

# NAVIGATING THE INTERSECTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND STUDENT LEARNING: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON GEN Z STUDENTS IN BHOPAL

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## Abstract

Social media has changed the way individuals communicate, share information, and connect with one another. Young lives have been significantly impacted by this, especially those of the Gen Z generation. So, it is crucial to comprehend how social media is affecting students' academic learning.

This study focuses on the opinions and experiences of 150 students from Bhopal, India, who are between the ages of 19 and 21. The study aims to add to the existing discussion regarding social media's place in education by examining how it affects students' learning. The study provides light on whether social media has an impact on academic performance, if it is beneficial or how it is affecting the future of education, how it aids students in finding trustworthy information, and whether it gives them adequate chance.

As they navigate the digital era, educators, politicians, and students will find the study's conclusions to be helpful. It will give teachers knowledge of how to use social media into the curriculum in a positive way while minimizing negative effects.

This study will advance our knowledge of how social media is influencing the educational landscape and offer guidance on how to maximize its positive effects while reducing its negative ones. We seek to acquire a better understanding of how social media can be utilized to support academic performance and prepare students for the difficulties of the digital world by looking at the perspectives and experiences of students.

**Keywords:** social media, youth, academics, sleep disorder

## INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms have transformed contemporary communication by enabling people to connect and communicate with people around the world. It has a significant impact on how individuals communicate with one another, consume news and information, and engage in social and political concerns.

The first social media platform was Six Degrees, launched in 1997, which allowed users to create profiles and connect with friends. However, it was not until the mid-2000s that social media exploded in popularity, with the launch of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Platforms like LinkedIn, founded in 2003, provided a professional networking platform for job seekers and professionals. Instagram launched in 2010, focused on visual content and became a popular platform for sharing photos and videos. Snapchat, founded in 2011, introduced the concept of ephemeral messaging, where messages disappear after a short period, and became popular among younger users.

The issue at hand is the complex relationship between social media and student learning. While social media has the potential to be a valuable resource for students, it can also be a source of distraction and negativity that negatively impacts their education. As such, it is crucial to examine this relationship in more detail to better understand its effects on student learning, especially among Gen Z students in Bhopal.

There are several reasons why this is important. First, social media usage is increasingly prevalent among young people, and this trend is only expected to continue in the future. As such, it is important to understand the impact that social media is having on student learning in order to support students in making the most of this technology.

Second, Gen Z students in Bhopal represent a unique population with unique experiences and challenges. This group's experiences will be better understood by looking at how social media affects their learning, and it may also highlight issues and possibilities that are unique to this area that need to be addressed.

Finally, shaping the future of education depends on our ability to comprehend how social media affects student learning. Researchers and decision-makers can create strategies to help students use technology in ways that improve rather than hinder their education by carefully evaluating this relationship.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Greenhow, 2016) challenges the traditional divisions between formal and informal learning in order to make the case that social media may promote learning outside of the classroom.

(Manca, 2016) offers an updated review of the literature from 2012 to 2015 on the use of Facebook as a technologically enhanced learning environment and the Facebook's potential for use in education and its drawbacks.

(Kirschner, 2013) examines the assumption that students always know what is best for their learning style and so educators should think about alternatives because social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter may not be the best tools for all learners.

(Al-Rahmi, 2013) explores how students' use of social media affects their academic performance in higher education in Malaysia. According to the research, students who use social media for academic objectives perform better than those who use it for social purposes, and social media use has a detrimental impact on academic performance.

(Junco, 2012) examines the link between Facebook use and college student involvement. Students who use Facebook frequently and engage in its activities may be more motivated to complete their assignments.

(Malik, 2012) aims into how students at Lahore College for Women University's academic performance are affected by social media. As per this study, there is a negative correlation between social media use and academic achievement.

(Wang, 2011) explains that integrating social media into the classroom can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on pupils, and that teachers should be cognizant of these consequences.

(Nambisan, 2011) indicates that social media may be a valuable tool for fostering social support and raising patients' perceptions of empathy.

(Papacharissi, 2010) examines the possible effects of social media on education, contending that it could lead to new approaches to participation and learning.

(Prensky, 2001) The terms "digital natives" and "digital immigrants" are introduced in this article, which also covers the effects of technology on education. The author makes the case that educators should modify their teaching strategies to fit the demands of this new generation of learners since digital natives have a different learning style than digital immigrants have a different learning style than digital immigrants and that educators need to adapt their teaching methods to meet the needs of this new generation of learners

(Goyal, 2020) investigates how social media affects Indian students enrolled in higher education in terms of their academic performance. The results imply that social media use may be detrimental to productivity and academic success.

(Pal, 2020) This study looks into how social media affects Indian undergraduate students' learning and academic performance. The results imply that social media use may be detrimental to productivity and academic success.

(Bhatnagar, 2019) This study investigates how social media affects Indian students' academic performance. According to the research, social media may have a detrimental effect on productivity and academic achievement.

(Panchal, 2019) This study investigates how social media affects management students in India's learning results. Social media should be incorporated into formal education systems to improve student learning, according to the study, which indicates that it has a favorable impact on learning outcomes, including improved engagement and collaboration.

(Soni, 2019) This study looks at how social media affects college students in India's academic performance. The results show that social media use has a negative effect on productivity and academic achievement.

(Dhar, 2018) This paper covers the body of research on how social media affects education. It explores the difficulties of incorporating social media into formal education institutions while highlighting the advantages of social media for education, such as improved involvement and cooperation.

(Gupta, 2018) This study looks at how social media affects academic achievement in India. The study concludes that using social media has a detrimental impact on academic achievement and recommends that teachers give their pupils advice on how to use social media effectively and responsibly.

(Datta, 2018) This study intends to investigate how social media affects Indian student academic lives. The results imply that social media can affect student participation and academic achievement in both favorable and unfavorable ways.

(Malhotra, 2018) This study looks into how social media affects Indian students' academic performance. The results imply that social media use may be detrimental to productivity and academic success.

(Kaur, 2018) This study looks into how social media affects management students in India's academic performance. The results imply that social media use may be detrimental to productivity and academic success.

(Chugh, 2017) This study looks at how social media has affected India's educational system. It draws attention to the beneficial benefits of social media on education, such as improved student engagement, easier access to learning materials, and collaborative learning. The study also covers some of the possible negative aspects of social media, like diversions and the dissemination of false information. (Kumari, 2017)

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine whether social media helps Gen Z in academics and learning.
2. To determine how social media is changing the way Gen Z studies and how they take advantage of social media.
3. To determine the relation between social media usage and time spent on it among Gen Z.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H01: social media does not provide students with enough opportunities for learning, business, jobs, finding people, etc.

H1: social media provides students with enough opportunities for learning, business, jobs, finding people, etc.

H02: There is no relationship between gender and the usefulness of social media for learning.

H2: There is a significant relationship between gender and the usefulness of social media for learning.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to gather and analyze data from primary sources using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The population of the study was Generation Z of Bhopal and information was accumulated from 167 respondents of Bhopal through a survey questionnaire.

The research methodology used in the study employed a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyze data from primary data sources. The population of the study was Generation Z of Bhopal, and the sample size was 165 students. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire designed using a Likert scale and observations of students in their natural setting. The survey questionnaire was administered using Google Forms. The study used convenience sampling.

## ANALYSIS FROM THE RESPONSES

To analyze the data collected, various statistical tools were used such as the chi-square test, z-test, rank order analysis, and measures of central tendency such as mean, mode, and median. We used the chi-square test to determine whether there is a significant association between the gender of students and their opinion about the usefulness of social media for learning. Z-test to determine whether there is a significant difference opportunity that gen z get from social media. Rank order analysis is used to determine the relative rank of items in a dataset.

1. Out of 167, 98 were male, 68 were female and 1 other.
2. Out of the total responses students were in majority (141) followed by other professions.
3. Among 167 respondents showed that Instagram was the most popular platform, with 128 respondents indicating that they use it frequently. This is followed by YouTube with only 15 respondents, WhatsApp with 7 respondents, LinkedIn with 4 respondents, and Facebook with only 3 respondents. It's also important to note that 10 respondents claimed to use additional social media networks that weren't listed in the alternatives.
4. The data shows that the majority of the respondents, 146 out of 167, believe that social media helps them to find information. This would imply that social media enhances students' learning by giving them quick access to a large variety of knowledge. Nonetheless, the 21 "no" responses would suggest that there are certain restrictions or difficulties when using social media for academic objectives
5. Majority of the respondents (132 out of 167) believe that social media provides them with reliable information, while 35 respondents said no. This indicates that a significant number of students trust social media as a source of information. However, it is important to note that there is a considerable number of respondents who do not consider social media to be a reliable source of information, which could have implications for their learning outcomes.
6. According to 167 participants' responses, it was discovered that the majority of respondents use social media for entertainment (48), closely followed by socializing (45) and general awareness (35). The remaining respondents (9) indicated various reasons for using social media, whereas a lesser fraction of respondents (23) and (6) reported using social media for study/knowledge purposes and business purposes, respectively
7. The results show that 62 respondents spend less than two hours per day on social media, while 82 out of 167 respondents (or the majority) spend between four and eight hours each day. Nevertheless, a sizeable portion of responders (23 out of 167) do so, with 7 spending more than 6 hours online. This implies that a considerable portion of respondents' daily routines likely include using social media.
8. Out of 167 respondents, 109 said social media was at least somewhat helpful for learning, while 55 thought it was really helpful. Just 3 respondents said that social media is not effective for learning. This shows that a sizeable section of Bhopal's Gen Z population views social media as a helpful learning tool.

9. Hypothesis I

**Table 1: Cross Tabulation Analysis**

Ho: null hypothesis is that there is no relationship between gender and the usefulness of social media for learning.

H1: The alternative hypothesis is that there is a significant relationship.

Performing the calculations for all the cells in the table, we get the following results:

Group	Observed frequency	Expected frequency	OI -EI	(OI -EI) ^2	(O-E) ^2 / E
<b>Male</b>					
Somewhat useful	69	65.72	3.28	10.75	0.164
Very useful	29	32.27	-3.27	10.69	0.331
<b>Female</b>					
Somewhat useful	43	46.27	-3.27	10.69	0.231
Very useful	26	22.72	3.28	10.75	0.473
<b>Total</b>					1.199

Since the calculated value of chi-squared (1.199) is less than the critical value (3.841), comparing calculated value and table value of  $\chi^2$ , we find that calculated value is less than the table value and the result thus, supports the hypothesis and it can be concluded that there is no relationship between gender and the usefulness of social media for learning.

10. Hypothesis II

H02: Social media does not provide students with enough opportunities for learning, business, jobs, finding people, etc.

H2: Social media provides students with enough opportunities for learning, business, jobs, finding people, etc.

$$\hat{p} = 153 / (153 + 14) = 0.916$$

Next, we calculate the standard error of the sample proportion:

$$SE = \sqrt{\hat{p} * (1 - \hat{p}) / n} = \sqrt{0.916 * 0.084 / 167} = 0.034$$

Using a standard normal distribution table or calculator, we find the critical value at a significance level of 0.05 and a one-tailed test to be:

$$Z \text{ critical} = 1.645$$

The test statistic is calculated as:

$$z = (p - P) / SE = (0.916 - 0.5) / 0.034 = 13.41$$

Based on the sample data, it can be concluded that the majority of the participants (153 out of 167) believe that social media provides students with enough opportunities for learning, business, jobs, finding people, etc. The statistical analysis supports this conclusion, as the one-tailed z-test for proportions resulted in a test statistic of 13.41, which is greater than the critical value of 1.645 at a significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, and it can be concluded that social media provides students with enough opportunities

11. Rank order obtained for the given data on social media platforms and their ratings:

**Rank 1** - Instagram

**Rank 2** - Telegram

**Rank 3** - LinkedIn

**Rank 4** - Facebook

To obtain the rank order, the weights was given to each rating for each social media platform based on the given ratings. According to this ranking, Instagram is the social media network that participants prefer most, followed by Telegram, LinkedIn and Facebook. It is crucial to note that there may not be a substantial variation in preference across the four platforms because the difference in average ranks between the platforms is quite tiny.

## FINDINGS

The impact of social media on the knowledge of youth is a complex and multifaceted issue.

**Positive Impacts:**

**Access to information:** Easy access to a wealth of material is made possible by social media, which makes it simpler for students to learn and do research.

**Collaboration and networking:** Social media platforms can help students, professors, and professionals in various disciplines collaborate and network.

**Personalized learning:** social media can be used to personalize learning so that each student's needs and interests are taken into account.



**Improved communication:** social media can help students and teachers communicate better, making it simpler to ask questions, get feedback, and remember due dates and assignments.

**Improved access to educational resources:** Students can access a variety of educational resources through social media, such as online courses, videos, and articles.

**Enhanced creativity and innovation:** By providing them with access to a variety of viewpoints and ideas, social media can inspire children to be imaginative and creative.

**Increased motivation and engagement:** By giving students a forum to share their work, get feedback, and connect with others who share their interests, social media can boost motivation and engagement.

**Development of digital skills:** Students can build digital competencies including information literacy, digital communication, and technology fluency by using social media for learning. These competencies are critical for success in the twenty-first century.

**Increased sense of community:** social media can provide students with Students, teachers, and specialists can feel linked and part of a community through social media, fostering a cooperative and encouraging learning environment.

**Access to global perspectives:** Access to perspectives and experiences from people around the world, helping to broaden their understanding of different cultures and ways of thinking.

**Negative Impacts:**

**Distraction and decreased focus:** social media can be a major source of distraction, reducing the amount of time and attention students give to their studies.

**Decreased critical thinking skills:** social media can lead to a reliance on quick, surface-level information, which can reduce critical thinking skills.

**Spread of misinformation:** With the ease of sharing information on social media, it can be difficult to verify the accuracy of information, leading to the spread of misinformation.

**Negative impact on mental health:** Spending excessive amounts of time on social media has been linked to a range of mental health problems, including anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders.

1. The findings of this study suggest that social media has a significant impact on learning outcomes among Gen Z students in Bhopal.

2. Social media is perceived as a useful tool for a variety of purposes among this population, including learning, business, jobs, finding people, and entertainment.

3. A sizable portion of students use social media for socializing, as well as for leisure and business-related activities.

4. Of the people questioned, WhatsApp and YouTube are the next most popular social media networks, followed by Instagram.

5. Although a sizable portion of respondents do not believe social media to be a reliable source of information, students trust it as a source of knowledge.

6. Further study is required to examine the restrictions and difficulties associated with using social media for academic purposes.

7. The results of this study can be useful in designing social media-based learning interventions for Gen Z students, taking into account their preferences and usage patterns.

8. Teachers and educators can enhance student learning and information sharing by utilizing social media platforms.

9. Universities can utilize social media to advertise their courses and programs, communicate with potential students, and increase their presence online.

10. Future study can examine how social media affects particular learning outcomes, such academic performance, critical thinking, and creativity, and can examine how successful social media-based learning interventions are in comparison to conventional teaching techniques.

11. This finding suggests that social media has the potential to be a useful tool for students to access reliable information. However, it also highlights the need for students to be discerning about the sources of information they use and to be aware of the potential for misinformation and bias on social media platforms.

12. People can take advantage of social media's many benefits. It aids people in discovering who they are, their passions, and their goals.

13. Social media gives users access to relevant news, updates, and information that can help them advance both personally and professionally.

14. Students can use social media to learn, explore career options, and connect with others who share their interests. It also encourages the sharing of creativity and cultural exchange.



media in education could be better understood by looking into how it may affect mental health and wellbeing in the context of learning.

- The study could further investigate the factors that influence students' perception of social media as a reliable source of information and explore ways to improve their digital literacy skills to help them make informed choices about the information they consume.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, researching how Gen Z students in Bhopal use social media in relation to their learning is crucial for a number of reasons, including the region's distinctive challenges and experiences, the growing prevalence of social media use, and the need to reimagine education in a way that promotes student learning.

Social media is an online platform that facilitates communication, collaboration, and information sharing among users. It has many benefits for education, including giving students and teachers access to a variety of educational resources, encouraging engagement and participation in the learning process, and facilitating cooperation and information exchange between students and teachers. However, the use of social media in education can also have disadvantages, such as distractions, privacy concerns, cyberbullying, and issues related to digital literacy and online etiquette.

Additionally, social media may not be accessible to all students, and it is subject to change and may not always be reliable. Despite these limitations, social media can be a powerful tool for enhancing learning when used appropriately, such as facilitating online discussions, sharing educational resources, providing feedback and assessment, and promoting collaboration and teamwork.

- Social media is now an essential component of our everyday lives and has a big impact on education and learning. According to the study, social media can be a helpful tool for learning since it gives users access to a wealth of knowledge and resources, fosters cooperation and communication, and motivates participation.
- Social media does, however, have its limitations and difficulties, including the potential for distraction, information overload, and privacy and security issues. According to the study, the effectiveness of social media for learning may differ depending on a variety of elements, including user preferences, aptitude, and goals, as well as the precise setting and type of the learning activity.
- More research is required to determine the best ways to incorporate social media into educational settings and to address the problems and difficulties that come with its use.

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