From Likes to Life: The Influence of Social Media on Higher Education Students' Social Behaviors

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ABSTRACT

This scholarly investigation examines the impact of social media on the social behaviors of students in higher education, with particular emphasis on cooperation, altruism, empathy, and feelings of loneliness. The objectives of the research are to (1) Analyze the patterns of social media usage among university students and (2) Asses the correlation between social media participation and social behaviors. Utilizing a qualitative methodological framework, this study implemented thematic analysis to derive insights from students' viewpoints. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select a cohort of 40 students from a total population of 220 individuals enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed. Hons.) Elementary program at UAJK JV Campus. Thematic analysis, adhering to Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework, was utilized to identify prevalent themes within the participants' responses. The results indicate that social media assumes a bifurcated function in the modulation of students' social conduct. While it cultivates collaboration, compassion, and altruism through virtual participation, collective learning, and emotional reinforcement, it concurrently engenders social seclusion and heightened sensations of loneliness attributable to the predominance of online interactions supplanting authentic social experiences. The research underscores the imperative for a judicious approach to social media engagement, championing digital literacy programs that facilitate substantive online interactions whilst alleviating adverse social repercussions.

***Key Words:** Social media, university students, social behaviors, thematic analysis, cooperation, empathy, altruism, loneliness*

INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites (SNSs) are being used by people around the globe and their popularity is increasing day by day. Social media is an advanced form of communication which connects people without any geographical barriers. People are using social media for chatting, sharing videos, photos, entertainment and blogging purposes. Social networking sites provide a platform where people can interact and share their ideas with others. Social networking sites are used by teachers and students for communication purposes and discuss academic related matters (David et al., 2012). Social media has emerged as an integral component of contemporary existence, particularly among the student demographic, substantially influencing their educational journeys and social engagements.

Dual Nature of social media underscores that the ramifications of social media are complex, encompassing both advantageous and disadvantageous consequences. Understanding this duality is

pivotal for comprehending the comprehensive effects on students. Among the positive ramifications of social media are improved communication and collaboration among students, access to a diverse array of educational resources that facilitate learning, avenues for self-expression and creativity, enabling students to exhibit their talents, and the establishment of peer support networks that cultivate a sense of belonging and community. Conversely, there are several negative repercussions: the potential decline in academic performance attributed to excessive screen time, challenges such as attention deficits and sleep disruptions associated with social media usage, vulnerability to cyberbullying and online harassment, which may result in psychological distress, the dissemination of misinformation that can hinder critical thinking abilities and the capacity to assess credible sources(kumar Jha et al., 2023).

Social behaviors are defined by Fox (2006) as, human behaviors that influences or influenced by other humans. Also, it relates to how an individual interacts with others. Also, there are many social behaviors but, in this study, the following behaviors will be considered. These behaviors include cooperation, altruism, empathy, and loneliness. These behaviors are observed physically or from emotions of other people. Human beings are social animals, and they cannot live without society. These behaviors can be defined as follows:

Cooperation: Cooperation is a mutual interaction between two social entities for mutual benefits. It is important behavior of social entities to work together and solve many issues.

Altruism: Altruism is human behavior to help others without expecting anything in return.

Empathy: Empathy is the action of experiencing the feelings, thoughts and experience of another person. It develops understanding about others and makes predictions.

Loneliness: Loneliness is human behavior which shows cut down or avoids the gathering with family members and with other social elements.

The emergence of social media has fundamentally transformed the modalities through which students engage with information, one another, and their broader environment. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat provide channels for immediate communication, self-representation, and the dissemination of information. These digital platforms have obscured the distinctions between private and public spheres, establishing virtual environments in which students navigate the complexities of identity development, social affirmation, and peer influence. Nevertheless, in addition to the advantages of connectivity, social media brings forth a multitude of challenges and intricacies that necessitate rigorous scrutiny. A primary concern regarding the implications of social media on students pertains to its effect on academic achievement. Although digital platforms afford unparalleled access to educational materials and collaborative resources, they simultaneously introduce distractions and temptations that may detract from academic engagement. The incessant barrage of notifications, the enticement of trending content, and the pressure to sustain online identities present substantial obstacles to student productivity and focus. Beyond the realm of academics, social media significantly influences students' social interactions and relationships. The digital landscape functions as a virtual arena where friendships are initiated, sustained, and occasionally tested. However, the crafted nature of online profiles and the ubiquity of comparison culture can engender feelings of inadequacy, solitude, and social alienation among students(kumar Jha et al., 2023).

Boateng (2016) has summarized that social media is an acceptable platform for interaction of teachers and students. Kircaburun (2016) concluded that excessive use of social media affects the social behaviors of university students. University students are common users of social media and their social behaviors are positively influenced by social media(Al-Sharqi et al., 2015). Social media have both positive and negative impact on academic & social behaviors of university students (Al-Tarawneh, 2014). Also, academic and social behaviors are positively influenced by social media by providing proper guidance and motivation. This scholarly investigation endeavors to enhance this inadequacy by scrutinizing the relationship between social media engagement and the academic conduct demonstrated by students of Bachelor of B.Ed. elementary education program at the University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Jhelum Valley Campus, Hattian Bala.

Statement of the Problem

Social networking sites (SNSs) have fundamentally altered the modalities through which individuals engage, communicate, and disseminate information on a global scale. The bloom popularity of these platforms, particularly among the university student demographic, has elicited considerable apprehension concerning their bifurcated influence on both academic and social conduct. While SNSs function as venues for scholarly collaboration, knowledge dissemination, and peer support, they concurrently present challenges that include excessive screen time, diversions, the propagation of misinformation, and psychological distress. The ramifications of social media on students' social conduct such as cooperation, altruism, empathy, and feelings of loneliness constitute an increasingly significant area of academic inquiry; however, the extant literature yields inconclusive results. Notwithstanding the acknowledgment that social media occupies a crucial position in influencing students' social interactions, a discernible gap remains in comprehending the magnitude and character of its impact. Certain studies posit that SNSs cultivate a sense of belonging and collaborative spirit, whereas others underscore potential hazards such as social withdrawal and a decline in real-world interpersonal interactions. Considering the pervasive incorporation of social media into the daily routines of students, it becomes imperative to investigate whether these platforms serve to enhance or obstruct fundamental social behaviors. This study endeavors to elucidate the intricate relationship between social media utilization and the social behaviors of university students, with a specific focus on cooperation, altruism, empathy, and loneliness. By examining these dimensions, the research aspires to yield empirical insights into the beneficial and detrimental effects of SNS engagement on the social well-being of students. Grasping this dynamic is essential for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders within higher education to formulate strategies that amplify the advantages of social media while alleviating its negative repercussions on students' social development.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To explore the use of social media among university students.
2. To find the relationship between social media and social behaviors (Cooperation, Altruism, Empathy, and loneliness) of university students.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H_{01}: There is no relationship between social media usage and academic behaviors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social behaviors are defined by Fox (2006) as "human behaviors that influences or influenced by other humans". Also it relates to how an individual interact with others. Best (2014) has explored from the literature that social media has positive impact on social behaviors such as increased self-esteem, social support, increased social capital and increased self-confidence. Furthermore, some negative impact on social behaviors are depression, social isolation and social bullying. Lubsky et al. (2016) quoted the definitions of social behaviors by Parsons, (1949) as social behaviors are collection of action both traditional and normative types, and Weber, (1951) defined social behaviors as, a set of conscious action which can be target-rational or value rational. Social behaviors are response reactions of person in a social situation.

Rovira (2014) concluded that social behaviors of children with autism can be enhanced within the classroom. When a teacher places a child with autism in the classroom, it becomes the responsibility to give positive instruction and provide social relationships and communication with other students. There

are some strategies which enable teachers to build social skills and interaction among students. There are many resources which can be used by teachers for betterment of social behaviors of students. Educators are responsible not only for teaching academic skills as well as need to support the behaviors of students. A child need additional support for success in school and it is the responsibility of the teachers and parents to support children educationally and behaviorally(Gonzalez & Brown, 2015).

Cooperation: Mondahl and Razmerita (2014) explored that social media has opened new ways for communication and collaboration with classmates and friends. Social media is used in foreign language learning because it fosters the process of learning by collaboration and fast communication. Social constructivism is a process through collaboration and connectivity with others. The results of the study revealed that motivation, communication and collaboration of foreign language learners is enhanced by social media. Students solve many problems by using social media by collaboration and cooperation.

Vriens-van Hoogdalem et al., (2016) examined that language and metacommunication are important factor for cooperation in a society. Language is just like cement which strengthens the higher level of cooperation among students. Games are healthy activities which promote verbal and nonverbal communication among youngsters. Metacommunication means plans, meaning clarification and rules of games. The results of the study revealed that language ability has a relationship with cooperation in free play and collaborative tasks. Both verbal and nonverbal communication build cooperation among students during collaborative work or games. Language, metacommunication and cooperation associated with behavior. High language ability has the most impact on cooperation and collaborative tasks.

Cooperation is the central feature of human society through which people pay cost (time, effort, and money) to give benefits others(Rand, 2016). Kerimbayev et al., (2017) explored that the development in international cooperation needs cooperation in the educational sector. Sharing of educational experiences with others is a sense of cooperation. Madden et al., (2016) investigated that social media can enhance cooperation among students by sharing their knowledge and expertise with others. By using social media students are enabled to strengthen others by solving problems. Also, virtual relationships increase the potential of students and smooth their academic and professional life.

Popularity of individual increase in a society due to cooperation, helping and benefiting other without any demand(Egilmez & Naylor-Tincknell, 2017). Altruism is a social behavior which may affect individual social behavior. The results of the study revealed that helpful behavior is related to empathy and popularity. Gratefulness and altruistic behavior are very effective social behaviors in relationships in society. The results of the study showed that there is no gender difference altruism and popularity. Also, empathy has significant relationship with popularity while altruism has no significant relationship.

Altruism: Yildirim, (2016) investigated the altruistic behavior in headmasters at Turkey. The aim of the study was to create altruism in educationists. It is human behavior to help others without expecting anything in return. An altruistic personality shows many characteristics such as self-ness, consistency, charitability and support. In education system not only, headmaster show altruistic behaviors but also those headmasters which are not altruistic are criticizing non-altruistic behavior. The study concluded that there are many types of altruistic behaviors such as time altruism in management and personal altruism to tackle the situation. Altruism is behavior which must be present in teacher ship. Headmaster are observed having altruism behavior and they solve many problems in professional life. Also, they protect the image of the school by this social behavior.

Lozada et al., (2014) investigate the plasticity of altruistic behavior in children. Altruism is the behavior of an individual which intrinsically motivates others to desire. It is not homogeneous behavior, and it is changing in different contexts. The results of the study revealed that there is difference in altruistic behavior before and after intervention. The behavior of the children is turned more altruistic

after an intervention session which consists of 10 weeks. This behavior can be enhanced in children by games, group activities, relaxation and security. Boys and girls have similar altruistic behavior, and no gender difference is found. There must be some session on altruistic behavior of children and how teachers can build this social behavior.

Ong et al., (2013) discovered that there is difference between altruistic behavior of mother and father. Mother has much altruistic behavior as compared to father' behavior. Increase in mother income has more outcome in children as compared to same increase in father income. The study found that mutual altruism exists between mother and child not between father and child. Mother desires more altruism behavior compared to father, and she demands in return same behavior in old age. The study also found that happiness is more between mothers and children as compared to fathers and children. Children are observed more altruistic towards father's appearance compared to mothers.

Campbell and Ramos (2017) examined that students' altruism behavior is associated with students' attachment messages (SAM). SAM enhances the sense of security and increases the willingness to boost altruism behavior. There are a variety of factors which affect the altruistic behavior of students such as release of tension, cooperation and empathy. SAM are very helpful to build the altruistic behavior of the students. It is the responsibility of teachers to teach their students a sense of bonding during class discussion, assignments and during examination. SAM has different impacts on different educational levels such as primary, middle and high school level.

Paat (2016) explored the major life courses of educational aspiration of students which are career transition, life events and turning points, joint life, altruism and social justice and rational choice. The study identified that altruism and social justice were critical aspects in cost benefit calculation. These factors are motivating intrinsically and fulfill the desires. Also, the property of helping others and ability to make difference are very important in the lives of students. Educational investment and its return play a critical role in decision making process. Moreover, educational authorities must assess the financial status and personal needs before selecting the college courses. Personal life history and experiences affect the decision-making process of students.

Empathy: Lalama (2016) conducted a study to find the relation between caring climate, empathy and social behaviors of students. The study concluded that the relationship between caring climate, empathy and social behaviors are positive. If students are enabled to understand the emotions of other students, then there is positive social behavior. Caring is an essential part of human behavior, and it affects other social behaviors. Also, teachers-students both perceive positive caring climate, but teachers' perception of caring climate is higher than the students. Students' perception about caring climate is not different based on gender, age, ethnicity and institution. High school students have a more caring climate compared to others because they spend more time with their fellows and teachers.

Cuzzo et al. (2017) found that teaching empathy is important for undergraduate and graduate students. Empathy enables us to determine the needs of our and others and build an interpersonal relationship in society. It is investigated that those students which have a high level of empathy are more satisfying, have more emotional intelligence and high self-esteem. Empathy also improves the learning ability of the students, and they share their knowledge with others. This is an essential behavior of humans, and it can be learnt easily if educators are well trained. Teaching empathy is hard work, and it can be taught with the core of heart and with full commitment.

Bojana et al. (2016) conducted a study to find the relationship between empathy and peer violence also its association with gender difference. Empathy is the ability to understand the emotional state of other people. It has many indicators like emotional and cognitive markers. Many other authors explain empathy as it is the ability of an individual to feel emotions of others and share emotion with

other people. Empathy and violence are more common social behaviors in society. In gender difference it is found that female is more empathetic as compared to males. Boys have more violent behaviors like girls both physically and verbally.

Kanthan et al. (2016) discovered that empathy is decreasing gradually among college students. Many studies revealed that media has a positive impact on students' behaviors such as sources of information, up to date knowledge, public health and safety messages. While, it has negative impacts also such as violent behaviors, smoking, drug addiction and sexual activities. Empathy is developing in children with respect to their age and it is a gradual process. The results of the study revealed that media literacy promotes empathy in young students. Also to promote empathy in students it is necessary to enable students to think critically on media messages and influences. Empathy has different scores in gender difference such as in boys it has less while in boys it has higher scores.

Loneliness: Aytaç (2018) investigated that Internet dependency influences loneliness of male and female teachers-students. The Internet is the most common phenomena in daily life of today's world. It is used in almost every field of life such as communication, education, business and in other fields. Loneliness is defined as the symptom of depression, and it causes deficiencies in social connections. Also, there is contradiction on the effect of social loneliness because some philosophers think that is good behavior while the others say that it is not good for social cohesion. The results of the study revealed that Internet dependency of male teachers-students is higher as compared to female teachers-student. Also, female teachers-students having more loneliness than male teachers-students.

Stankovska et al. (2016) explored that excessive use of social networking sites causes many problems like poor academic performance of students, depression and loneliness. There is difference between social communication on Internet via SNSs and communication is real life. The results of the study showed that there is a positive relationship between the use of social networking sites and academic and social behaviors. Also, relationships become negative when usage time of SNSs is increased. Those students who feel loneliness in real life are making more communication on SNSs with friends.

Neto et al. (2015) examined the relationship between social media usage, academic performance and loneliness of school students. There is demographic effect on these three factors which change the nature of the relationship between them. Due to many features of communication in SNS students are attracted towards the sites. These networking sites can be operated on both smart phones and laptops with the help of Internet connectivity. Due to the use of SNSs there is an effect on academic and social behaviors such as poor academic performance and loneliness. Loneliness is the state through which an individual reduces or disconnects with real society. Results of the study revealed that female students are observed more loneliness as male students. Also, there is a weak relationship that is observed between GPA and loneliness of students.

Heredia et al. (2017) examined the association between loneliness and relationships such as teacher-students, parents-students and peers. Interpersonal relationships played a vital role in Latin students' wellbeing. Literature has revealed that social isolation is the main cause of loneliness, and it decreases the wellbeing of students. Also, positive teacher-students relationship safeguarding the social isolation and increased the students' wellbeing. Findings of the study revealed that social isolation/loneliness can be decreased by positive peer relationship and family support. Further those students having high level of loneliness also have low social wellbeing and low level of loneliness causing high level of social wellbeing. In addition, the level of loneliness is reduced by family support and peer relationship.

van Roekel et al. (2015) examined the state levels of loneliness in adolescence. Both concurrent associations and temporal dynamics between social scenario and state levels of loneliness were

investigated by using experience sampling methods. Loneliness is not stable social behavior, and it fluctuates and depends on daily life routine. Main findings of current exploratory study were that loneliness is higher when adolescents were alone, compared with when they were with their friends or family members. In addition, school was a negative environment which causing a high level of loneliness as compared to another environment.

Lasgaard et al. (2010) examined Loneliness and perceived social support in 39 adolescent boys with autism disorders by means of loneliness measure. Loneliness is a negative experience that affects an individual's social, affective, and cognitive functions. Many scholars agree that loneliness is a subjective, unpleasant, and distressing experience resulting from deficiencies in a person's social relationships. Loneliness is concerned with mental health problems like depressive affect, anxiety and suicide ideation. The results of the current study support the hypothesis that adolescent boys with ASD generally feel lonelier than adolescent boys from regular schools. Also, social protection is an important factor that could minimize the loneliness of adolescent boys with ASD.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This investigation adopted a qualitative research framework employing thematic analysis to examine the perspectives of students. The sample population consisted of 220 students enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed. Hons.) Elementary program. A purposive sampling strategy was implemented to select an appropriate sample size of 40 students, ensuring that participants with pertinent experiences were included. Data collection was conducted through a self-constructed open-ended questionnaire, the reliability and validity of which were established prior to its implementation. Thematic analysis, adhering to Braun & Clarke (2006) six-phase methodology, was employed for the interpretation of data. This analytic approach facilitated the identification of patterns and themes within the participants' responses. Data underwent systematic coding, categorization, and analysis to extract meaningful insights. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were rigorously upheld throughout the study. The results yield a comprehensive understanding of students' social behaviors within an educational framework.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

A. Cooperation

1. **In group projects or collaborative tasks, how do you think your use of social media (e.g., messaging apps, online platforms) has influenced your willingness to cooperate with peers? Provide examples.**

Participants 1 to 14 responded that they have experienced a situation where social media resolving a conflict with friends, situation group project with social media helps me in our project (use of social media has significant influenced our willingness. Respondents say Yes social media help in our academic activities. For example, when we have a project or collaboration task then we work with our colleague through messaging communication skills that will help in making our writing goals. Stories book, Islamic book. Participants 15 to 21 responded that there was no experience Participant 8 responded that social media help in academic and educational platforms. now a days I am reading English novels. Participant 22 to 40 responded that social media help in cooperating and collaborating with peers

2. **Have you ever experienced a situation where social media hindered or enhanced cooperation in resolving conflicts with friends or classmates? Describe the experience and its outcome.**

Participant 1to 19 responded that I read the lives of children by a situation where social media enhanced cooperation in resolving conflict with friends (e.g. artwork). Participant 20 to 34 responded that no we have no experience Participant 35 to 38 responded that mostly enhance the cooperation between the classroom mate and peers. Participant 39 responded that people demand money by using social media platform. Participant 40 responded that lot of people use social media platforms to collect the money for poor.

B. Altruism

1. How does social media influence your willingness to help others, either online or in real life? Can you describe a specific instance?

Participant 1 to 26 Respondents says Yes social media influence our willingness to help others (e.g. if there is any needy person even financially or emotionally, help them. Participants 27 to 36 say Yes social media influence our willingness to help others both online and in real life. In experience. Participants 37 to 38 say Yes, we will help one person through chatting on WhatsApp are also in real life Participant 39 to 40 Respondents say no about the response.

2. Have you ever engaged in any social media campaigns or online initiatives that promote kindness and support for others? What motivated you to participate?

Participants 1 to 15 responded that no we are engaged in any social media complaints or in any other activities. Participant 16 to 35 responded that Respondents says in our opinion social media sometimes has positive impact on individual life or sometime has negative effect that decrease the negative ability in real life Participant 36 to 40 responded that there is no experience that ever engaged in any social media campaigns or online initiatives that promote kindness and support for others

C. Empathy

1. How do interactions on social media (e.g., reacting to others' posts, reading personal stories) shape your ability to understand and share the emotions of others offline?

Participants 1 to 18 responded that yes social media explore our emotion due to social media learning lot of knowledge about empathy now we are always ready for helping to others. Participant 19 to 28 responded that says Yes, we will also interact on social media to feel kindness and empathy to listen the story of one girl who tell about their difficult life to help them and feel relax Participant 29 to 35 responded that many of news on social media have no authentic source so we cannot explore our emotion. And some say that there are no interactions on social media (e.g., reacting to others' posts, reading personal stories) shape your ability to understand and share the emotions of others offline

2. Do you think social media increases or decreases your ability to empathize with others in real life? Why?

Participants 1 to 18 responded that   we thank that social media increase the ability to emphasize with enter in real life because due to social media we get information about other people. 19 to 28 participants responded that in our opinion social media sometimes has positive impact on individual life or sometimes has negative effects that increase the ability in real life. Participant 29 to 38 responded that deny that social media increases or decreases our ability to empathize with others in real life Participant 39 and 40 responded that there is no idea about social media increases or decreases your ability to empathize with others in real life.

D. Loneliness

1. How does social media impact on your feelings of loneliness or connection with others? Do you think it provides meaningful social interactions?

Participants 1 to 22 responded that not the social media relationships or interaction are fake. People play with other emotions. Participants 23 to 40 responded that yes it will help us to connect with some collaboration people who will positively impact on our feelings and then we relate to someone.

2. Have you ever felt isolated or excluded because of social media interactions? If so, how did it affect your social life?

Participants 1 to 25 responded that now we use social media for watching reels and education. We do not interact with others on social media. Participants 26 to 37 responded that yes, we felt isolated excluding social media intentionally sometimes, when we saw someone travelling but we have not much more expenses of travelling. Participants 38 to 40 responded that we do not feel isolated or excluded because of social media interactions? If so, how did it affect your social life

A. COPERATION			
S#	**Questions**	**Respondents**	**Remarks**
01	In group projects or collaborative tasks, how do you think your use of social media (e.g., messaging apps, online platforms) has influenced your willingness to cooperate with peers? Provide examples.	26 14	26 respondents say Yes, we have experienced a situation where social media resolving a conflict with friends, a situation group project with social media helps me in our project (use of social media has significantly influenced our willingness. 14 respondents say Yes, social media helps in our academic activities. For example, when we have a project or collaboration task then we work with our colleague through messaging communication skills that will help in making our writing goals.
02	Have you ever experienced a situation where social media hindered or enhanced cooperation in resolving conflicts with friends or classmates? Describe the experience and its outcome.	15 16 09	31 respondents say Yes, we have a situation where social media enhanced cooperation in resolving conflict with friends (e.g. artwork) 09 respondents say that no we have no experience
B. Altruism			
03	How does social media influence your willingness to help others, either online or in real life? Can	32	32 Respondents say Yes social media influences our willingness to help others (e.g. if there is any needy person even financially

	you describe a specific instance?	06 02	or emotionally, help them. 06 Respondents say Yes social media influences our willingness to help others both online and in real life. In experience. Yes, I will help one person through chatting on WhatsApp are also in real life 02 Respondents say no about the response.
04	Have you ever engaged in any social media campaigns or online initiatives that promote kindness and support for others? What motivated you to participate?	15 25	15 Respondents say No we are not engaged in any social media complaints or in any other activities. 25 Respondents says in our opinion social media sometimes has positive impact on individual life or sometime has negative effect that decrease the negative ability in real life
C. Empathy			
05	How do interactions on social media (e.g., reacting to others' posts, reading personal stories) shape your ability to understand and share the emotions of others offline	18 02 20	18 Respondents say Yes social media explore our emotion due to social media learning lot of knowledge about empathy now we are always ready for helping others. 02 Respondents say Yes, we will also interact on social media to feel kindness and empathy to listen to the story of one girl who tells about their difficult life to help them and feel relaxed 20 Respondents say that many of news on social media have no authentic source so we cannot explore our emotion.
06	2. Do you think social media increases or decreases your ability to empathize with others in real life? Why?	18 15 07	18 Respondents say we thank that social media increase the ability to emphasize with enter in real life because due to social media we get information of other people. 15 Respondents say in our opinion social media sometimes has positive impact on individual life or sometimes has negative effects that increase the ability in real life. 07 Respondents say deny that social media increases or decreases our ability to empathize with others in real life

	D. Loneliness		
07	How does social media impact on your feelings of loneliness or connection with others? Do you think it provides meaningful social interactions?	22 18	22 Respondents say No the social media relationships or interaction are fake. People play with other emotions 18 Respondents say Yes it will help us to connect with some collaborative people who will positively impact on our feelings and then we relate to someone.
08	Have you ever felt isolated or excluded because of social media interactions? If so, how did it affect your social life?	25 15	25 Respondents say No we used social media for watching reels and education. We do not interact with others on social media. 15 Respondents say Yes, we felt isolated excluding social media intentionally some time, when we saw someone travelling but we have not much more expenses of travelling.

FINDING OF THE STUDY

Theme: Cooperation

a. Positive Influence on Cooperation

A significant number of respondents (26 out of 40) stated that social media positively influenced their willingness to cooperate in group projects and collaborative tasks. Social media platforms, particularly messaging apps, played a crucial role in conflict resolution among peers, aiding in teamwork and task coordination. Also, 14 respondents emphasized that social media enhances academic collaboration by facilitating communication and goal setting in group tasks.

b. Social Media and Conflict Resolution

The majority 31 respondents acknowledged that social media helped in resolving conflicts with friends or classmates by providing a platform for discussion and collaboration. Examples included working on art-related projects where social media acted as a mediator for better cooperation. However, 9 respondents denied having any such experience.

Theme: Altruism

c. Willingness to Help Others

The majority (32 respondents) agreed that social media positively influences their willingness to help others, whether emotionally or financially. Some respondents (6) shared specific instances where they assisted someone in need, either through WhatsApp chats or in real-life scenarios. Only 2 respondents did not acknowledge any impact of social media on their willingness to help others.

d. Participation in Social Media Campaigns

The majority of 25 respondents acknowledged the dual impact of social media, stating that while it can promote kindness, it also has negative effects on real-life interactions. However, 15 respondents confirmed they had never participated in any social media campaigns promoting kindness or social support.

Theme: Empathy

e. Impact of Social Media on Emotional Understanding

Most of 18 respondents agreed that social media interactions, such as reading personal stories or reacting to posts, helped them develop empathy. Only 2 respondents shared specific cases where they felt empathetic toward individuals sharing their struggles online. However, 20 respondents expressed skepticism about social media content, doubting its authenticity and therefore limiting their emotional engagement.

f. Social Media and Real-life Empathy

The majority of 18 respondents believed that social media increases their ability to empathize with others in real life by providing access to diverse perspectives and experiences. Also, 15 respondents acknowledged both positive and negative aspects of social media's influence on empathy. Moreover, 7 respondents did not perceive any positive or negative impact of social media on their ability to empathize.

Theme: Loneliness

g. Social Media and Social Connection

Most of 22 respondents believed that social media does not provide meaningful social interactions, considering online relationships to be superficial. However, 18 respondents felt that social media helped them establish valuable connections and collaborations that positively impacted their emotions.

h. Feelings of Isolation Due to Social Media

The majority of 25 respondents reported that they primarily use social media for entertainment (watching reels) and education, without engaging much in social interactions. However, 15 respondents admitted feeling excluded or isolated due to social media, especially when seeing others engage in activities they couldn't afford.

DISCUSSION

The results derived from this investigation elucidate the intricate function of social media in the formulation of interpersonal relations, particularly regarding cooperation, altruism, empathy, and loneliness. A substantial fraction of participants articulated that social media platforms, notably messaging applications, have positively impacted their propensity to engage in collaborative endeavors and to mediate disputes among colleagues(Yue et al., 2024). This observation is congruent with existing research indicating that active engagement with social media can augment perceived social support, thereby

facilitating cooperative behavior and enhancing teamwork efficacy. Nevertheless, the bifurcated nature of social media is manifest, as some subjects acknowledged its capacity to foster kindness while concurrently recognizing its detrimental effects on face-to-face interactions. This dichotomy mirrors broader discourses within the literature concerning the intricate interplay between online participation and social conduct(Hui et al., 2024).

With respect to empathy, the investigation uncovers a divided viewpoint among respondents. While some indicated that social media exchanges, such as interactions with personal narratives, have cultivated emotional comprehension, a considerable number of voiced doubts regarding the authenticity of online material, which consequently restricted their empathetic involvement(Qin et al., 2022). This observation aligns with research that suggests the influence of social media on empathy is multifaceted, encompassing both advantageous and disadvantageous aspects. Furthermore, the correlation between social media usage and the experience of loneliness is intricate. While certain individuals derived significance from online connections, the majority regarded these interactions as superficial, underscoring the potential for social media to both mitigate and intensify feelings of isolation. This complexity is echoed in contemporary scholarship, which posits that the quality of digital interactions may not adequately satisfy the social requirements fulfilled through in-person communication, potentially resulting in heightened loneliness over time(Mao et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The results of this investigation highlighted that the dual character of social media in influencing social behaviors, particularly in the promotion of cooperation, altruism, empathy, and feelings of loneliness. Although social media platforms augment collaborative efforts, aid in conflict resolution, and encourage prosocial behaviors such as assisting others, their effects are intricate and contingent upon various contexts. The findings indicate that while certain individuals cultivate empathy through digital interactions, others maintain a skeptical stance regarding the authenticity of online content, thereby constraining their emotional involvement. Moreover, the function of social media in relation to loneliness presents a paradox that some users establish significant connections, whereas others endure social isolation because of superficial exchanges. These revelations highlight the necessity for a judicious approach to social media utilization, accentuating its capacity for constructive engagement while addressing its adverse ramifications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Incorporate social media platforms within educational frameworks to augment cooperative efforts and facilitate effective conflict resolution.
II. Advocate for involvement in social media initiatives that cultivate generosity and foster social support networks.
III. Implement workshops aimed at equipping students with the skills to engage empathetically and critically to evaluate online information.
IV. Foster face-to-face interactions and promote initiatives for digital detoxification to mitigate the isolation associated with excessive social media engagement.

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