Social Media Usage and Platforms Exposure Among Junior High School Students

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their level of social media platforms exposure among Junior High School students in a district of the Schools Division of Samar. Specifically, it described students' usage profile in terms of gadgets used, preferred platforms, duration, and purpose of use, and determined their level of exposure across cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 312 students selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using an adopted and validated questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and Spearman's rho correlation. Findings revealed that smartphones were the most commonly used devices, while Facebook/Messenger, TikTok, and YouTube were the most preferred platforms. Most students reported moderate daily usage (1–3 hours) and primarily used social media for communication, educational purposes, and entertainment. Students demonstrated a frequent level of exposure across cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimensions, indicating that social media plays a meaningful role in their learning experiences, communication practices, and emotional engagement. Correlation analysis showed that gadgets used had a statistically significant but very weak relationship with social media platforms exposure, while preferred platforms, duration, and purpose of use were not significantly related. These results suggest that access to digital devices may slightly influence students' engagement with social media for academic-related activities, but other usage factors have limited impact. The study highlights the importance of promoting responsible and balanced social media use to support students' academic development and overall well-being.

1. Introduction

Social media platforms are deeply woven into students' daily routines, significantly shaping their communication, information access, and participation in academic and non-academic activities. For Junior High School students, popular platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube influence not only how they interact and are entertained, but also their learning habits. While these platforms enable opportunities for effective communication and collaborative learning, they are also sources of distraction that can undermine academic focus and performance. Consequently, examining the effect of social media exposure on academic outcomes is a

key educational issue that requires targeted investigation.

Globally, educators, parents, and policymakers hold mixed views on students' growing use of social media. While these platforms offer opportunities for collaboration, creativity, and access to resources (Morales & Abegglen, 2020), they have also been linked with reduced study time and lower academic engagement if used without limits (Masood et al., 2020). Thus, social media serves both as a support and a challenge to academic development.

Social media is a defining feature of youth culture, influencing routines and interactions (Tahpliyal et al., 2024; Bindhim & Althumiri, 2023). While these platforms support access to information, overuse has been linked to sleep deprivation and reduced academic engagement (Throuvala et al., 2021). These issues are also seen among students in the Schools Division of Samar, where social media is prominent in daily routines.

District academic data highlights the issue. Recent records show that many students performed only at satisfactory levels, while some did not meet expectations in certain subjects. Although some excelled, most remained at average or below-average achievement. This trend raises questions about behavioral and environmental factors, such as social media exposure.

The situation takes on added significance when considered in the context of a district in the Schools Division of Samar, where many communities experience varied access to digital devices and inconsistent internet connectivity. Within the district, some students depend on shared family devices or prepaid mobile data, making it challenging to use technology for academic tasks in a structured, purposeful way. Frequently, social media is primarily used for leisure and communication, rather than for schoolwork. Parental supervision of online activity is sometimes limited, partly due to differences in digital literacy among adults. Additionally, schools in the district often struggle with integrating ICT into instruction due to resource constraints. These local conditions suggest that student experiences with social media in this rural district may differ substantially from patterns observed in urban or more affluent settings.

This study draws on policies that promote digital access and responsible technology use. Republic Act No. 10929 ensures wider public access to the internet, while DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2019 stresses responsible digital citizenship and ICT skills. The government aims to prepare students for a digital society, yet it must ensure that digital access helps learning without harming academic performance.

Despite extensive research on social media and academia, many studies focus on urban settings with stable internet access, more devices, and better ICT support. Thus, there is limited knowledge of how social media affects students in rural, resource-limited areas, where digital experiences differ due to local conditions.

In view of these considerations, this study aimed to examine the relationship between exposure to social media platforms and academic performance among Junior High School students in a district of the Schools Division of Samar. By situating the inquiry within the realities of a local educational setting, the study sought to provide context-specific insights that may serve as a basis for responsible digital use,

improved academic support, and more responsive educational interventions.

2. Objectives

This study aims to examine the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their level of social media platforms exposure among Junior High School students in the District of Zumarraga, Schools Division of Samar, as a basis for responsible digital engagement and academic support strategies.

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. to describe the social media usage profile of student-respondents in terms of:
   a. gadgets used,
   b. preferred social media platforms
   c. duration of social media use, and
   d. purpose of social media use;

2. to determine the level of social media platform exposure of student-respondents in terms of:
   a. cognitive aspect,
   b. behavioral aspect, and
   c. emotional aspect;

3. to measure the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their level of social media platforms exposure.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their level of social media platforms exposure.

The descriptive component was used to determine the students' social media usage profile in terms of gadgets used, preferred social media platforms, duration of use, and purpose of social media use. It also described the level of students' social media platforms exposure in terms of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects.

The correlational component was used to determine whether significant relationships exist between students' social media usage profile variables and their level of social media platforms exposure.

This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to describe existing conditions and examine the relationships among variables without manipulating them.

3.2 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 312 Junior High School students enrolled in public secondary schools in a district within the Schools Division of Samar. The respondents were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation of students from the participating schools.

Stratification was based on school affiliation to ensure that the sample accurately represented the Junior High School student population in the district. This sampling technique allowed the researcher to obtain a balanced distribution of respondents and improve the representativeness of the sample.

3.3 Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study was an adopted questionnaire designed to gather the necessary data

aligned with the objectives of the research. The instrument consisted of two major parts. The first part focused on the students' social media usage profile. This section collected information regarding the types of gadgets used by the students, their preferred social media platforms, the duration of their social media use, and their primary purpose for using social media. The respondents were asked to indicate their answers by checking the appropriate options provided in the questionnaire.

The second part of the questionnaire measured the level of students' social media platforms exposure in terms of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects. The items included in this section were adopted and modified from the validated instruments developed by Tess (2013) and Kabigting et al. (2021). To measure the responses of the participants, a five-point Likert scale was utilized, with response options ranging from Always (5), Often (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), and Never (1). This scaling allowed the researcher to determine the frequency of students' exposure to social media platforms across the identified dimensions.

Prior to its administration, the questionnaire was subjected to expert validation to ensure the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items in relation to the objectives of the study. The suggestions and recommendations of the validators were incorporated to improve the overall quality and contextual suitability of the instrument.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Schools Division of Samar. Upon approval, coordination was made with the Public Schools District Supervisor and the principals of the participating schools.

After securing the necessary approvals, the researcher coordinated with the school heads and class advisers regarding the schedule for administering the questionnaire.

Before distributing the questionnaires, the respondents were informed about: the purpose of the study; the voluntary nature of participation, and confidentiality of responses.

The questionnaires were personally administered to the respondents during the approved schedule. After completion, the questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness, and prepared for data analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the students' social media usage profile. The weighted mean was utilized to determine the level of social media platforms exposure in terms of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects.

To determine the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their level of social media platforms exposure, Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ) was employed, with

significance tested using p-values at the 0.05 level.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to ethical standards in research.

Permission was obtained from the appropriate educational authorities and school administrators before conducting the study. The respondents were informed about the purpose and significance of the research.

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that they could withdraw at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed. No unnecessary personal identifiers were collected, and all gathered data were used solely for academic purposes.

The results were reported in aggregate form only to protect the identity and privacy of the respondents.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Students' Social Media Usage Profile

Table 1 presents the students' social media usage profile in terms of gadgets used, preferred social media platforms, duration of usage, and purpose of social media use. The results indicate that cellphones are the most commonly used gadget among the student-respondents (97.76%), ranking first among all devices. This suggests that smartphones are the primary means by which students access digital platforms and online communication. Laptops (16.03%) ranked second, followed

by tablets (13.14%) and iPads (8.01%). In contrast, desktops (1.28%) and other devices such as smartwatches (3.85%) were least utilized. The predominance of smartphones reflects current technological trends among adolescents, as mobile devices offer convenience and immediate access to social networking and online information (Pew Research Center, 2022). Similarly, Tang and Hew (2019) noted that smartphones have become the most accessible tools for students to engage in digital communication and collaborative learning activities.

In terms of preferred social media platforms, Facebook/Messenger emerged as the most frequently used platform (92.63%), followed by TikTok (70.19%) and YouTube (63.14%). Instagram also showed considerable usage (46.47%), while platforms such as Twitter (12.50%), Viber (3.85%), and Skype (0.96%) were less frequently used. Professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn (2.24%) and gaming-related platforms such as LOL and Crossfire were reported by only a small proportion of respondents. These results indicate that students mainly prefer social networking and video-sharing platforms for communication and entertainment. Previous studies have shown that adolescents tend to gravitate toward platforms that allow interactive communication and multimedia content sharing (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

With regard to the duration of social media usage, the largest proportion of students reported using social media for one to three hours daily (32.37%), followed by those who reported no usage (29.81%) and those who spent four to six hours (24.04%). A smaller number of students reported extended usage of more than ten hours daily. These findings suggest that while most students engage moderately with social media platforms, a portion of them may

experience prolonged exposure. According to Keles, McCrae, and Grealish (2020), excessive social media use among adolescents may be associated with decreased academic focus and increased psychological distress, although moderate

usage may support communication and information access.

In terms of purpose, the primary reason students use social media is to connect with friends and family (79.81%), followed by educational purposes such as

Table 1. Students' Social Media Usage Profile

Social Media Usage Profile	f	%	Rank
Gadgets Used			
Cellphone	305	97.76	1
Tablet	41	13.14	3
Laptop	50	16.03	2
Desktop	4	1.28	6
iPad	25	8.01	4
Others (Smartwatch)	12	3.85	5
Preferred Social Media Platforms			
Facebook/Messenger	289	92.63	1
Twitter	39	12.50	5
Instagram	145	46.47	4
Youtube	197	63.14	3
Tiktok	219	70.19	2
Viber	12	3.85	6
Skype	3	0.96	11
LinkedIn	7	2.24	7.5
LOL	6	1.92	9
Crossfire	5	1.60	10
Others (Bili-Bili, Discord, Mobile Legends)	7	2.24	7.5
Duration			
More than 12 hours	10	3.21	5
10 hours –12 hours	21	6.73	4
7 hours – 9 hours	9	2.88	6
4 hours – 6 hours	75	24.04	3
1 hour – 3 hours	101	32.37	1
Less Than Hour	3	0.96	7
No Social Media Platforms Usage	93	29.81	2
Purpose			
To connect with friends and family	249	79.81	1
To stay updated on news and current events	135	43.27	5
For educational purposes (ex. researching, accessing academic content)	186	59.62	2
To participate in online study groups or academic discussions	101	32.37	7
For professional networking and career development	51	16.35	8
For entertainment (ex. watching videos, following celebrities)	150	48.08	3
To share my own content (e.g., photos, updates)	92	29.49	9
To relax and relieve stress	138	44.23	4
To discover new ideas and trends (e.g., in fashion, technology)	125	40.06	6
Others (To Play Games)	26	8.33	10

researching and accessing academic content (59.62%). Entertainment-related activities such as watching videos or following celebrities ranked third (48.08%), while other purposes included relaxation and stress relief (44.23%) and staying updated on news and current events (43.27%). These findings suggest that social media platforms serve both social and educational roles among students. Greenhow and Lewin (2016) emphasized that social media can function as an informal learning environment where students exchange knowledge, collaborate with peers, and access educational resources beyond the traditional classroom.

The results highlight that students' social media usage is largely influenced by mobile technology accessibility, the popularity of interactive digital platforms, and the need for communication and information sharing. While social media provides opportunities for learning and social interaction, balanced and responsible use should be encouraged to ensure that students benefit from digital platforms without negatively affecting their academic performance and well-being.

4.2 Level of Social Media Platform Among Students as Perceived by Themselves

Table 2 indicates that students exhibit a frequent level of cognitive exposure to social media platforms, as reflected in the overall weighted mean. This suggests that social media plays a meaningful role in shaping students' access to information, communication patterns, and knowledge acquisition. The results imply that students perceive social media not only as a platform for social interaction but also as a space for learning, idea exchange, and information discovery.

Table 2. Social Media Platforms Exposure of Students as to Cognitive Aspect

	Statement Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.	I appreciate the opportunity to use social media platforms for conducting research for my lessons/assignments.	3.92	F
2.	I find that social media platforms provide valuable updates on the activities of my friends and family.	3.90	F
3.	I've found that social media platforms enhance my communication skills.	3.52	F
4.	I've experienced that social media platforms offer a great way for me to expand my social circle and make new friends.	3.52	F
5.	I value the creative outlets that social media platforms provide for self-expression and exploration.	3.42	F
6.	I feel empowered to express myself authentically and confidently through social media platforms.	3.29	M
7.	I engage thoughtfully with content on social media platforms, choosing to respond when it adds value to the conversation.	3.29	M
8.	I appreciate the diverse perspectives shared on social media platforms without comparing them to my own life.	3.54	F
9.	I've observed that social media platforms contribute to expanding my vocabulary and knowledge base.	3.65	F
10.	I recognize the potential of social media platforms as a space for constructive and interactive discussions.	3.46	F
	Grand Weighted Mean	**3.55**	**F**

Legend:			
	4.21 – 5.00	Habitual	(H)
	3.41 – 4.20	Frequent	(F)
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	(M)
	1.81 – 2.60	Rare	(R)
	1.00 – 1.80	Less	(L)

These results suggest that social media can function as a supplementary learning environment, where students encounter diverse ideas, access educational materials, and participate in discussions beyond the classroom setting. According to Greenhow and Lewin (2016), social media platforms expand learning opportunities by enabling students to engage in informal knowledge exchange and collaborative learning. Similarly, Alharthi et al. (2020) emphasized that exposure to social media can contribute to students' cognitive development by providing access to a wide range of information and promoting communication skills. Thus, when used appropriately, social media may enhance students' learning experiences and support the development of knowledge and critical thinking skills.

Table 3 indicates that students demonstrate a frequent level of behavioral exposure to social media platforms, as reflected in the grand weighted mean of 3.60. This suggests that social media has become a regular part of students' daily routines, particularly in maintaining

Table 3. Social Media Platforms Exposure of Students as to Behavioral Aspect

Statement Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I check my social media account regularly to stay connected with friends and family.	4.05	F
2. I find that social media platforms offer convenient ways to stay connected with friends, even when physical interaction is not possible.	3.69	F
3. I maintain a manageable number of social media accounts to stay connected without feeling overwhelmed.	3.30	M
4. I prioritize my sleep schedule to ensure that my social media use does not negatively impact my punctuality.	3.82	F
5. I prioritize engaging with content that interests me while using social media platforms.	3.38	M
6. I make an effort to keep my social media accounts updated regularly.	3.63	F
7. I find that engaging with social media platforms occasionally allows me to relax and enjoy leisure time.	3.63	F
8. I believe that updating my social media profile occasionally adds a personal touch to my online presence.	3.40	M
9. I manage my time effectively to ensure that social media browsing does not overshadow other activities.	3.54	F
10. I adapt my language usage appropriately, leveraging social media language conventions when necessary.	3.48	F
11. I enjoy using social media platforms to share pictures and videos.	3.58	F
12. I appreciate that social media platforms keep me updated on the activities of my friends and family.	3.92	F
13. I appreciate the occasional opportunity to unwind and alleviate stress through social media platforms.	3.46	F
14. I engage thoughtfully with content on social media platforms, choosing to respond when it adds value to the conversation.	3.53	F
Grand Weighted Mean	**3.60**	**F**

Legend:
4.21 − 5.00	Habitual	(H)
3.41 − 4.20	Frequent	(F)
2.61 − 3.40	Moderate	(M)
1.81 − 2.60	Rare	(R)
1.00 − 1.80	Less	(L)

communication with friends and family and staying updated on social activities. The findings imply that students actively engage with social media through behaviors such as checking their accounts, sharing content, updating profiles, and interacting with online communities.

The results further suggest that social media platforms function not only as communication tools but also as spaces where students maintain social connections and leisure activities. Through regular interaction, students remain connected with peers even when face-to-face communication is not possible. Vannucci et al. (2017) noted that adolescents frequently incorporate social media into their daily social practices, influencing how they communicate, share experiences, and engage in online communities.

The behavioral engagement of students reflects the increasing integration of social media into everyday life, where users frequently interact with digital content and networks. Kircaburun et al. (2020) noted

that regular engagement with social media encourages activities such as browsing, posting, and interacting with online content, which may develop habitual usage patterns. While these activities support communication and relaxation, excessive use may affect time management and academic focus, highlighting the need for responsible social media use.

Table 4 shows that students demonstrate a frequent level of emotional exposure to social media platforms, as indicated by the grand weighted mean of 3.72. This suggests that social media plays a meaningful role in students' emotional experiences, including enjoyment, relaxation, and feelings of connection with others. The findings imply that students perceive social media as a platform that supports their emotional well-being by providing opportunities for entertainment, stress relief, and social interaction. Adolescents often use social media to maintain relationships and strengthen their sense of belonging in online communities (Vannucci et al., 2017). Likewise, social

Table 4. Social Media Platforms Exposure of Students as to Emotional Aspect

Statement Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I acknowledge my responsibility for maintaining a healthy balance between social media use and academic performance.	3.96	F
2. I appreciate the entertainment and enjoyment that social media platforms bring into my life.	3.69	F
3. I appreciate the occasional opportunity to unwind and alleviate stress through social media platforms.	3.57	F
4. I cultivate a positive mindset even when I am unable to access my social media account.	3.54	F
5. I feel a sense of accomplishment and connection when I use social media platforms for conducting research for my lessons/assignments.	3.82	F
6. I find using social media platforms helps me feel connected and supported during challenging times.	3.73	F
Grand Weighted Mean	**3.72**	**F**

Legend:	4.21 – 5.00	Habitual	(H)
	3.41 – 4.20	Frequent	(F)
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	(M)
	1.81 – 2.60	Rare	(R)
	1.00 – 1.80	Less	(L)

Table 5. Relationship Between Students' Social Media Usage Profile and Social Media Platforms Exposure

Domestic Responsibilities	Comprehension Strategies (ρ/p)	Vocabulary Acquisition (ρ/p)	Sentence Structure Analysis (ρ/p)
Gadgets Used	0.183*/0.001	0.135*/0.017	0.114*/0.045
Preferred Social Media Platforms	0.052/0.363	0.061/0.280	0.022/0.696
Duration of Social Media Use	<0.001/0.999	0.030/0.595	0.076/0.182
Purpose of Social Media Use	-0.016/0.774	-0.034/0.551	0.065/0.250

Legend: *Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

media may provide opportunities for relaxation and emotional expression, although excessive use may pose risks to psychological well-being (Keles et al., 2020).

4.3 Students' Social Media Usage Profile and Social Media Platforms Exposure

Table 5 presents the relationship between students' social media usage profile and their exposure to social media platforms in terms of comprehension strategies, vocabulary acquisition, and sentence structure analysis. The results reveal that gadgets used has a statistically significant relationship with all three aspects, as indicated by the significant p-values (p < 0.05). However, the correlation coefficients are very weak, suggesting that while access to gadgets is related to students' exposure to social media for learning-related activities, the strength of this relationship is minimal.

On the other hand, preferred social media platforms, duration of social media use, and purpose of social media use show no significant relationship with comprehension strategies, vocabulary acquisition, and sentence structure analysis since their p-values are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that these profile variables do not significantly influence students' exposure to social media platforms in terms of the identified cognitive aspects. The findings suggest that

availability of gadgets may slightly contribute to students' engagement with social media platforms for academic-related activities, while other usage characteristics do not significantly affect their cognitive exposure to social media platforms.

These findings suggest that social media can enhance students' sense of connection and emotional support.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study investigated students' social media usage profiles, their levels of exposure to social media platforms, and the relationships among these variables. The results indicate that smartphones are the predominant devices used by students, demonstrating that mobile technology is the primary means for accessing social media. Facebook/Messenger, TikTok, and YouTube are the most preferred platforms, which reflects students' preference for interactive communication and multimedia content. Most students spend one to three hours per day on social media, indicating a moderate degree of engagement. The primary purposes for social media use include connecting with friends and family, accessing educational content, and seeking entertainment.

Additionally, students exhibit frequent exposure to social media across

cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimensions. This finding suggests that social media platforms play a significant role in students' learning experiences, communication practices, and emotional interactions. Social media functions not only as a tool for social connection but also as a supplementary environment for information access, idea sharing, and participation in online communities.

The analysis of relationships further revealed that the type of device used has a statistically significant but very weak association with students' exposure to social media platforms, particularly regarding comprehension strategies, vocabulary acquisition, and sentence structure analysis. In contrast, preferred social media platforms, duration of use, and purpose of usage did not demonstrate significant relationships with these aspects. These findings suggest that while access to digital devices may slightly influence students' engagement with social media for academic purposes, other usage characteristics do not substantially affect their learning-related exposure.

In conclusion, the study finds that social media platforms are an integral component of students' daily lives, supporting communication, information access, and social interaction. Nevertheless, balanced and responsible use of social media is essential to ensure that its benefits contribute positively to students' academic development and overall well-being.

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