

## Impact of Social Media on Teenagers’ Academic Achievement

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### **Abstract**

*This theoretical study examines the impact of social media on the academic achievement of teenagers. Social media has become an essential part of students’ daily lives, offering both educational opportunities and potential distractions. On the positive side, platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and online study groups provide quick access to the learning materials, tutorials and academic discussions. However, excessive use of social media for entertainment, constant notifications and decreased study time. Using theories such as users and gratification theory, cognitive load theory, this paper explains how social media influences learning behaviour.*

### **A) Academic Keywords**

*Academic performance, Adolescent behavior, Digital literacy, Learning outcomes, Time management, Cognitive development, Media influence*

### **B) Psychology-Based Keywords**

*Attention control, Procrastination, Motivation levels, Behavioral imitation, Online peer influence*

### **C) Technology & Media Keywords**

*Digital platforms, Screen time, Online engagement, Multimedia resources*

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The study concludes that the academic effect of social media depends on how teenagers use it. Balanced and purposeful use can support academic growth, while uncontrolled use can negatively affect performance.

The study shows that excessive use harms attention and study habits. Productive academic use supports learning, so balanced use of social media makes the study perfect.

Researchers like Nicholas Carr highlight how constant digital engagement can reduce deep concentration, suggesting that excessive social media use may weaken students' focus and study discipline.

At the same time, authors such as Howard Gardner and Luis Starkey emphasise the learning potential of multimedia platforms, showing that video discussions and online communities can support understanding and collaborative learning.

Through Bandura's social learning theory, the paper explains how teenagers often imitate behaviour seen online, which may positively or negatively affect their study habits.

Media scholars like Marshall McLuhan argue that fast-paced digital content shapes the way young people process information, influencing their attention patterns. Across these authors' viewpoints, the literature shows that social media has both constructive and disruptive effects on teenagers' academic performance.

### **Introduction**

Social media has become one of the most influential digital tools shaping teenage behaviour in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to ideas discussed in educational psychology books such as "Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice" by Robert Slavin and "Psychology of Learning" by Hilgard and Bower, an adolescent's environment significantly affects their learning patterns. Today, a major part of that environment is online- especially on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp and Snapchat.

Books on digital behaviour, such as "The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains" by Nicholas Carr, explain how constant exposure to online content can reshape attention spans, reduce deep thinking and influence memory. This connects directly to teenagers' study habits as learning requires sustained focus. Authors in the field of media studies, like Marshall McLuhan, famously state that "the medium is the message", implying that the form of digital media itself changes how young people process information.

Similarly, Howard Gardner's works on multiple intelligences highlight that teams today learn not only through text but also through images, videos and

interactions, many of which occur on social platforms. This suggests that social media could become a powerful learning tool if used effectively.

Educational research books such as “Teaching and learning in the Digital Age” by Louis Starkey show that the digital platform supports collaborative learning and critical thinking. Teenagers often use online groups to share notes, discuss homework, and explore difficult concepts. However, books on youth psychology like “Growing Up Digital” by Don Tapscott warn that excessive digital engagement may lead to distraction, Procrastination and reduced academic discipline. Therefore, the introduction of social media into everyday teenage life brings both opportunities and challenges. This study aims to explore through theory and literature how these platforms influence academic achievement, learning behaviour and study motivation among teenagers.

- Teenagers widely use Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp Snapchat
- Social media influences communication and learning
- Resist concerns about attention concentration and study habits

Social media has become an important and integral part of teenagers’ daily lives. Influencing communication, lifestyle and learning behaviour. With easy access to smartphones and internet connectivity, teenagers spend a significant part of their day engaging with Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and WhatsApp influence how students communicate, learns and spend their free time. Social media can support learning through educational videos and discussions. It can also distract students from their studies. This paper explores the Theoretical perspective on how social media affects the academic achievement of teenagers.

### **Objectives of The Study**

1. To examine the positive effects of social media on learning
2. To identify the negative impacts of excessive social media use
3. To explain the relationship between social media, habits and academic achievements
4. To understand how teenagers can use social media responsibly for learning
5. To analyse social media usage patterns among teenagers
6. To suggest strategies for balanced use of social media

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **1. Uses and gratification theory**

This theory explains that the Proper use of media to satisfy their needs, like social entertainment, relaxation, information and social connections. Full point teens use social media for enjoyment, communication, and sometimes education. These

choice affects their time for studies.

## **2. Cognitive Load Theory.**

According to this theory, the brain can focus on only limited information at a time, switching between So she switches between studying and scrolling social media increases cognitive load and reduces concentration.

## **3. Social Learning Theory, Bandura Theory.**

This theory says students learn by observing others through educational content, tutorials and role models on social media. Teams can learn new skills. Digital destruction theory notifications interrupt focus.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on three main Ideas Positive academic influence, Access to educational videos online, study group instant learning resources these helps improve understanding and academic participation Negative academic influence distraction from studies late night usage leads to poor sleep shortened attention reduces study efficiency and academic performance balanced use Leads to better achievement when team uses social media for learning and limit entertainment Scrolling academic performance improves.

### **Methodology**

1. Theoretical research. No primary data was collected
2. Based on books, journal articles, and 2018-2024 concepts were analysed through comparison and interpretation, and compared to build the theoretical arguments.

### **Discussion**

Social media has both benefits and drawbacks. Educational channels help students understand lessons better, especially difficult concepts; however, excessive scrolling of online gaming content and constant notifications can reduce focus. Poor time management habits caused by social media reduce study hours and affect performance in exams. Students who manage their screen time and follow healthy Digital routines generally perform better academically. Impacts depend on purpose and time spent.

The relationship between social media and academic achievement has been widely discussed by different authors, each offering unique viewpoints. Their ideas help explain why social media can both support and harm teenagers' learning.

**1. Nicholas Carr-** Effects on Attention and Deep Learning. In his book *The Shallows*, Nicholas Carr explains that frequent digital use trains the brain for quick browsing rather than deep concentration.

- Applying this to teenagers, constant scrolling and switching between apps may reduce their ability to focus on textbooks and long study tasks.
- This supports the idea that excessive social media use can weaken academic performance.

**2. Howard Gardner** Multimedia Learning Potential Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory suggests that students learn in different ways ( visual, auditory, interpersonal, etc.)

- Social media provides videos, discussions, animations, and interactive content matching these learning styles.
- From a Gardener's perspective, social media can enhance learning than used for educational content.

**3. Albert Bandura's** Social Learning theory. Bandura believes people learn by observing and imitating others.

- Teenagers follow study influencers, toppers and teacher channels online.
- Positive academic behaviours shown on social platforms can motivate students to develop better study habits.
- However, if teens follow entertainment creators excessively, it may promote Low performance.

**4. Marshall McLuhan** "The Medium is the Message McLuhan argues that the nature of a medium shapes how people think.

- Fast short-form content on platforms like Instagram and YouTube Shorts encourages quick attention shifts.
- This may reduce teens' ability to stay focused on long academic tasks like reading chapters or writing essays.

**5. Don Tapscott**- Digital Generation Strengths and Weaknesses

- In Growing Up Digital, Tapscott notes Today's teens are quick learners and good at navigating technology.
- This means they can access study materials faster and collaborate with classmates easily.
- But he also wants digital habits to cause way distraction and multitasking, which lowers study efficiency.

**6. Robert Slavin** -Academic Motivation and Learning Environment

- Slavin- work on educational psychology shows that motivation and environment strongly influence achievement.
- Social media can create motivation through competitive study groups and educational communities.

- At the same time, it can create an environment of distraction if teens spend more time on entertainment than academics.

#### **7. Louise Starkey- Learning in the Digital Age**

- Starkey suggests digital tools support critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.
- Many teenagers use YouTube for understanding concepts, Google Classroom for assignments, and groups for doubt-solving.
- This demonstrates the positive academic potential of social media.

The above authors discuss in a well-mannered manner that the balanced use of social media will make better achievements and more usage of social media impacts on the academic environment and other lifestyles.

#### **Conclusion**

Research published in various educational and psychological journals shows that social media has both positive and negative effects on the academic achievement of teenagers, depending on how it is used. Studies from journals on digital learning report that when social media is used for academic purposes -such as accessing explanations, joining study groups, or watching educational videos- it can improve understanding, increase motivation, and support collaborative learning among students.

However, journals that focus on adolescent behaviour and digital distraction highlight that excessive entertainment, based on social media use, leads to reduced concentration, irregular sleep patterns, performance and less time spent on studies. Articles published in technology and youth psychology journals consistently show that frequent notifications, multitasking, and constant scrolling weaken students' attention span and reduce the quality of academic performance.

Students who manage their time well and use platforms responsibly tend to maintain good academic performance, while those who lack digital discipline are more likely to face negative outcomes.

Overall, the conclusion from multiple journal findings is that social media is neither fully harmful nor fully beneficial its impact depends on the purpose, timing and amount of usage, balanced use, parental guidance, self control and awareness of digital habits are essential for ensuring that social media becomes a tool for learning rather than a source of distraction. Therefore, teenagers should be guided to use social media wisely so that it **supports -not harms** their academic achievement.

Social media influences teenagers' academic achievement in both positive and negative ways when used for learning. It supports academic growth, but uncontrolled users can distract students, reduce attention and negatively impact

exam results. Awareness, self-discipline, and healthy study habits are essential for balancing social media use and academic success.

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