

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE IN VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION

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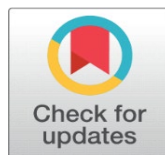
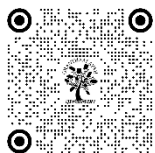
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of social media platforms on student engagement and academic performance in visual arts education. With the growing use of digital tools in creative fields, platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube have become integral to sharing creative works, fostering collaboration, and accessing resources. The primary research problem addresses the need to explore whether these platforms enhance or hinder student engagement and academic outcomes in visual arts programs. The objectives are to assess how social media influences students' creative development, collaborative learning, and overall academic performance. The methodology includes surveys and interviews with visual arts students, analyzing their interactions with social media platforms and how these interactions correlate with academic achievements. Key findings reveal that active use of visual platforms fosters increased engagement, providing opportunities for peer critique, resource sharing, and inspiration, ultimately leading to improved academic performance. However, challenges such as distraction and superficial engagement also emerge as critical concerns. The study concludes that while social media platforms offer valuable tools for enhancing engagement, their use must be carefully structured to optimize learning outcomes in visual arts education.

Keywords: Social Media, Student Engagement, Visual Arts Education, Academic Performance, Digital Learning Tools

1. INTRODUCTION

The integration of social media platforms into education has revolutionized the learning environment across various fields, including the creative domain of visual arts. Platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube have become essential tools for students, educators, and professionals to showcase their work, exchange ideas, and gain inspiration from a global audience[1]. These platforms offer a dynamic space for sharing visual content, creating virtual portfolios, and receiving feedback from peers and mentors, which is crucial in visual arts education. In addition to serving as a creative outlet, social media provides students with access to vast resources such as tutorials, workshops, and professional tips, allowing them to enhance their skills beyond the traditional classroom[2]. This trend reflects a growing reliance on digital tools for fostering creativity and learning in educational settings, particularly in disciplines where visual expression is paramount.

The increasing use of social media in visual arts education necessitates an exploration of its effects on student engagement and academic performance. While social media provides a collaborative platform for artistic expression and peer interaction, concerns arise about its impact on students' focus, depth of engagement, and overall academic outcomes. Students might engage superficially, driven more by the need for online validation than by meaningful learning experiences[3]. At the same time, social media can create distractions, drawing attention away from educational goals. These concerns highlight the need for a thorough analysis of how these platforms influence student behavior in the context of visual arts education. Therefore, the current research addresses the critical question of whether social media enhances or hinders student engagement and academic performance[4].

The primary objective of this research is to evaluate the impact of social media platforms on student engagement and academic performance in visual arts education[5]. This study aims to identify how the use of visual-centric platforms, such as Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube, affects students' creative processes, collaborative learning, and academic achievements[6]. The research also seeks to investigate how these platforms can be effectively incorporated into teaching strategies to improve student motivation, enhance peer feedback, and provide additional learning resources that contribute to the academic success of visual arts students[7]. By understanding these dynamics, educators and institutions can develop more informed strategies for integrating social media into their curricula.

The relevance of this research extends to educators, students, and academic institutions alike. For educators, the findings can provide insights into optimizing teaching methods by incorporating social media in a manner that enhances student engagement without sacrificing academic rigor[8]. For students, the study highlights the potential benefits of using social media platforms to enhance creativity, receive critical feedback, and connect with a broader artistic community[9]. Furthermore, academic institutions can leverage the results to develop policies that promote the responsible and effective use of social media within educational contexts. Given the increasing digitalization of education, particularly in creative fields, the study's findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of how social media can be utilized as a tool to foster collaborative learning, encourage creativity, and improve academic outcomes in visual arts education. Thus, this research is both timely and critical in shaping the future of digital learning in the creative arts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of social media in education has been extensively studied, highlighting its transformative impact on student-teacher interactions, peer collaboration, and resource sharing. Numerous studies suggest that social media platforms foster a more interactive and dynamic learning environment by enabling real-time communication and collaboration. Social media has enhanced peer-to-peer interaction, with students being able to share resources, provide feedback, and engage in discussions outside the traditional classroom[10]. Additionally, platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have enabled educators to adopt innovative teaching methods, such as live tutorials, forums, and content sharing, which foster student engagement and participation[11]. The integration of social media in education has reshaped the learning landscape, offering students and teachers a platform to exchange ideas and resources on a much broader scale, which can enhance both the teaching and learning experience.

In creative fields, particularly visual arts, digital platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube have gained prominence as key tools for visual sharing and artistic expression. Literature in this area highlights that these platforms serve as virtual galleries where students and professionals alike can showcase their work to a global audience[12]. Visual sharing on these platforms has been found to inspire creativity, foster critical feedback, and promote artistic growth. Instagram, for example, has become a popular platform for visual arts students to curate their portfolios, share their creative processes, and receive critique from peers and professionals. YouTube, on the other hand, serves as a learning resource with numerous tutorials on artistic techniques and skills. These platforms offer not only inspiration but also technical knowledge that students can apply to their coursework, thereby enhancing their learning experience in visual arts education[13]. The ability to visually document and share artwork online has changed how students learn and engage with the broader creative community.

Several models and theories of student engagement emphasize the role of participation, motivation, and cognitive engagement in the learning process[14]. Research suggests that digital tools like social media can significantly enhance these elements by providing students with a more engaging, participatory learning environment[15]. Social media allows students to take ownership of their learning, engage with their peers in collaborative projects, and find intrinsic motivation through social validation and feedback. Cognitive engagement is also enhanced as students actively seek out and engage with diverse visual content, tutorials, and artistic communities[16]. Theories of social constructivism and connectivism particularly emphasize the importance of collaboration and social interaction in learning, which social media platforms effectively facilitate[17]. However, some research has also pointed out potential challenges, such as the risk of distraction, superficial engagement, and a focus on social validation over meaningful learning.

Despite the growing body of research on social media in education, there are notable gaps concerning its direct impact on academic performance in visual arts education[18]. While numerous studies explore how social media platforms enhance engagement and creativity, few have delved into the specific effects these platforms have on measurable academic outcomes, such as grades, project quality, and skill acquisition. Further research is needed to understand how social media engagement correlates with actual academic performance and whether the benefits of visual sharing and peer feedback translate into improved educational outcomes in visual arts programs. Addressing these gaps will provide a more comprehensive

understanding of the role social media plays in both the creative and academic development of visual arts students.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of social media platforms on student engagement and academic performance in visual arts education. This approach allows for a more nuanced exploration of the subject, providing both statistical data on academic performance and insights into students' perceptions and experiences[19]. The study will utilize surveys and interviews to collect data from students and teachers, as well as case studies to capture detailed accounts of how social media is being used in visual arts education. These methods are designed to triangulate findings, ensuring the data collected is both rich and reliable[20]. Quantitative data will provide measurable indicators of engagement and performance, while qualitative data will offer deeper insights into the motivations and experiences behind these trends.

Participants will be selected based on specific criteria to ensure that the sample is representative of the population under study. The sample will consist of students currently enrolled in visual arts programs at higher education institutions who actively use social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube as part of their creative process. These students should be utilizing social media not just for personal use but also for sharing artistic work, collaborating with peers, and seeking feedback on projects. Teachers of visual arts subjects who encourage or incorporate the use of social media as part of their teaching strategies will also be included in the study. A diverse sample will be sought to include students from different levels of academic achievement and varying degrees of social media use in order to capture a broad spectrum of experiences.

To gather data, a variety of tools will be used, ensuring both depth and breadth in the information collected. Questionnaires will be administered to both students and teachers to quantify the use of social media platforms in visual arts education and their perceived impact on engagement and academic performance. The questionnaires will focus on topics such as the frequency of social media use for academic purposes, the types of platforms used, the nature of interactions on these platforms, and perceptions of how social media has influenced the creative process and academic outcomes. In addition, focus group discussions will be conducted with a subset of participants to explore their experiences in more depth, particularly focusing on the qualitative aspects of peer feedback, inspiration, and collaborative learning facilitated by social media. Visual analytics of student posts and interactions on social media platforms will also be employed to track engagement metrics such as the frequency of posts, the type of content shared, and the level of peer interaction in the form of likes, comments, and shares.

Data analysis will involve both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data from the questionnaires will be analyzed using statistical tools to identify patterns and correlations between social media use, student engagement, and academic performance. Key indicators such as engagement frequency, types of peer interactions, and academic performance metrics (grades, project evaluations) will be used to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of social media in enhancing educational outcomes. Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups will be thematically analyzed to identify recurring themes related to creativity, motivation, and peer feedback, offering deeper insight into the student experience.

Together, these methods will provide a holistic understanding of the impact of social media on visual arts education.

4. PROPOSED METHOD

The conceptual framework for this research links social media engagement with academic performance in visual arts education by examining the ways in which these platforms facilitate creative learning, peer interaction, and feedback. The framework posits that higher engagement on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest leads to improved skill acquisition, project completion rates, and overall student motivation. Social media platforms offer visual arts students an expansive space to showcase their work, gain inspiration, and receive feedback, all of which are critical elements of the learning process. By connecting the frequency and quality of engagement on these platforms with measurable academic outcomes, the framework aims to provide a structured way of analyzing how digital tools contribute to students' artistic and academic development.

In terms of impact analysis, engagement on platforms like Instagram or YouTube can directly influence skill acquisition and project completion in several ways. First, regular exposure to the work of other artists provides students with new techniques, styles, and ideas that can be incorporated into their own projects. This process of visual inspiration leads to a continuous cycle of learning and improvement. Second, platforms that allow for peer critique, such as the comment sections on Instagram or video responses on YouTube, foster an environment where students can receive constructive feedback from a broad audience. This feedback loop accelerates the refinement of their artistic skills and contributes to higher-quality project outputs. Additionally, the public nature of these platforms creates an intrinsic motivation for students to complete and share their work, often leading to higher levels of project completion and dedication. The visibility of their work among peers and professionals can also lead to increased motivation, as students seek validation and recognition for their efforts, which in turn positively influences their academic performance.

Specific metrics are used to measure student engagement on social media platforms. These include interaction frequency, which tracks how often students engage with content by liking, commenting, or sharing posts related to visual arts. Another key metric is content sharing, which monitors how frequently students post their own work or reshare the work of others as part of their learning process. Feedback loops are essential engagement metrics as well, focusing on how often students receive and provide feedback on their posts. The number of comments, likes, and shares received can serve as indicators of how actively students participate in the online community, while qualitative aspects of the feedback—such as the depth of critique or advice given—provide insights into the learning value of these interactions. These metrics collectively offer a comprehensive understanding of how students are engaging with social media in the context of visual arts education.

Performance metrics are essential to evaluating academic outcomes and are grounded in both quantitative and qualitative assessments. Academic performance can be evaluated through grades assigned to visual arts projects, which reflect both the technical skill and creative execution demonstrated by students. Additionally, project reviews by instructors can provide detailed feedback on the quality of work submitted. Peer critiques, facilitated through social media platforms, can also serve as performance metrics, offering a peer-driven assessment of creativity, originality, and execution. Together, these metrics form a robust system for assessing how

social media engagement translates into tangible academic achievements in visual arts education.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from this study highlight several key patterns regarding student engagement with visual arts content on social media platforms. As observed in Figure 1, student engagement fluctuates throughout the academic term, with notable peaks during project deadlines and dips during holidays or periods of low academic activity. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube appear to significantly enhance engagement by offering students an interactive space to share their creative work, gather feedback, and draw inspiration from peers and professionals. However, these platforms also pose the risk of distraction, as students may engage in non-educational content during critical learning periods. The overall trend suggests that when social media is used strategically, it serves as a valuable tool for enhancing the learning experience by providing students with opportunities for real-time feedback and inspiration, ultimately fostering creative growth.

In terms of academic performance, Figure 2 reveals a positive correlation between social media usage and academic outcomes. Students who engage more frequently with social media for artistic purposes tend to perform better in their visual arts projects, as indicated by higher grades and instructor evaluations. The peer feedback system that social media facilitates allows students to refine their work before submission, leading to improved project quality and skill acquisition. However, challenges such as superficial engagement, where students prioritize likes and social validation over constructive learning, were also identified. This indicates that while social media can be a powerful tool for academic improvement, the quality and focus of engagement play a critical role in determining its impact on performance.

Social media platforms also significantly influence peer feedback and collaborative learning, as demonstrated in Figure 4. Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest enable students to receive comments and critiques from their peers in a public forum, facilitating a more collaborative learning environment. This form of interaction mirrors traditional studio critiques but offers the added benefit of real-time feedback from a broader audience. Figure 4 shows that some students are more engaged in providing feedback than others, with varying levels of participation observed across the cohort. Students who actively engage in peer critique and collaborative discussions tend to benefit more from these interactions, demonstrating higher levels of creativity and skill development, as seen in Figure 3. However, it is also noted that not all feedback is constructive, and some students may receive superficial or non-specific comments that do little to enhance their learning experience.

Figure 1

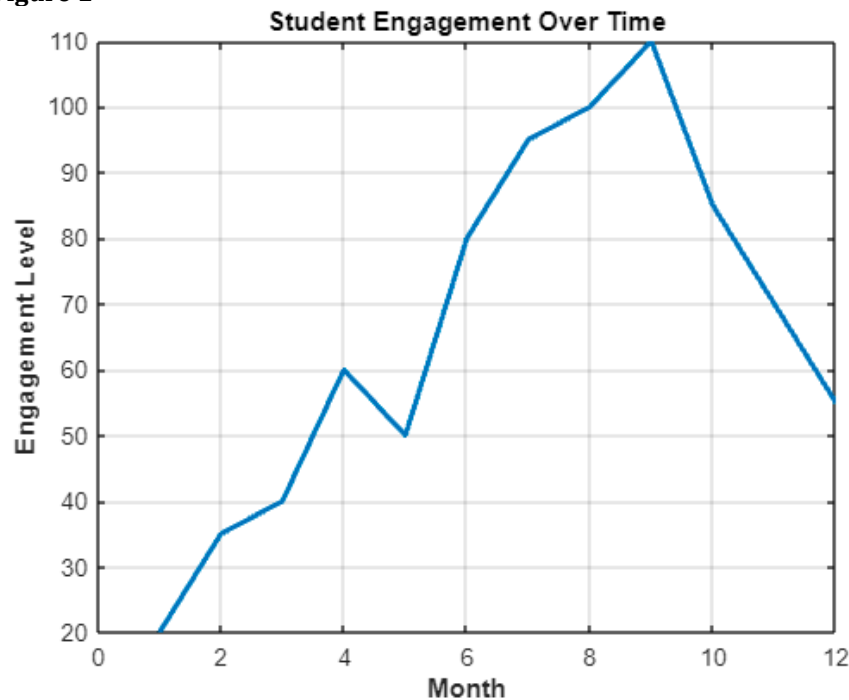


Figure 1 Student Engagement Over Time

Figure 2

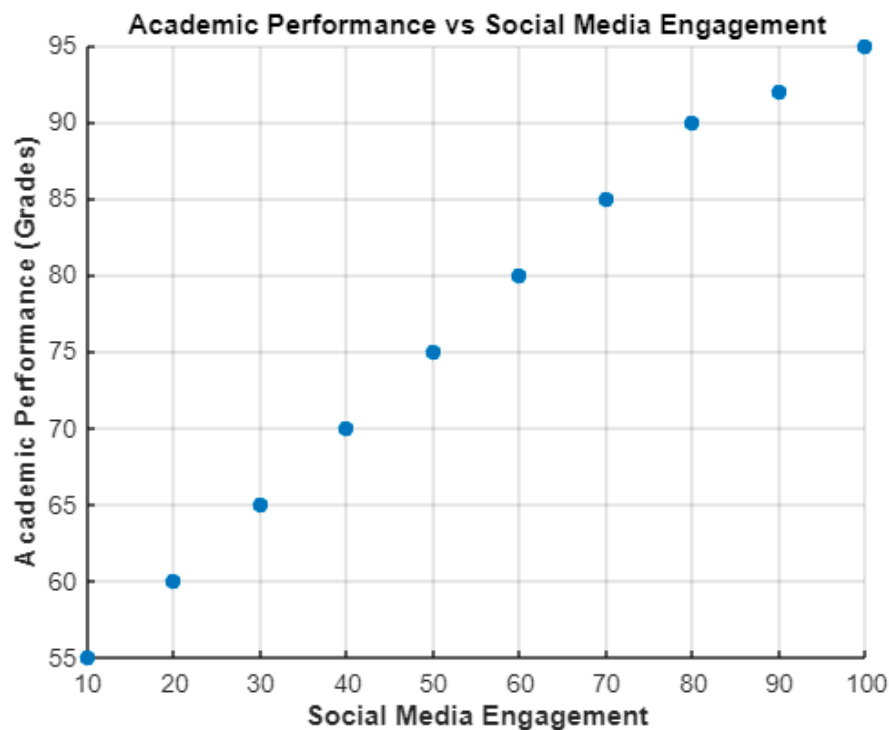


Figure 2 Academic Performance vs Social Media Engagement

Figure 3

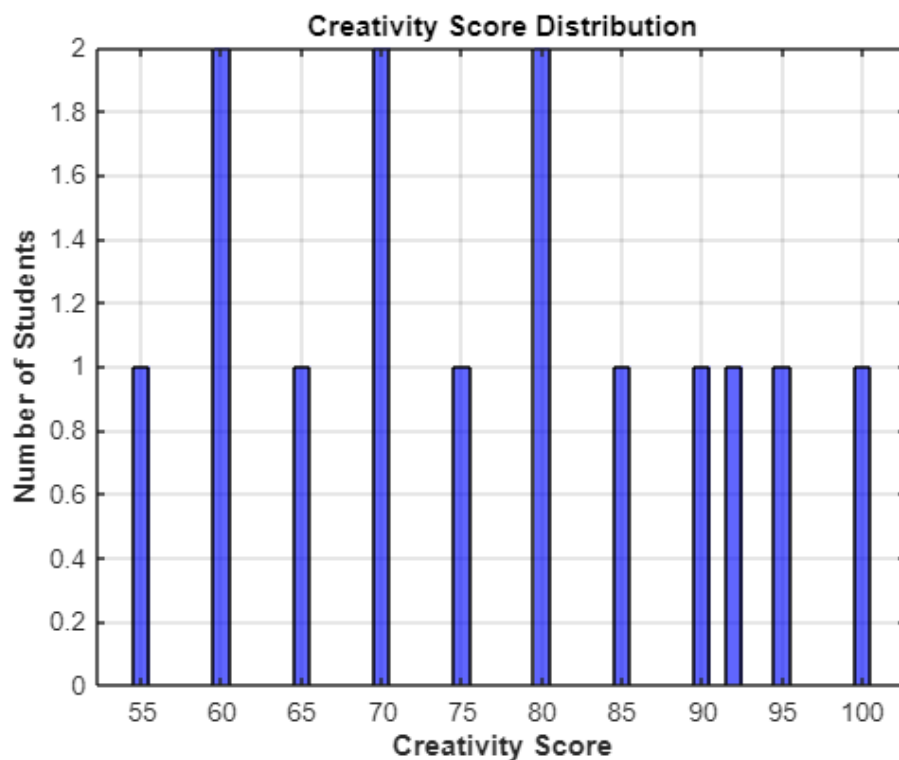


Figure 3 Creativity Score Distribution

Figure 4

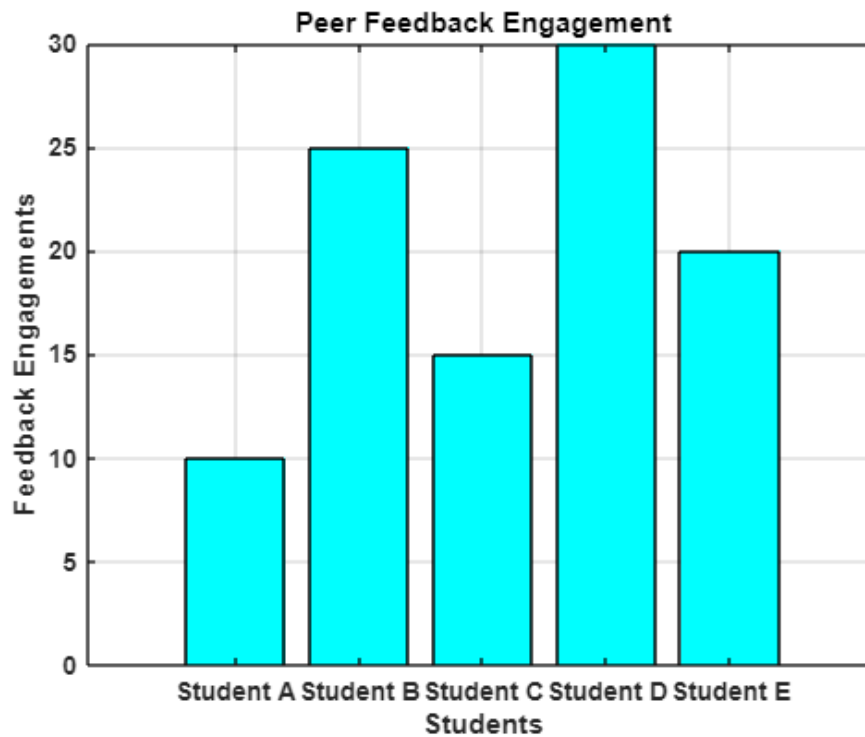


Figure 4 Peer Feedback Engagement

Figure 5

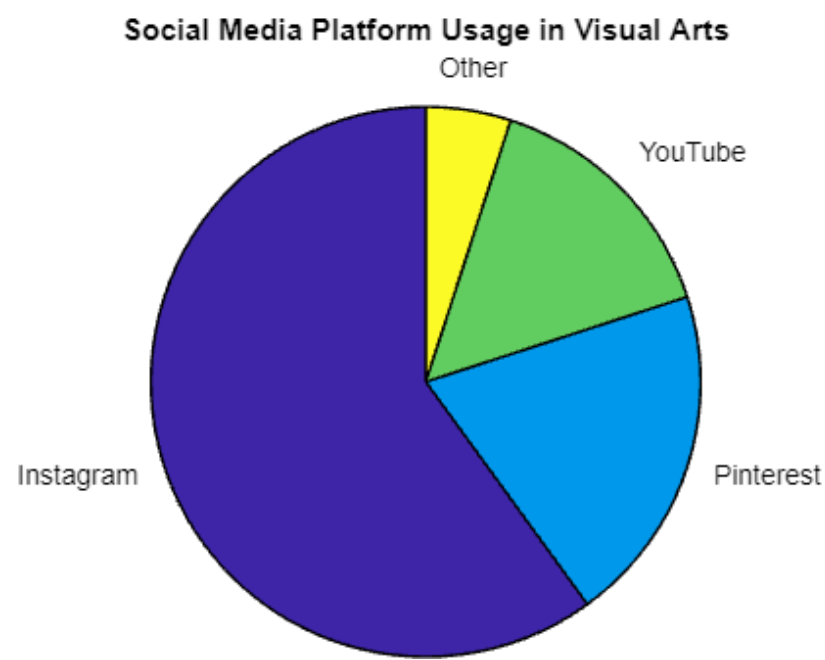


Figure 5 Social Media Platform Usage

Figure 6

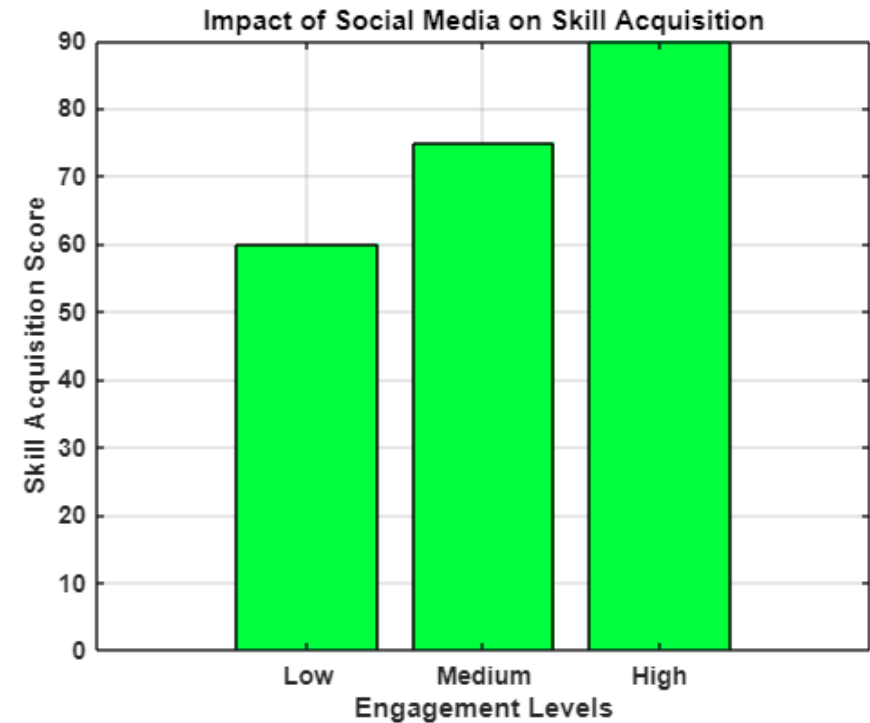


Figure 6 Impact of Social Media on Skill Acquisition

When comparing social media engagement with traditional classroom or studio-based learning approaches, several differences emerge. Traditional methods, such as face-to-face critiques or instructor-led discussions, provide a more structured and focused environment for learning. In contrast, social media

platforms allow for a more fluid and continuous exchange of ideas, which can foster creativity but also lead to distractions, as seen in Figure 1. Figure 6 illustrates that students with high engagement in social media tend to acquire artistic skills more rapidly than those relying solely on traditional methods, suggesting that the real-time interaction and feedback loop provided by social media enhance learning outcomes. However, traditional methods offer more in-depth, personalized feedback from instructors, which may not be fully replicated in an online setting. In summary, the findings show that social media platforms enhance student engagement and academic performance in visual arts education, particularly through peer interaction and real-time feedback. However, the effectiveness of these platforms depends on how students engage with them, with challenges such as superficial participation and distractions posing potential drawbacks.

6. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that social media platforms play a significant role in shaping student engagement and academic performance in visual arts education. Platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube enhance student interaction, offering real-time feedback and collaborative opportunities that can improve creativity and project outcomes. However, the quality of engagement is critical, as superficial participation may detract from the learning experience. Overall, a positive correlation between social media engagement and academic performance was observed, particularly when students actively participated in peer critiques and shared their work regularly. For educators, the findings suggest that integrating social media into teaching practices can provide students with broader learning opportunities. Structured assignments involving social media platforms, such as peer reviews or project sharing, can foster creativity and enhance collaboration. However, it is crucial to guide students on how to use these platforms effectively to avoid distractions. The study is limited by its sample size and the subjective nature of evaluating creativity and engagement. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias. Future research should explore specific features of social media platforms that maximize learning, such as algorithms that tailor content to educational goals, and investigate the long-term effects of digital engagement on creative education.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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