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ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN IMPROVING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PAKISTANI STUDENTS

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Abstract

The objectives of this research paper is to analyze the "Role of Social Media in improving academic performance of Pakistani Students". For this purpose, we collected primary data through a structured questionnaire from 600 students of four Universities randomly. The improvement of academic performance of the students was dependent variable while independent variables include social media usage, enhancing academic relationship, improving learning motivation, Personalized learning material and development of collaborative abilities. We used descriptive statistics, correctional analysis and Multiple Regression Methods were used to analyze data. Our findings show that there is positive and significant relationship between social media and academic performance of students.

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1. Introduction

Interactive tools have enabled the users to give their suggestions and express their opinions on different agendas along with socializing their life with academic environment. The use of social media for educational materials has some internal rules and has developed sentiment systems. But all this is about localized systems and differ from place to place. A new ecology of development has increased with mobile applications which has been devised for social media (Patrut & Patrut, 2013). Whether it is research for students, or teaching, the use of social media has forced the people to develop a new learning mechanism, and so has been adopted by many universities to manage e-learning environment. For learners, educational process is associated with anxiety (Rabbani, Javed, Asif, & Ibrahim, 2015).Twitter has recently developed a new platform for information sharing (Lincoln, 2013). This tells us that information sharing and current trends has been the most important trends that people are trying to follow.

1.1 Problem Statement

With rapid use of ICTs, it has been observed that in Pakistani educational environment many students are not even having a laptop or computer system through which they can interact with their educational institutions (Mallia, 2013). The reason is that parents do not allow their children to excessively involve in social media activities. Moreover, it can be seen that E-learning is another advantage of social media channels. But problem is that to get benefits through internet are uncertain, this means, if a student receives certain help on a topic one time, it is not sure that next time the same level of enthusiasm will be shown by the helping party next time. Or, with development of fake

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information, which is being promoted on Facebook and Twitter, people are following lies in many ways. Even the people who are sharing information, do not know that the information they are sharing are true or false.

1.2 Objectives of study

The main objectives of this research paper are given below: -

● To study the importance of social media.

● To study the impact of social media on educational sector.

● To analyze relationship between social media and students' performance.

● To study the important role of technology in promotion of higher education.

1.3 Research Questions:

The main research questions of this research papers are given as under: -

► How Social Media networks are responsible for enhancing learning abilities of students?

► Is word-of-mouth on social media helpful in enhancing learning capabilities?

► Is social media developing new study urge among Pakistani students?

► Are Pakistani students using social media in positive ways?

► Are Pakistani students assumed better working scenarios through social media?

1.4 Scope of Study

The role of ICTs combined with social media has brought a major change in trends of social media and education in a short span of time. The Covid-19 has totally changed learning and teaching environment from lower to higher

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level of education. Social distance is compulsory need to save the lives of students and teachers. This study will help the policy makers and media managers to take benefit of its results because it deals with the role of social media in academic performance of the students. Even for parents the results of this study will be helpful to manage the education of their children. As social media is changing with the changing landscape of pandemic scenario the scope of this study is multi-dimensional.

2.Literature Review

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as an internet based tool that allows the creation and exchange of user generated contents. The social media gives its users an opportunity to create, edit and collaborates their contents using internet as medium of propagation (Donath & Boyd, 2004; Rajeev, 2005). The social media provides rich experience to different users to exchange data being generated by them. This contribution towards social media is also done through public reviews and comments (Donath & Boyd, 2004). It provides users an opportunity to interpret and get information through tagging. The features of Web 2.0 have laid a solid base for highlighting different interpretation of information by end users. Golbeck (2008) suggested that social media is being found in different forms and users can interact and communicate with each other not only with their friends, family but also with strangers.

Social Media has enriched educational possibilities with significant growth and access to web content (Greenhow & Sonnevend, 2016). With this, basic conceptualizations of classroom and learning has become a serious challenge for administrators, educators and students (Curtis, 2011). Teaching and learning has been influenced a lot by social media development.

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Educational practices are being tested on online social media especially in the field of law, sociology, communications, cultural studies and educational behavior (Greenhow & Sonnevend, 2016; Johnson & Christensen, 2010).

2.1 Social Media and Students:

Many authors suggested that students in current age consider using social media as an integral part of their everyday activities (Salter & Junco, (2007); Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter, & Espinoza, (2008). They remain connected with their families, friends and colleagues through social media websites. Facebook has an overwhelming popularity among youth and it is found that students do consider using Facebook as a source of amusement, entertainment and knowledge sharing. In a study conducted in Los Angles it was found that students belonging to first year college life do consider using social media more specifically as compared to other activities. While in Pakistan, apart from Facebook, Pakistan do have higher users of Twitter and LinkedIn as well. McFedries, (2007) concluded in his research that students mostly use Twitter for education improvement. They used Twitter in order to share academic material with each other. The students also used this material as a means of improving their research capabilities and sharing published research articles with each other. It has also been found that students do put their queries over Twitter in order to get response from experts and other students so that they can improve their academic capability. Twitter, thus, serving as a useful tool for exchange of student's comments, reviews, study materials and guidelines. From student activities on Twitter, it can be found that they are engaged in healthy positive learning which is enhancing their academic experience and broadening their academic horizons.

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2.2. Use of Social Media Sites for Academic Purposes:

The major review, which relates to our study is that, does social media sites help in academic performance or not. Many studies have considered social networking sites as an option for developing academic performance (Camilia, Ibrahim, & Ibrahim, 2013).

2.3 Social Networking and Asia Pacific:

The concept of social networking has been developed over the period of time with platforms like Blackboard, Forums, Discussion board, Wiki, Blogs, Moodle, Webinars etc., which are developing mass media role in public (Issa, Isaias, & Kommers, 2015). Also, along with affordability and simplicity of internet access, globally and locally social networking has increased (Rabbani, Javed, Asif, & Ibrahim, 2015). Also with cheaper tablets and mobile phones, which are being offered in market or on affordable market, convenience has been added. With integration of social networking and higher education, risks are also a part of this infrastructure as:

- Social Development.
- Security.
- Physical Development.
- Cognitive Development.

It can be seen in the study that many students feel that collaborating with peers is important in studies and it is being made easy with this setup.

2.4 Media and Academic Development of students

Al-Khalifa (2013) stated in his research that 58 percent of the students have shown positive gesture in using Twitter for their academic purposes. The 37 percent students were reluctant to use social media as means for improving

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their academic excellence. He also identified disadvantages associated with use of social media websites for academic purposes. The cyber bullying is one of the major disadvantages of making social media use. Cyber bullying is leakage of one's personal data (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2011). Another major disadvantage associated with use of social media websites is wastage of time on non-academic activities. This is associated with putting negative effects on performance of the students. Tariq W (2012) contended that it is necessary that students must be engaged on social media platforms in order to be in touch with each other and to learn from each other in a better way. The need of the time is to educate students on positive and useful use of social media in order to enhance their learning and overall performance. He further suggested that social media is meant for entertainment purpose but it can be used for education enhancement and learning process. Chisty KU (2013) stated that social media has negative impacts on student grades. The reason is that students get addicted to use of social media platform which affects their study timings thus hindering their academic grades. He also argued that social media excessive use makes students shy and they are reluctant to face communication which hinders their self confidence in the long run. It also causes problems in their career development. Siddiqui S (2016) discussed that social media has both positive and negative impacts on student performance. The students can make positive use of social media by making study and discussion groups where they exchange academic views, experiences and learning's with each other. This platform can be used for sharing useful information and better opportunities for future can be explored. It is also observed that the students making negative use of social media by creating fake accounts for fun purpose. Also, they get addicted to it and thus wasting their time.

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2.5 Social Media and Interaction:

Online applications which are being introduced by social media are actively increasing collaboration, interaction and content sharing (Richter & Koch, 2007). People and especially students have become more participative in different activities and that is because of social media marketing (Alhadid & As'ad, 2014). According to Armstrong & Kotler (2005), change in different aspects cannot be bounded by any theory. Here are some possibilities which have been studied earlier with benefits highlighted as:

Accessibility: While studying or watching tutorials online, cost that occurs to students is often minimal (Brown, Krasteva, & Ranerie, 2016). Also, people sitting in rural areas are able to get online educational services.

Online Communities: Multiple connections are being built by education providing companies (Alhadid & As'ad, 2014). Improvements in educational learning is being helped to these communities.

Interaction: Recent ideas are shared with students who come online on any social media platform(Camilia, Ibrahim, & Ibrahim, 2013; Greenhow & Sonnevend, 2016). With up-to-date information being broadcasted on social media marketing this media has developed new methods for students to study.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

Data was collected through a structure questionnaire. As many as 600 students were selected from four different private and public Universities. The data was collected randomly. The sampling universities are as under:

- Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan
- Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan

- National College of Business Administration & Economics, Multan
- COMSATS University, Lahore

3.2 Selected variables

Five independent and one dependent variable were selected for this study. The dependent variable was academic performance of students while independent variables include: Social Media, enhancing academic relationship, improving learning motivation, personalized learning materials and development of collaborative abilities.

3.2.1 Explanation of Variables

3.2.1.1 Independent Variables:

● Social media is assumed to be an effective tool for enhancing learning. It is being widely used by academic institutions to disseminate knowledge and learning of their students.

● **Enhancing Academic Relationship:**

It is a fact that academic relationships with teachers at school level are quite easier but when a student enters university life, this scope is broadened (Nugent, 2009). The word teacher has multiple roles like a person's friend, a senior or a person with similar academic research (McGinnis, 1985).

● **Improving Learning Motivation**

Text messages have been observed as the basic usage mode for children going to schools; and has added up a next level to conversational development. Many students have had been shy in talking or speaking up directly to people, but this has now been developed into a new phase with mega development and interactive session. The studied dimensions are: Scope of study and reduction of stress.

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● **Personalized Learning Materials:**

Webinars, and other You-tube tutorials are a great example of studying for students, especially in the practical or software field (Nugent, 2009). Due to this reason, this variable has been considered important. Multiple online lectures on tough and descriptive topics are also the reason of personalized learning in this field and this has increased social media usage, resulting the academic performance up gradation in Pakistani educational institutions. The important dimensions are: Assignments completion and new trends motivation.

● **Development of Collaborative Abilities:**

With blogging and discussion groups being posted on Facebook or Twitter, development of collaboration has been established. This can be understood as; if a student is in a class, jealousy becomes a reason of not sharing techniques (Brown, Krasteva, & Ranerie, 2016). But when he or she is on global discussion, many international students become the source of information, which is probably the right one. Better Graphical understanding and international help are the studied dimensions.

● **Academic Performance of students**

The dependent variable used in our research study is academic performance of the students. The academic performance is defined as improvement in academic outputs of the students as result of making use of different social media sites. This academic performance is measured in terms of improved grades, enhanced learning, enhanced practical exposure of students and improved problem-solving capabilities of the students. It will also take into consideration on measuring the impact that social media sites have

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on accomplishing different academic tasks assigned to students by their teachers.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on multiple studies discussed in literature review, the framework is based on drawing a conceptual model comprising independent, mediating and dependent variable. that effects the dependent variable. Considering the improved usage of social media tools and channels like WhatsApp and Facebook in particular, personalized learning materials have been observed to be published on social media, along with that collaborative groups are made with tutorials being promoted on each level or expertise. With that, academic relationships on global and local levels are maintained which help students learn new techniques in various manners. The conceptual model containing independent, mediating and dependent variables is shown in Figure 1.
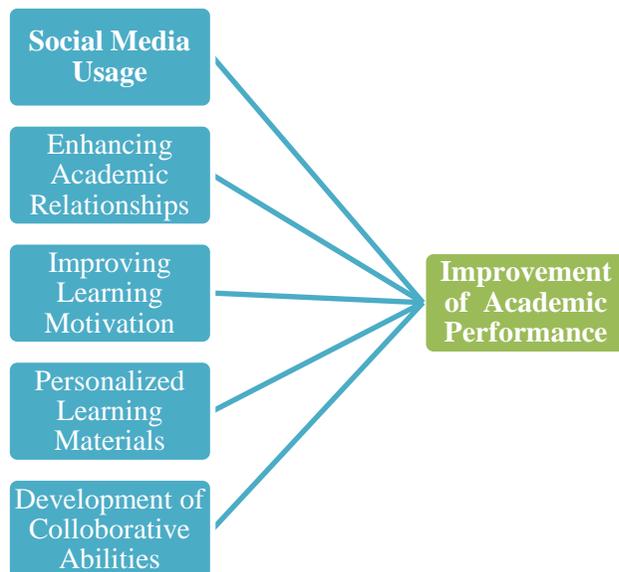
Social Media Usage

Enhancing Academic Relationships

Improving Learning Motivation

Personalized Learning Materials

Development of Colloborative Abilities

Improvement of Academic Performance

Figure1: Conceptual Model

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3.4 Hypotheses of the study

The hypotheses of the study are given below: -

Ho: Social media usage does not improve academic performance of students.

H_1: Social media usage does improve academic performance of students.

Ho: Learning motivation does not increase social media usage and academic performance of students.

H_1: Learning Motivation increases social media usage and academic performance of students.

Ho: Personalized learning materials increase social media usage and academic performance of students.

H_1: Personalized Learning Materials increases social media usage and academic Performance of students.

Ho: Collaborative abilities developed through social media usage do not improve academic performance of students.

H_1: Collaborative abilities developed through social media usage improves academic performance of students.

Ho: There is no positive association between usage of social media and academic performance of students.

H_1: There is positive association between usage of social media and academic performance of students.

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4. Empirical Analysis:

4.1 Descriptive statistics:

The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1: -

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.39	.146		2.704	.007		
PLM_ Mean	. 177	.040	.179	4.408	.000	.494	2.024
DCA_ Mean	. 190	039	.194	4.837	.000	.503	1.986
EM_ Mean	170	.045	.166	3.752	.000	.414	2.418
AR_ Mean	300	.035	.325	8.580	.000	.567	1.765
SM_ Mean	. 137	.046	.085	2.990	.003	.997	1.003

a. Dependent Variable: AP _Mean

The value of Beta here signifies that null hypothesis is rejected and, in each case, and H_1, H_2, H_3, H_4 and H_5 have been accepted in this case. The value of beta signifies that Personal Learning Material is being used from social media to increase academic performance. Since all values are greater than 0, so as mentioned earlier all hypothesis are accepted. Similarly, all values of **t-test** signify a strong relationship between these variables. The value of R^2 determines the model summary. According to value = 0.526, this model has been declared as a goodness of fit for usage and development. This shows that

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theoretical framework developed has been approved and all these independent variables do have significant impact on dependent variable.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Social Media is an important variable in this study, which is assumed as mediator. By keeping that in mind, we know that all scaled questions were formed in the context of this variable. In order to make sure that effective results are found, the value of 'r' i.e. correlation value, is calculated. When a value of Pearson correlation is positive, that shows that relationships are strong, and when it is more than +0.5, it means moderate positive correlation between variables. The results show that the values of coefficient of all variables are more than 55 percent, showing that there are positive and significant correlation between variables.

Table 2   Results of Correlation Analysis

Variable	Co-relation Coefficients
Enhanced Motivation	0.627
Academic Relationship	0.628
Development of Collaborative Authorities	0.576
Personalized Learning Material	0.596

4.3 Regression Analysis

The results of regression analysis were drawn through Ordinary Least Square method and these results are shown in Table 3.

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Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics						Durbin Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.F Change		
	.728[a]	.530	.526	.59033	530	130.365	5	577	.000		1.852

a. Predictors: (Constant), SM _Mean, DCA_ Mean, AR_ Mean, PLM _ Mean, EM_ Mean

b. Dependent Variable: AP Mean

The results in table 3 shows the value of R^2 is 0.530 while adjusted R2 is 0.526 which means that 52.6 percent variations in dependent variable is due to independent variables. Hence, there is significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. In other words, social media has significant impact on academic performance of the students.

5. Conclusion

We conclude from the results that the trend of sharing experiences is developing among Pakistani students. Similarly, collaborative abilities of the students also improving All popular channels of social media such as face book, WhatsApp's, Linked, Academia, Twitter also positively contributed in the improving knowledge of the students. Similarly, availability of learning material has made the study on any subject very easy. In this way, social media has played a significant positive role in improvement of the academic performance of Pakistani students. The Universities have also launched their

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educational channel to provide latest academic information to the students as well.

6. Recommendations

In the light of above results, the recommendations of the study are given as under: -

► People should focus on the fact that internet is the most productive technology which can be used in many aspects.

► Positive outcomes like jobs or future studies of personal interests for students in Pakistan should be promoted.

► Moreover, in software industry, pages like Tech Hubs, and other software pages, are of great help in implementation of code. These soft wares must be updated.

► Educational institutions should work with human resource managers, and work on online opinion leaders, who can share and evaluate positive outcomes from social media development.

►Future Pakistani researchers should not only observe, but also consult or conduct seminars on the use of technology.

7. Contribution of study

Social media is new ways of learning for the students. It has opened the ways of knowledge sharing thus, removing territorial barriers for learning. With the help of internet and social media, a lecture delivered in Oxford university can be seen in any Pakistani university. The technology is shaping the way our students are learning. In every field, technology and advancements do have positive as well as negative aspects associated with it. It is responsibility of the user to safeguard its interests and use it in a positive way. Social media is playing significant role in enhancing and increasing learning of students. It is providing students an opportunity to exchange resources

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related to academic learning and excellence. It is useful means of sharing and getting books, journals, research articles and other scholarly work to enhance students learning. It also provides assistance in the form of shared lectures which are a useful means of increasing knowledge and promoting learning process. It also provides students to exchange their views and share their findings and experiences with other students. This knowledge sharing discussions is really helpful for students in building their strong academic base. This highlight the contribution of study in measuring the impact of social media and importance of technology for promotion of online learning.

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Contribution of author

Both authors jointly carried out this research study and collaborated each other. The author 1 collected data, conducted its statistical analysis. He prepared initial draft of manuscript. The Author 2 helped Author 1 in selected of title of paper, guided him in statistical analysis and gave final shape to the manuscript. Both authors carefully read final draft of manuscript and find it fit for publishing.

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