Social Media Consumption as a Predictor of Youth development: An Analysis from Public Sector College Students of Lahore

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Abstract

Internet and social media has changed the way of living. Pakistan is a developing country with huge population of energetic youth. Pakistani Youth is well aware with latest digital technology and getting opportunities created by the social media platforms. Pakistani Govt. has launched many projects for trainings and learning digital skills for youth**.** Digi-skills, Digital marketing, freelancing and other internet social media based projects are started for empowering the youth. Pakistan has great potential in digital world but due to lack of resources and guidance this is not used for properly. In recent Years Pakistani Govt. has started many projects for youth development. College Youth is also taking great interest in availing these digital opportunities created by the Govt. Social media consumption is very high among youth across the world as well as in the Pakistan. Numerous studies have been conducted on the negative impacts of social media usage however; recent studies are focusing on the positive impacts of the social media. The current study is an attempt to find out the role of social media in youth development when social media consumption is based on building constructive relationships and enhancing political interests. The study is based on quantitative strand of the research inquiry by using the survey method. The population of the current study is entire collegiate youth in the district Lahore. From this population a sample of 2200 respondents was gathered by applying the multistage sampling technique. A pre-coded self-administered questionnaire was used to obtain the information from the respondents. Regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the study variables. The findings of the study illustrate that a positive and significant association exists between the study variables i.e. increase in the social media usage for political interests, career planning, building relationship and civic engagement will increase the youth development by 75%. This is a strong relationship however, in terms of effect of each variable the political interests and civic engagement are of the prime importance in increasing the youth development.

*Keywords***:** Social Media Consumption, Predictor of Youth Development, College Students

1. Introduction

Social Media is becoming very popular these days and now it is the integral part of life. In Pakistan 87 million internet users and 71 million social media users. The number of social media users in Pakistan increased by 21.0 million (+6%) between 2022 and 2023.The number of social media users in Pakistan was equivalent to 30.6% of the total population in January 2023. A total of 191.8 million cellular mobile connections were active in Pakistan in early 2023, with this figure equivalent to 80.5 percent of the total population. More broadly, 82.1 percent of Pakistan's total internet user base (regardless of age) used at least one social media platform in January 2023.

As per May 2023, the total population of Pakistan was 237.1 million, which was, increased about 4.3 million between June 2022 and May 2023. According to these statistics, the population increase rate was about +1.9%. Out of the whole population, the females count about 48.5% while the males represent the 51.5% of total population. At the same time, 37.8% country's population resides in the urban areas and 62.2% in the rural areas (Kemp, 2022).

The internet usage was also witnessed an increase during the last years as according to reports the internet user population was about 87.10 million as per January 2023. These internet users increased by 22 million which counts about +35.9% between 2021 and 2022 (Kemp, 2022).

Media is playing an important role in overall uplift of the society and changing the behavior of an individual. However, youth is the most effected segment of the society that is being influenced by the use of media in general and social media in particular. Both positive and negative impacts of social media are being discussed among the research community across the globe. However, the prime common aspect is that for what objective social media is being used. The current study is an attempt to find out that if social media is being used to build positive social attributes and political knowledge it can help youth excel and bring positive youth development. The existing literature provide strong evidence that social media usage for better social attribute can have positive youth development attributes. Researchers Atarodi, Rajabi, and Atarodi (2020) looked into the correlation between young people's reliance on their cellphones and feelings of isolation in their social circles. The authors based their study on interviews with college students. This investigation may have been qualitative or quantitative in nature. Researchers found that most app abuse occurs amongst young people. Abuse of mobile devices many people, especially young people, feel isolated because of technology.

Several studies have found that social networking sites have a number of primary advantages and benefits (Rideout & Robb, 2019).

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Facebook, as an example, it encourages individuals to recognize their own value and independence, boosts their self-esteem, and lifts their spirits during times of adversity (Nyagah, Stephen and Muema, 2015).

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According to a meta-analysis of 23 studies, there is a link between young people's poor Facebook habits and mental health problems (Marino, Gini, Vieno, & Spada, 2018). Social media use has been linked to depression in a significant way, according to research (Best, Manktelow, & Taylor, 2014).

Some academics assert that the internet as a whole, rather than social networking sites specifically, has an effect on people's self-esteem (Valkenburg, Peter and Schouten, 2006). According to Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe (2007), people with low self-esteem value Facebook more than they value people with high self-esteem. People with low self-esteem are more likely to use Facebook than those with high self-esteem (Tazghini & Siedlecki, 2013).

Marker, Gnambs, & Appel (2018) investigated the connection between students' use of social media and their performance in the classroom. When conducting this study, the authors opted for a quantitative approach. According to the study's findings, adolescents' use of social networking sites is widespread. Students' low performance in class has been linked to their overuse of social media.

According to the research, young people are able to learn using social media and other forms of online technology differently, highlighting the need for more adaptable the importance of learning and socializing online has grown (DeGennaro, 2008).

1.1. Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to find out how social media consumption in terms of career building, political interests and civic participation helps in youth development.

Methods and Materials

The current study is based on quantitative research technique with the objective of finding out the relationship between different dimensions of social media usage and youth development. Hence, the study is based on explanatory research design. However, to implement the above mentioned technique survey method was used for this study.

1.2. Population of the study

College students of district Lahore have the population of the current study as the target population of the current study was collegiate students. However, it was kept in mind to include both male and female for the current study for a better gender representation. A list of all the college students was obtained from Directorate of Education Lahore Division to serve as the sampling frame.

1.3. Sampling Technique

For the identification of the respondents multistage sampling was used in the current study. Following are the different stages of the sampling techniques employed in the current study.

- In the first stage a list of the all the colleges and their enrollment was obtained from the concerned authorities so that the researcher has the sampling frame.
- In the second phase, all girls and boys colleges were clubbed separately with their enrollment.
- The third stage of the sampling technique applied the proportionate sampling method where enrollment of each college was divided by the sample size to obtain the number of students to be selected from each college
- In the fourth and last stage of the sampling technique researcher applied simple random technique to actually obtain the data from the respondent.

1.4. Sample Size

The current study used researcher advisor formula (2006) to determine sample size, which is widely used for the known population. For sampling frame, a list of the colleges and their enrollment was obtained from director colleges Lahore. The list provided total number of colleges and their enrollment.

Table 1: Sample size Calculation

1	Boys Colleges	21	33114
2	Girls Colleges	27	42723
	Total	48	75837

Hence, the total target population for the current study is 75837 and sample size was determined by using the following formula.

$$n = \frac{X2 * N * P * (1 - P)}{\left(ME2 * (N - 1)\right) + (X2 * P(1 - P))}$$

Where in formula is
n=sample size

X2=Chi-square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom
N=Population size
P=population size
ME= desired margin of error
After assuming the margin of error of 2.5% and 99% confidence interval, the sample size for the current study was adjusted as 2563. However, during the data collection the response rate was slightly low in different institutions hence the actual sample size for the current study was 2200.

1.5. Variable Construction

As the current study is based on explanatory research design, hence it was important to denote both independent and dependent variables with clear distinction.

- Social media usage for career planning, civic engagement, building relationship and political interest have been adjusted as the independent variable for the current study.
- Youth development has been adjusted as the dependent variables for the current study.

2. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by using SPSS latest version by applying the regression analysis. However, before applying the regression analysis all the assumptions of the regression analysis were observed such as normality of the data, heteroscedasticity and Multicollinearity.

3. Analysis and Results

The findings of the current study are presented into two major sections. In the first place, socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented followed by the inferential statistics in terms of regression analysis.

3.1. Socio-demographics of the study

In this section of the study, socio-demographic features of the respondents are presented.

Table 2: Age Wise Distribution of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-17 (Years)	1096	49.8	49.8
	18-22(Years)	1104	50.2	100.0
	Total	2200	100.0	

The above table shows that the age distribution of the respondents was almost at the equal ratio with 49.8% of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 15 to 17 years of age while remaining 50.2% were between 18 to 22 years.

Table 2: Gender Wise Distribution of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	1247	56.7	56.7
	Male	953	43.3	100.0
	Total	2200	100.0	

The above table shows the gender distribution of the youth of the current study, which again illustrate that both genders were almost with similar, ration with slight difference. 56.7% of the respondents were female while 43.3% of the respondents were male in the current study.

Table 3: Social Media Consumption

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 1 hour	1029	46.8	46.8
	1-4 hours	884	40.2	87.0
	4-6 hours	223	10.1	97.1
	Above 6 hours	64	2.9	100.0
	Total	2200	100.0	

The frequency of using Social media consumption was also asked from the respondents and above table shows that 46.8% of the respondents used it for less than 1 hour while it was 40.2% for 1 to 4 hours. Remaining 2.9% of the respondents use social media for more than 6 hours.

3.2. Inferential Statistics

In the inferential statistics, the regression analysis is presented where it was tried to find out association between the studies variables.

Table 3: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4877.426	4	1219.357	1696.857	.000^b
	Residual	1577.321	2195	.719		
	Total	6454.747	2199			

The above table of the regression analysis provided the following important details.
- Firstly, P-value is the less than .05, which illustrates that the overall model of the study is significant. P-value less than the .05 shows the significance of the model.
- Similarly, the value of F-statistics is also very high as compared to the mean square, which is another important aspect to determine the higher significance of the model being applied in the study.
- In addition to that, above table shows that Regression Sum of Squares (4877.426) is higher than the Residual Sum of Squares (1577.321). This implies that the explained variation in the dependent variable due to independent variable (Regression Sum of Squares) is higher that he unexplained variation (Residual Sum of Squares). Hence, this asserts that the overall model used in the current study is significant.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.869^a	.756	.755	.84770	1.968

The above table shows that R-Square value is .756, which shows that independent variable is explaining 75% variation in the dependent variable. In line with the current study, this implies that social media usage account for 75% of the youth development among study participants. On the same token, adjusted R-Square explains this association by adjusting the error.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.119	.241		-.491	.623
	Social media usage and political interests	.969	.038	.272	25.713	.000
	Social Media Usage/Consumption	1.976	.033	.637	60.325	.000
	Social media usage for Civic Engagement	1.516	.047	.343	32.450	.000
	Social media usage for career planning	1.074	.027	.415	39.251	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Youth Development						

The above table of the regression analysis illustrates the individual effect different constructs on the youth development, which is the true essence of the regression analysis. When it comes to determining the influence of each category of the independent variable on the dependent variable it has been observed that overall social media usage or consumption is at the highest level with 1.976 times increase in youth development. After overall social

media usage, the role of social media usage for civic engagement is at the second level with 1.516 times increase in the youth development. Social media usage for career planning and building relationship is at third level with 1.074 times increase in the youth development. Social media usage for political interests is at fourth level with .969 times increase in the youth development.

4. Conclusion

It may be concluded from the regression analysis that social media usage is directly related to the youth development. Different objectives or categories of the social media usage are directly related to the youth development such as civic engagement, political interests, career planning and building relationships. However, when it comes to the influence of the each category social media usage for civic engagement and career planning have the higher influence on the youth development.

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