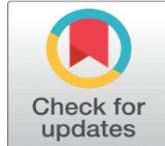


SCROLLING AND SUSTAINED ATTENTION: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE SUSTAINED ATTENTION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Social media is one of the powerful tools for connecting with people and sharing ideas and information. The utilization of online social media platforms for connecting with family, relatives, peers, colleagues, and others is encompassed within the concept of social networking. These platforms, which serve both social and business functions, are accessible through a range of websites. (Dr. Sadaf Mustafa, 2018) Valuable information is provided to users by social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn etc. But it diverts students from their studies. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, heightened levels of time are being dedicated by students to social media platforms. Because it provides additional opportunities for connecting with other people. In this study, the researcher analysed the impact of social site on sustained attention with respect to gender and geographical area. The study, which included 105 participants, entailed the development of a questionnaire aimed at investigating the influence of various elements of social media on the capacity of school students to sustain their attention. It was found that students' sustained attention is negatively affected by social media, and individuals from diverse genders and geographical areas engage with social media for a variety of purposes.

Keywords: Social Media, Sustained Attention, School Students, Social Networking Sites

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media refers to electronic communication via websites that allow people to share content, ideas, and messages. Among the social media platforms are microblogging, social bookmarking, social networking, and forums. Almost all familiar examples of social networks are regarded to be Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Myspace, YouTube. Social networking is a means of increasing one's contact list through connections, and it has always been ingrained in our cultures and beliefs (Sawyer and Chen, 2012). Social media is a major factor in raising living standards since it facilitates worldwide access to international markets and a range of services (Sadaf Mustafa, 2018). Adolescents have grasped these sites much more to connect with contemporaries, provide information, rebrand themselves, with

highlight their communal lives. Because they are accustomed to what occurs in these virtual environments, they are typically more likely to develop addictive behaviours related to SNS compared to previous generation (Guedes, Nardi, Guimarães, Machado, and King, 2016) Within the research domain, a variety of online platforms fall under the umbrella of social media, which includes weblogs, business dealings, mutual projects, business social networks, virtual conferences, photo and video sharing, product reviews, social bookmarking and virtual worlds (Aichner and Jacob, 2015). The emergence and extensive utilization of social networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, LinkedIn and Tumblr have had a significant impact on global communication practices in recent years, resulting in a substantial transformation (Bargh, McKenna, and Fitzsimons, 2002).

The outcome of social network sites in our habitual lives is unpredicted upon user behaviour and practices, as emphasized by (Côté, 2013), who advocates for the provision of secure online spaces for users. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter have particularly shaped user experiences. The positive outcomes of social communication on education are apparent over the acquisition of new skills, improved educational quality, embellished creativity, and increased familiarity are the constructive outcome of social media on education. Conversely, negative impacts, such as diminished learning outcomes, academic sub-standard performance, and privacy concerns, have also been identified (Miller, and Costa, 2016). The shift in interpersonal interactions simplified by social media has facilitated individuals to transaction of ideas and knowledge data and briefing in online networks (Govender, Yavisha Ramnarain, and Krishna, 2013). This mode of communication heavily depends on cell phone and internet-based mechanisms, creating collective podium for individuals and communities to engage, codesign, and discuss from users content. Consequently, communication dynamics among organizations, communities, and individuals have endured significant changes. The extended utilization of the social media as a communication tool has guided to the inception of social networking sites, emergence a new style of online communication (Megan A. Pumper, Jeffrey p. Yaeger, and Megan A. Moreno, 2011). The aggregation of technology into daily life has performed in cultural shifts that impact human interconnections and social behaviours. This high-tech advancement has not only affected academic and business environments but has also directed to mental health issues among individuals. In consequence, technology-related addictions have become frequent in society (Saricam, 2018).

Research has indicated that alterations in brain structure may be experienced by individuals who partake in media multitasking, which involves the simultaneous use of various digital equipment. A reduction in grey matter density in the anterior prefrontal cortex, a brain region linked with cognitive and emotional regulation, has been observed, implying potential adverse effects on brain function due to social media usage (Loh and Kanai, 2014). Specifically within the youngster, social media has become cognizant of a fundamental component of daily life and a means of fulfillment; this phenomenon has witnessed a substantial surge both during and post the COVID-19 pandemic (Paschke Austermann, Simon-Kutscher and Thomasius, 2021). The consumption of social media, encompassing activities such as viewing videos, giving feedback, listening to music, and engaging in video games, has demonstrably escalated in recent times. For instance, in the US, children aged 8–12 spend nearly 6 hours daily on digital media, with a considerable portion of that time committed to engaging with multiple media concurrently (Rideout, Foehr and Roberts, 2010). Frequent interferences during the day-to-day can crucially affects the perception of heavy workloads and stress levels. When individuals face constant interruptions, their skills to attention and productivity is negotiated. As a result,

tasks may take more to entire due to these disturbances, leading through a sense of increased workload. To subsist with the disruptions, individuals often work harder to catch up or refocus, which, in turn, raises anger and anxiety levels (Mark, Judith, and Klocke, 2008).

Sustained attention is defined as the capacity to sustain focus on pertinent information for prolonged durations while filtering out irrelevant stimuli (Sepede, and Gianna, 2014). An illustration of sustained attention can be observed in the uninterrupted reading of this paper from start to finish. In light of the dynamic nature of the association between social media and attention, it is imperative to remain informed through regular synthetic updates. The influence of social media on cognitive functions, particularly attention, implies that the digital realm may impact individual cognition and broader shifts in attention at a population level (Josh A. Firth John Torous and Joseph Firth, 2020). Attention is governed by two interlinked systems: involuntary (bottom-up) attention, which responds to sensory stimuli, and voluntary (top-down) attention, which is a deliberate process influenced by prior knowledge and objectives (Corbetta and Shulman, 2002).

The crucial role of focusing in higher-order cognitive processes, including logic and reasoning, decision-making, and designing, has been emphasized in research (Cowan, 2009). General cognition's interaction with digital technologies often centers on attention. Consequently, studies linking technology use to decreased attention are frequently cited to argue that technology adversely affects cognitive skills like short-term memory, executive control, and learning. Conversely, research showing a correlation between technology use and diminished learning outcomes often highlights attention as the primary system of this relationship (Ventura, Shute and Zhao, 2013). In various settings such as public spaces, schools, and places of worship, it is common to observe young individuals engaged in conversations. Some individuals are so engaged that they continue conversing even while driving on highways. The ease of exchanging messages without visiting cybercafés, facilitated by advanced mobile phones, has further complicated this situation. In reality friends are receiving less attention compared to virtual friends, impacting essential activities such as writing and studying. Many individuals who prioritize knowledge acquisition and skill development are expressing unease about this facts (Ezekiel, Asemah, Ruth Okpanachi, Leo, and Edegoh, 2013).

The link between excessive social media consumption, encompassing various forms of media and screen-based media, and negative attentional and behavioural outcomes has been underscored by numerous studies. (Twenge, Campbell, 2018 and Beyans, Valkenburg, Piotrowski, 2018) argued that the new challenges in maintaining focus have emerged with the proliferation of digital tool, such as social media. These technologies have facilitated constant distractions, making it easier to lose focus. The widespread use of social media has been associated with diminished attention control when used excessively. Additionally, social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Snapchat and Twitter are significant media of interruption. The continuous stream of notifications and endless scrolling through feeds can divert attention from important tasks, resulting in a perpetual state of partial attention. Research conducted by Kross, Verdun, Demiralp, Park, and Lee, and Lin, (2013) revealed that passive Facebook use was correlated with decreased comfort and heightened feelings of distraction and inattention. The impact of excessive digital technology use on brain structure and function has been documented, leading to various cognitive impairments. Studies indicate that internet addiction is connected to reduced grey matter density in the

frontal cortex of the brain, a region critical for determination and self-control (Loh and Kanai, 2014).

The consistent utilization of social media may have an impact on the brain's capacity to focus and maintain attentiveness. Tasks necessitating prolonged attention are often found to be challenging for individuals who engage in heavy multitasking compared to those who engage in light multitasking (Ophir, Nass and Wagner, 2009). Moreover, students who exceed 2 hours of daily screen time on social media tend to exhibit poorer performance on cognitive assessments in comparison to those with restricted screen time (Firth, Torous, Stubbs, Steiner, Smith, 2019). Within academic settings, students' concentration is disrupted by technological diversions such as text messaging, scrolling, and the switching between digital tasks on various screens, resulting in a reduction of their attention span to a mere 6 minutes (Rosen, Whaling, Carrier, Cheever, and Rokkum, 2013). Studies have indicated that students disturbed by text messages during class times achieve lower test scores in the subjects than those who maintain focus (Rosen, 2011). The capacity to sustain attention is crucial for tasks that necessitate the ability to disregard distractions and resist shifts in focus toward irrelevant stimuli. Deficits in sustained attention may have a more pronounced impact on individuals who consume raised levels of media multitasking (May and Elder, 2018).

This paper is organized into multiple sections. The introduction is presented first, followed by the literature review in section 2. The methodology is outlined in section 3, and the results, discussion, and conclusion are covered in section 4.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on a study on Nigerian undergraduates' research abilities, reliance on unreliable information sources brought on by using certain social networking sites might lead to poorer research. Nonetheless, they might have research ideas and improve their writing skills from the someone. In their study, they found Facebook is frequently used to generate ideas about areas of research interest of the respondents. (Kanelechi Nwangwa, Yonlonfoun, and Omotere, 2014).

Students negatively influenced by the social media, but when used properly, it can also be beneficial. Therefore, educators have a responsibility to direct learners toward responsible and beneficial use of social media platforms (Osharive Peter, 2015).

Young people are familiar with Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Skype, among other websites. To help them set their priorities and prevent negative effects from excessive or improper use, they must understand the benefits and drawbacks of these (Khurana, 2015)

In the Pew Research Center Teen Relationships Survey conducted from 2014 to 2015, it was observed that a greater proportion of teenagers are engaged in online interactions with their closest companions (55%) in comparison to physical presence at school (83%) or at a friend's residence (58%). The research also suggests that the utilization of the internet has the potential to enhance face-to-face communication rather than completely supplanting it (Lenhart, Smith, Anderson, Duggan, and Perrin, 2015). Additionally, the survey data indicates that while 75% of teenagers participate in online gaming with other individuals, a notable 89% of them express a preference for engaging in gaming activities with their friends in a physical setting.

In a recent investigation carried out at a public university in the Southeastern region of the United States, a survey was administered to 717 undergraduate and

graduate students through convenience sampling. The results revealed a correlation between the use of social media and GPA; however, the degree of attention was found to not exert a substantial influence on the association between social media utilization and GPA, and vice versa. An observable interaction between social media usage and attention in forecasting GPA was not identified in the study conducted by Bianca A. Barton and associates in 2021.

2.1. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

- To discuss the major roles played by social media
- To find the level of social media use with respect to Gender
- To find the level of usage of social media with respect to Geographical area.
- To find the most favourite social networking sites among school pupils.
- To find the relationship between social media and sustained attention.

3. THE MAJOR ROLE PLAYED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

The following are the most significant roles that social media has played out of all the roles that it has performed.

Communicate: Social media is a relatively new tool, but it has proven to be one of the most successful in communication history. All of the organizations can unite into a single social community, better described as a town square. Due to the increased interactive technology used in this mode of communication, it feels quite lively and authentically like face-to-face communication. It also has the added benefit of being extremely easy to monitor initiatives for change. Social media is a platform used by introverts as well as extroverts. Unlike in facing interaction or the like, they can freely communicate without having to face the respondent.

Collaborate: This collaboration is extraordinary. A significant number of individuals utilizing the Internet participate in regular social media interactions, Google Talk hangouts, and other online activities. Through posts, one person starts a conversation among a closed or open group of Netizens, either with or without the assistance of multimedia content. Individuals continue to add comments to the post, which facilitates more communication. To create a dynamic conversation, the comments can be viewed as feedback. Everything about the process becomes creative and team-based.

Educate: The public is educated through social media, which serves as a global classroom allowing virtual education for individuals worldwide. Online lectures can be conducted by a knowledgeable individual from any location to reach a global audience. Interactions such as posing questions and receiving answers foster a classroom-like atmosphere. Furthermore, the capability to record sessions for future reference is a valuable component of this educational method. Social media technology guarantees that high-quality educational resources are easily accessible to all those in search of them.

Engage: By involving them in some capacity, all employees of the company can be held equally accountable. A procedure like this enhances their morale and nurtures a sense of belonging to the team, encouraging them to produce creative ideas that can improve the organization's overall effectiveness. People feel respected and valued when they are actively involved, which is why it happens. They consequently think the most, produce more, and even work with greater strength.

The ultimate outcome is high employee productivity, which is made possible by their contentment.

Monitor: Another critical aspect of social media is the monitoring process, which provides valuable insights into the current situation. For instance, an accurate real-time visitor count can be displayed by Google Analytics. Not only can team leaders virtually access the situation with the help of these monitoring facilities, but they can also adjust their strategy to suit the circumstances. It is simpler to identify setbacks and to reduce losses, make adjustments, or send in reinforcements. Similar to how the human body's central nervous system works, social media gives leaders a means of responding appropriately.

Maximize: The use of social media by employees in any given organization increases employee excitement and productivity because these platforms enable people to work more easily and accomplish the most for the company. Social media has been transformed into a valuable asset for businesses, enabling online transactions and enhancing profits for numerous internet-based companies. The change in consumer purchasing behaviours is observable as online shopping is now favoured due to individuals' hectic schedules, eliminating the necessity of visiting brick-and-mortar stores for extensive browsing. In response to this shift, specialized applications and websites have been developed by businesses to provide streamlined online shopping experiences. This transition to digital platforms has streamlined the shopping journey, with comprehensive product details and sizing choices easily accessible with a simple click. Online merchants currently provide a wide array of products beyond the traditional clothing selections.

Entertainment: The way in which media is consumed has been revolutionized by social media, which offers a wide range of entertainment options that are not constrained by the limitations of traditional media. Diverse multimedia content is made accessible through social media, combining traditional media's best features with innovative elements. Users can easily discover enjoyable diversions from their daily routines due to the abundance of online content across various genres. Furthermore, social media functions as a source of amusement, enabling users to generate and distribute content on different platforms. Its rapid integration into daily life has rendered it a crucial daily activity for many, facilitating communication and the effortless sharing of images, videos, documents, and ideas with a simple click.

4. METHODOLOGY

A survey research method was adopted for this study through a questionnaire administered to 105 students of three private high school students in Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu. The students were selected particularly from the 9th standard. The sample consisted of 53 boys and 52 girls. Students participated and enrolled through convenience sampling. For this study, a questionnaire was prepared to collect the data. It includes 20 items on social media and sustained attention and questions on demographic variables to obtain details on gender, geographical area, and most favourite social media network. Cronbach's alpha of the reliability of the tool was 0.81 which is an acceptable value of the reliability of the instrument. Students provided information about social media usage from the experience and the influence of social media on sustained attention.

Table 1**Table 1 Usage of Social Media with Reference to Gender Among School Students**

S. No	Gender	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
1	Boys	Yes	53	100	
		No	Nil	Nil	
2	Girls	Yes	52	100	
		No	Nil	Nil	
			TOTAL	105	
Source Author's Analysis					

The above Table.1 highlights that the most of the students in Krishnagiri District have utilized social networking site. All the respondents agreed that they use social media daily.

Table 2**Table 2 Social Media Usage with Regards to Geographical Area Among School Students**

S. No	Geographical area	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
1	Urban	52	49.5	
2	Semi-Urban	30	28.5	
3	Rural	23	21.9	
			TOTAL	
			105	
Source Author's Analysis				

The above Table.2 shows that the social media usage with respect to geographical area among school students in Krishnagiri District. The students in the urban area used social media than semi-urban and rural area students.

Table 3**Table 3 Most Favourite Social Media Network Among School Students**

S. No	Social Media Network	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
1	YouTube	8	7.6	
2	Instagram	31	29.5	
3	WhatsApp	20	19	
4	Facebook	26	24.8	
5	Twitter	20	19	
			TOTAL	
			105	
Source Author's Analysis				

The above Table.3 shows that the majority of the responders have the opinion that Instagram is the most favourite social media network among the school students in Krishnagiri District. Facebook is the second most favourite social media that is utilized by the school students.

Table 4

Table 4 The Relationship Between Social Media Use and Sustained Attention Among School Students					
S. No	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Number of Students N	Pearson Coefficient	Level of Significance
1	Social media Use	Sustained Attention	105	-0.41**	0.001

Source Author's Analysis

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The above Table.4 presents an investigation into the relationship between the utilization of social media and the sustained attention among students. The independent variable in this study is the use of social media, while the dependent variable is the level of sustained attention. The dataset includes information gathered from 105 students, and the analysis reveals a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.41, indicating a negative association between social media usage and sustained attention. The statistical significance of this correlation is determined to be 0.001, underscoring its importance. This suggests that an increase in social media usage is linked to a decrease in sustained attention among students. This study provides insights into the potential impact of social media usage on students' sustained attention.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data was inspected using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Pearson correlation analysis was utilized to analyze the influence of social media use on sustained attention among school students. The outcomes showed that the majority of the school students use social site and no one student does not use social media. Without gender discrimination, all the students use social media. This is similar to the result of (Pedro Cardoso-Leite, Albert Buchard, Isabel Tissieres, Dominic Mussack, Daphne Bavelie and Osharive Peter, 2015) that there is no difference in media multitasking scores between boys and girls. This result partially coincides (Flad, K) who found the result that the students of XI standard in a high school in the United States, it has been concluded that girls have more accounts on social network sites and they spend excessive time on those sites than boys. Abdulwahaab Alsaif, (2016) revealed that male students use social media more than female users. And Ezekiel S. Asemah (2013) found social media is accessible to Kogi State University undergraduate students, and their level of access to it is considerable. The majority of students (68%), accepted that effect. This suggests that Kogi State University students used social media. The result of this paper contrasts with the previous research of (Jesu Kulandairaj, 2014) age and gender are not linked to problematic SNS usage or depressive symptomatology.

Based on geographical area, all the students in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas use social media. This shows that all students use social media for different purposes. However, there is a correlation between Neuroticism and Problematic Use and place of residence; individuals living in rural areas have more chance to score higher than those living in urban areas.

All the students use social media through their own or their parent's mobile phones. Even though there are many social media networks available in the internet world, some of the social media networks become popular in the student world. According to this idea, the question is raised among school students. Most of the students select Instagram as their most favourite social media network among them.

Facebook is the second favourite social media network among school students. This result varies from previous research findings (Khurana, 2015) that 75% of the respondents were using Facebook frequently.

The most significant result of this study showed that social media negatively correlated with the sustained attention of school students. Social media usage increases, and the level of sustained attention decreases. Social media affects the sustained attention of the school students which is most important to academic performance. If social media use increases, the level of sustained attention will be decreased. This result coincides with the result of (Pedro Cardoso-Leite, Albert Buchard, Isabel Tissieres, Dominic Mussack, and Daphne Bavelie, 2021) that is multitasking in media has a positive correlation with sustained attention. But this result varies from the result (Bianca. A. Barton, Katharine, S. Adams, Blaine. L. Brown, and Meagan, C. Arrastia-Chisholm, 2021) that social media usage does not affect sustained attention.

6. CONCLUSION

Now-a-days social media is essential part of teen's life. Students use social media without any partiality. Students' sustained attention may suffer as a effect of increased utilized of social media. The students usually pay more attention to it, so it tends to become a distraction for them. Giving more attention to these websites than the textbooks, which could negatively affect the classroom atmosphere (Jordaan and Surujla, 2013). In this study, the researcher found social media influences sustained attention of the school students. Social media use does not influence with respect to gender and geographical areas. The findings were all the students use social media. The researcher proposes for prospective work more studies and accession of factors that will add to know the influence of social media among school students and proceed into account demographical factors, a large sample to refine more and find more components to estimate the factors that influence students' sustained attention by using social media.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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