words, the amount of time students spend on social media does have a significant effect on their academic performance (grades, focus, etc.).

HYPOTHESIS

HO = Thers is no significance difference between average spending hours per day on social media and its impact on your mood

H1 = Thers is a significance difference between average spending hours per day on social media and its impact on your mood

CORRELATION

Correlation is a statistical measure that expresses the extent to which two variables are linearly related. It shows the strength and direction of a relationship between two variables. Correlation is widely used in statistics to determine how one variable may predict another.

Correlation measures the degree to which two variables move in relation to each other. It ranges between –1 and +1:

☐ +1 → perfect positive correlation (both variables increase together)

- 0 → no correlation

- –1 → perfect negative correlation (one increases while the other decreases)

Formula for Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r): r

$$r = \frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Factors	Social media impacted academic performance (grades, focus, etc.)	Social media affect the sleep schedule	On average, how many hours per day do you spend on social media?
Social media impacted academic performance (grades, focus, etc.)	1		
Social media affect the sleep schedule	0.588090052	1	
On average, how many hours per day do you spend on social media?	0.291203882	0.377895	1

INTERPRETATION:

- The correlation between academic performance and sleep schedule is positive ($r = 0.588$), suggesting students whose sleep is affected may also see academic impacts.

- The correlation between hours spent on social media and academic performance is less positive ($r = 0.291$), implying a slight trend but not a strong one.

- The correlation between hours spent on social media and sleep schedule is also less to moderate ($r = 0.377$), suggesting some impact of usage time on sleep patterns

FINDINGS

❖ A majority of respondents are between 18–23 years old, indicating a young demographic likely in college or early career stages.

❖ 64% of the respondents are male and 36% are female, showing a male-dominant sample.

❖ Most respondents are in their third (37%) and second year (30%) of study.

❖ Instagram (28%) and YouTube (22%) are the most frequently used platforms.

❖ A significant number (37%) of respondents spend more than 5 hours on social media daily.

❖ The main reason for social media usage is entertainment (31%), followed by staying connected with friends and family (22%).

❖ Since the P-value (0.00017) is less than 0.05, and the F-value (14.63) is greater than the F critical value (3.88), we reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the average time spent on social media and the perceived impact on academic performance. In other words, the amount of time students spend on social media does have a significant effect on their academic performance (grades, focus, etc.).

CONCLUSION:

The study reveals that social media usage among young adults, particularly college students aged 18–23, is both widespread and impactful. With the majority of respondents spending more than five hours daily on platforms like Instagram and YouTube, it is evident that social media plays a central role in their daily lives. Statistical analyses, including ANOVA and correlation tests, indicate that the amount of time spent on social media significantly affects both academic performance and mood. Students who spend more time online report more negative impacts on focus, grades, and emotional well-being. Furthermore, increased usage is linked to a greater experience of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), although no significant relationship was found between comparing oneself to others and FOMO.

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