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Digital Connections, Psychological Outcomes: Examining Students' Usage of Social media in Fostering their Psychological Well-Being

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Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of university students' daily lives, influencing their communication patterns, social interactions, and psychological experiences. The present study examined students' use of social media and its implications for psychological well-being, with particular attention to gender-based differences. A quantitative survey research design was employed, and data were collected from 129 students enrolled in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Lahore, Pakistan. Data were gathered using standardized Social Media Usage (SMU) and Psychological Well-Being (PWB) scales. The reliability analysis indicated good overall internal consistency for both instruments, with Cornbrash's alpha coefficients of .867 for the SMU scale and .902 for the PWB scale. Descriptive findings revealed that 97.7% of participants used social networking platforms, with WhatsApp (64.3%) and YouTube (31.0%) being the most frequently reported platforms. Furthermore, 57.3% of students reported spending at least five hours daily on social media. Gender-based comparisons indicated a statistically significant difference in social media usage, with female students reporting higher mean scores than male students. However, the reported results did not establish a statistically significant gender difference in psychological well-being. These findings highlight the widespread use of social media among university students and the importance of examining its psychological implications. The study recommends promoting balanced and purposeful social media engagement while strengthening students' awareness of digital well-being.

Keywords: *Social media use, psychological well-being, university students, gender differences, digital engagement, social networking sites*

Introduction

Well-being refers to an individual's overall state of health, happiness, and life satisfaction across various dimensions of life. It encompasses physical, psychological, emotional, and social aspects of an individual's overall functioning (McGuire, 2026). Subjective well-being reflects how individuals evaluate their lives in terms of happiness, life satisfaction, and personal fulfillment (Morita, 2026), which may vary according to their needs, values, and circumstances (Tazhiyeva et al., 2026). Psychological and emotional well-being involve maintaining a positive outlook, managing stress effectively, developing

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a healthy self-image, and experiencing a sense of purpose and fulfillment (Clements et al., 2026; Kusnadi et al., 2026). Social well-being, in contrast, emphasizes the quality of interpersonal relationships, social support, and a sense of belonging to a community. It involves establishing meaningful relationships, interacting positively with others, feeling respected and valued, and contributing to the well-being of others (Heinrichs et al., 2026).

Social media has become a global phenomenon, with billions of people using digital platforms to exchange knowledge, access information and entertainment, express themselves, and follow individuals and organizations that align with their interests (Mlambo, 2026). Its widespread adoption in contemporary society highlights the importance of understanding its influence on individuals' psychological and social experiences (Li et al., 2026). In the context of the present study, examining students' social media use is particularly important because digital interactions may influence their emotional experiences, social relationships, and psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is an essential component of overall mental health and contributes to individuals' life satisfaction and sense of fulfillment. Drawing on relevant literature, including Windle and Woods (2004), seeks to explore students' social media usage and its implications for psychological well-being. Understanding this connection provides valuable insights into the role of digital engagement in students' psychological experiences and overall quality of life.

Social relationships play a crucial role in shaping psychological health as a result of people's innate sociable and cooperative inclination. These connections are integral to the sense of identity and self (Powell, 2009; Tomasello et al., 2012). Social support encompasses feelings of being loved, cared for, valued, and part of a reciprocal network, which is a fundamental aspect of social connections (Cobb, 1976). Social media has radically changed facets of society, including interpersonal relationships, politics, commercial marketing, the broadcast of news, and cultural trends. It has become an essential component of modern communication. It has given people and groups a forum to express themselves, share knowledge, work together, and have discussions about a range of subjects (Shen & Rukmini, 2023). The tools that social media platforms offer make it easy to distribute and share content, including text, photographs, videos, and links. Individuals build personal profiles or accounts, connect with other users, become "friends," and communicate in real-time or asynchronously through direct messaging (Zheltukhina et al., 2026). Using social networking sites have witnessed significant growth in recent times (Leong et al., 2019). Social media encompasses web pages and digital resources that enable involvement from users, enabling them to share information, opinions, and interests (Swar & Hameed, 2017). Students utilize social media for interaction, amusement, or seeking out data. Particularly, students are becoming a greater number dedicating more time to online networking sites, e-games, texting, and other social media activities (Twenge & Campbell, 2019). Dhir et al. (2018) and Tateno et al. (2019) reported that social media significantly influences the patterns of interpersonal communication and individual as well as group behaviors worldwide. As social media usage continues to grow, there is a growing concern about the potential negative impacts, especially related to addiction (Kircaburun et al., 2020). One significant area of concern is its effect on psychological well-being (Chatterjee, 2020).

Psychological well-being (PWB) refers to an individual's experience of positive mental states, including happiness, life satisfaction, and a sense of fulfillment (Edward, 2005). It is influenced by various factors, among which social relationships and interpersonal support play important roles in maintaining psychological health. Social support can contribute to psychological well-being by helping individuals cope with life stressors and navigate everyday challenges, even during periods of relative stability. Higher psychological well-being is generally associated with fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety, lower

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levels of fear and boredom, and more positive emotional experiences. Furthermore, individuals with greater psychological well-being may be better equipped to establish and maintain positive relationships with others (Keyes & Haidt, 2003).

Deci and Ryan (2008) distinguished hedonic approach focuses on positive relationships with other individuals, while the eudaimonia approach emphasizes self-acceptance. Human flourishing is considered the fundamental condition and process of being a positive and psychologically healthy human being. It is a positive attitude that describes human health (Gable & Haidt, 2005). Feelings, participation, connections, significance, and accomplishment are important factors that contribute to increasing an individual's tendency to achieve psychological well-being (Seligman, 2011). Psychological well-being is shaped by a multitude of factors beyond social relationships. Perspectives, such as optimism, hardiness, resilience, and mental fortitude, along with faith, fulfilling work, physical activity, sleep, health, and economic security, play significant roles in influencing an individual's psychological well-being (Kusnadi et al., 2026). While social relationships are an important factor in influencing psychological well-being, social media platforms offer a space where meaningful and strong social relationships are cultivated and maintained. Certain kinds of social relationships formed on social media, such as meaningful friendships and healthy connections with family members, have the potential to positively impact an individual's psychological well-being. Moreover, social integration significantly impacts well-being by influencing normative behavior. Social relationships have the power to predict how well individuals cope with challenges and stress (Gong et al., 2025) and can mitigate the negative consequences of stressful life events, such as the loss of a loved one (Rook, 1984).

McCool et al. (2016) found that the utilization of social technologies has a detrimental impact on the health of learners. Except for connections, social media consumers appear to be less happy with their daily lives and education. The fact that girls suffered more than boys was also underlined. Social media has a significant impact on the lives of learners and improves the knowledge that is useful to them in their studies. Social media is directly linked to mental wellness, particularly among young individuals like college students. Alkan and Doan (2018) measured high school students' use of social media networking sites and whether their mental health was improved by using them, and whether there was a substantial connection between engagement with Social networking sites and the well-being of pupils while in secondary school. Also, the findings when compared to internet engagement by gender did not change. Weinstein (2018) discovered that the relationship between social media use and well-being has many facets. It occasionally had a good impact and occasionally a negative impact. As a result, this is a type of emotional seesaw that affects people differently depending on where they live.

Statement of the Problem

Social media is widely used across various aspects of everyday life, including education. Students enrolled in public and private educational institutions at primary, secondary, higher secondary, and tertiary levels increasingly use social media for communication, information sharing, academic collaboration, and learning. Teachers may also incorporate digital platforms into their instructional practices to facilitate interaction, engagement, and knowledge sharing. In Pakistan, university students similarly use social media for academic and personal purposes, making it important to examine its potential implications for their psychological well-being. Previous research has explored the association between social media use and well-being, highlighting the relevance of factors such as social connectedness, social isolation, and smartphone addiction (Matud et al., 2019). The present study aims to examine students' SM usage and its relationship with PWB, with particular attention to gender-based differences. Investigating patterns of SM use and

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students' PWB, the research seeks to contribute to a better understanding of digital engagement in university settings.

Research Objectives

The current research was structured to address the following research objectives:

1. Determine the level of university students' psychological well-being
2. Assess the level of university students' well-being
3. To compare gender-wise university students use of students' usage of social media in fostering their psychological well-being

Research Design and Methodology

Research design is a systematic procedure or an idea. It provides the right direction without any dissemination of tasks (Mertler, 2021), is the detailed strategy for conducting research Pallant, 2016), and is a mapping strategy, which assists the researchers in reaching the research objective Hennink et al., 2020). In the current research, the researchers use a quantitative research design focusing on a survey to answer the questions and draw a valid and trustworthy conclusion Coe et al., 2021). It covers the procedures, tools, and approaches for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting results. The research design and the scope of the research topics influence the methodology chosen.

Population of the Study

The population of the current study comprised 1,155 students enrolled in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Lahore, Pakistan. Established in 1999, the University of Lahore is a private higher education institution offering a wide range of academic programmes across multiple disciplines. For the present study, the researchers focused on four departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences: Education, Sociology, Islamic Studies, and the Lahore School of Behavioral Sciences (LSBS). The student population included individuals enrolled in BS, MS/MPhil, and PhD programmes. As presented in Table 1, Sociology had the largest student population (430), followed by Islamic Studies (293), LSBS (222), and Education (210). The total population of 1,155 students provided a relevant sampling frame for investigating university students' social media usage and psychological well-being across diverse academic disciplines and educational levels.

Table 1: List of Participants

Sr. #	Name of department	No of students			Total
		BS	MS/Phil	PhD	
1	Education	75	66	69	210
2	Sociology	420	Nil	10	430
3	Islamic studies	106	131	56	293
4	Lahore School of Behavioral Sciences	82	140	Nil	222

Table 1 presents the distribution of 1,155 students across four departments of the faculty of social sciences. The department of sociology has the largest student population, with 430 students, followed by Islamic Studies with 293 students, the Lahore School of Behavioral Sciences with 222 students, and education with 210 students. Regarding academic levels, BS students constitute the largest group, comprising 683 students (59.1%), followed by MS/MPhil students, with 337 students (29.2%), and PhD students, with 135 students (11.7%). The distribution indicates that undergraduate students represent the majority of the overall population, while postgraduate students constitute a substantial proportion.

Sample of the Research

The sample of the current research was drawn from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Lahore, Pakistan. The faculty comprised a total population of 1,155 students enrolled in four departments: Education, Sociology, Islamic Studies, and the Lahore School of Behavioural Sciences (LSBS). These departments represent diverse academic disciplines

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and provide an appropriate setting for examining university students' SM and PWB. The researchers selected 129 students from these departments to participate in the study. The participants represented different demographic characteristics, including gender, age, residential locality, marital status, religion, educational level, department, and semester of study. Furthermore, the sample included students with different patterns of social media engagement, enabling the researchers to examine their usage of social networking platforms and its potential association with psychological well-being. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in the following table.

Table 2: Demographic information of the participants

Sr. No.	*Variables*	*Categories*	*f*	*%age*
1	Gender	Male	49	38.0
		Female	80	62.0
2	Locale	Rural	50	38.8
		Urban	79	61.2
3	Age	16-20	22	17.1
		20-25	106	82.2
		25-30	1	.8
4	Marital status	Single	113	87.6
		Married	14	10.9
		Separated	2	1.6
5	Religion	Islam	126	97.7
		Christianity	1	.8
		Other	2	1.6
6	Level of education	Bachelors	124	96.1
		Masters	3	2.3
		M/S / M. Phil	2	1.6
7	Department	Education	26	20.2
		Sociology	25	19.4
		Islamic Studies	26	20.2
		LSBS	26	20.2
8	Semester	1 Semester	1	.8
		2 Semester	1	.8
		3 Semester	11	8.5
		4 Semester	18	14.0
		5 Semester	20	15.5
		6 Semester	48	37.2
		7 Semester	19	14.7
		8 Semester	11	8.5

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the 129 respondents, indicating that females constituted the majority (62.0%), while males accounted for 38.0%. Regarding locale, most participants belonged to urban areas (61.2%), compared with 38.8% from rural areas. In terms of age, the largest group was aged 20-25 years (82.2%), followed by those aged 16-20 years (17.1%). Most respondents were single (87.6%), while 10.9% were married and 1.6% were separated. Regarding religion, 97.7% identified as Muslim. Most participants were bachelor's students (96.1%), with smaller proportions enrolled in master's and MS/MPhil programmes. Departmental representation was relatively balanced, with Education, Islamic Studies, and LSBS each contributing 20.2% of respondents. Semester-wise, sixth-semester students formed the largest group (37.2%), followed by fifth-semester students (15.5%) and seventh-semester students (14.7%).

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Research Instrument

A research instrument refers to the tool or measure used to collect data relevant to a study's objectives. Common research instruments include questionnaires, surveys, tests, and rating scales. Selecting appropriate instruments is essential for ensuring the reliability and validity of the collected data. In the present study, the researchers employed two standarised scales: the Social Networking Usage Scale developed by Rahman et al. (2022) and the Well-Being Scale developed by Pradhan and Hati (2019). The Social Networking Usage Scale consists of six dimensions: informativeness (4 items), education (4 items), shopping (3 items), social cause (3 items), entertainment (3 items), and socialization (3 items). The Well-Being Scale comprises four dimensions: psychological well-being (10 items), social well-being (10 items), workplace well-being (9 items), and subjective well-being (8 items). All items were rated using a five-point Likert scale. Before data collection, the researchers obtained permission from the authors to use the instruments for research purposes.

Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures the construct it is intended to assess, whereas reliability indicates the consistency of its measurements (Coe et al., 2021; Hennink et al., 2020; Mertler, 2021). In the present study, the Social Media Usage (SMU) Scale and the Psychological Well-Being (PWB) Scale were adopted from previously published research. A pilot study was conducted to examine the internal consistency of both instruments. The overall reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .933 across 52 items, indicating excellent internal consistency. Furthermore, the individual reliability analysis showed that the SMU Scale, comprising 20 items, achieved a Cronbach's alpha of .867, while the PWB Scale, comprising 32 items, yielded a coefficient of .902. Both values indicate good to excellent internal consistency, suggesting that the instruments were sufficiently consistent for use in the study. However, the overall item count and reliability statistics should be verified against the original analysis output before final reporting.

Table 3: Factor-wise Reliability Statistics

No.	*Factors*	*N*	*Cronbach's reliability*
1	Informativeness	4	.675
2	Education	4	.781
3	Shopping	3	.574
4	Social cause	3	.662
5	Entertainment	3	.539
6	Socialization	3	.524
7	Psychological well-being	9	.734
8	Social well-being	10	.830
9	Workplace well-being	9	.745
10	Subjective well-being	4	.584

Table 3 shows that the factor-wise reliability analysis provides further insight into the internal consistency of the individual dimensions of the Social Media Usage (SMU) and (PWB) scales. For the SMU scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .675 for informativeness, .781 for education, .574 for shopping, .662 for social cause, .539 for entertainment, and .524 for socialization. For the PWB scale, the coefficients were .734 for psychological well-being, .830 for social well-being, .745 for workplace well-being, and .584 for subjective well-being. The results indicate that reliability varied across the dimensions, with education and social well-being demonstrating comparatively stronger internal consistency. However, some dimensions yielded relatively low reliability coefficients, particularly entertainment, socialization, shopping, and subjective well-being. Therefore,

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these results should be interpreted cautiously, considering the number of items in each dimension and the exploratory nature of the pilot study.

Data Collection

Before data collection, the researchers obtained permission from the relevant departmental authorities and informed the participants about the purpose of the study. After receiving approval, the researchers arranged suitable dates and times with the department heads to visit the concerned departments. With the assistance of a departmental guide, the researchers met the participants and distributed the questionnaires in their regular classrooms without disrupting teaching and learning activities. Participants were asked to read each statement carefully and select the response that best represented their views. The researchers remained available to clarify any confusing items and provide guidance when needed. Each class took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaires (Hennink et al., 2020). Participation was voluntary, and informed consent and confidentiality were maintained throughout the process in accordance with ethical research principles (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Coe et al., 2021). All distributed questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. After completing the data collection, the researchers thanked the participants for their time, cooperation, and contribution to the study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis is an essential stage of research because it enables researchers to organize information, identify patterns, and draw meaningful conclusions (Pallant, 2020). Data analysis and interpretation involve systematically examining collected data to uncover patterns relevant to the research question (Karakaya-Ozyer,2022). Quantitative analysis provides a systematic approach to examining variables and interpreting findings objectively (Mertler, 2021). Quantitative analysis is crucial for drawing valid conclusions, making informed decisions, and providing recommendations based on the research evidence (Muijs, 2022; Thrane, 2022). In the present study, the collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The collected questionnaires were coded and entered into SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to summarize the data and examine the study variables (Hennink et al., 2020). Data coding, entry, and screening were conducted systematically to minimize errors and ensure accurate analysis (Coe et al., 2021). The process starts with data cleaning and preparation, followed by applying statistical techniques to analyze the data (Wofford, 2022). Before entering the data, each completed questionnaire was assigned a unique identification number to facilitate systematic organization and reduce the risk of data-entry errors. The responses were then coded numerically and entered into a predefined SPSS data sheet. After completing data entry, the dataset was checked for accuracy and completeness. Appropriate descriptive statistical techniques were subsequently applied to summarize the responses.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on students' use of MoI

Sr. No.	*Item*	*Categories*	*f*	*%age*
1	Students' use of the medium of instruction	Urdu	49	38.0
		English	80	62.0
2	Do you use social networking sites	Yes	126	97.7
		No	3	2.3
3	If yes, which social networking sites do you use	Gmail	3	2.3
		Hotmail	1	.8
		Webmail	1	.8
		WhatsApp	83	64.3
		YouTube	40	31.0

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		Facebook	1	.8
		<2hrs	19	14.7
4	Per day social media use	2-4hrs	39	30.2
		5-6hrs	36	27.9
		>6hrs	35	27.1

Table 4 shows that 62.0% of respondents used English as their medium of instruction, while 38.0% used Urdu. Almost all participants (97.7%) reported using social networking sites. WhatsApp was the most commonly used platform (64.3%), followed by YouTube (31.0%), whereas Gmail, Hotmail, webmail, and Facebook were reported by comparatively few respondents. Regarding daily social media usage, 30.2% of students spent 2-4 hours online, followed by 27.9% who spent 5–6 hours and 27.1% who spent more than six hours daily. Only 14.7% reported using social media for less than two hours per day. These findings indicate that social media is widely used among university students, with a substantial proportion spending several hours daily on digital platforms. This pattern highlights the importance of examining how social media engagement may relate to students' psychological well-being.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics on factors of Social Media Usage

Sr. No	*Factors*	*M*	*SD*
1	Informativeness	12.45	3.14
2	Education	13.00	3.81
3	Shopping	9.02	2.63
4	Social cause	8.71	2.89
5	Entertainment	9.78	2.61
6	Socialization	9.92	2.48

Table 5 reflects that informativeness was an important factor (*M*=12.45, *SD*=3.14) and factor of social media *education* (*M*=13.00, *SD*=3.81), *shopping* (*M*=9.02, *SD*=2.63), *social cause* (*M*=8.71, *SD*=2.89), entertainment (*M*=9.78, *SD*=2.61), socialization (*M*=9.92, *SD*=2.48).

Table 6: Descriptive statistics on factors of psychological well-being

Sr. No	*Factors*	*M*	*SD*
1	Psychological well-being	29.35	5.88
2	Social well-being	31.45	7.39
3	Workplace well-being	29.33	5.62
4	Subjective well being	12.94	3.07

Table 6 reflects that most students responded that psychological well-being was an important factor (*M*=29.35, *SD*=5.88) and factor of social well-being (*M*=31.45, *SD*=7.39), Workplace well-being (*M*=29.33, *SD*=5.62), and subjective well-being (*M*=12.94, *SD*=3.07).

Table 7: Gender-Based Differences in SM Use and PWB among University Students

Overall	*Gender*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*t*	*p*
Social media	Male	49	60.18	13.97	4.181	127	-1.919	.043
	Female	80	64.54	11.54				
Psychological well-being	Male	49	100.08	18.38	.418	127	-1.467	.519
	Female	80	104.90	17.94				

Table 7 indicates a statistically significant gender difference in social media use, with female students reporting a higher mean score (*M*=64.54, *SD*=11.54) than male students (M = 60.18, *SD*=13.97), *p*=.043. In contrast, the gender difference in psychological well-being was not statistically significant (*p*=.519), although female students had a slightly higher mean score (*M*=104.90, *SD*=17.94) than male students (*M*=100.08, *SD*=18.38).

Table 8: Gender-Based Differences in Students' SMU Patterns

Factors of	*Gender*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*p*
Informativeness	Male	49	11.92	3.46	2.340	127	-1.510

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	Female	80	12.78	2.91			
Education	Male	49	11.96	4.22	6.091	127	-2.479
	Female	80	13.64	3.40			
Shopping	Male	49	8.43	2.88	3.085	127	-2.006
	Female	80	9.38	2.42			
Social cause	Male	49	9.02	2.76	.756	127	.944
	Female	80	8.53	2.97			
Entertainment	Male	49	9.45	2.35	1.154	127	-1.140
	Female	80	9.99	2.75			
Socialization	Male	49	9.41	2.81	2.689	127	-1.859
	Female	80	10.24	2.22			

Table 8 presents gender-based differences in students' social media usage across six dimensions. Female students reported higher mean scores for informativeness (*M*=12.78, *SD*=2.91) than male students (*M*=11.92, *SD*=3.46). Similarly, female students scored higher in education (*M*=13.64, *SD*=3.40), shopping (*M*=9.38, *SD*=2.42), entertainment (*M*=9.99, *SD*=2.75), and socialization (*M*=10.24, *SD*=2.22). In contrast, male students reported a higher mean score for social causes (*M*=9.02, *SD*=2.76) than female students (*M*=8.53, *SD*=2.97). The reported t values suggest potential gender differences across several dimensions; however, statistical significance cannot be conclusively determined because the corresponding p values are missing. Therefore, the findings indicate descriptive differences in social media usage patterns between male and female students, but the significance of these differences requires verification using the correct statistical test results.

Table 9: Gender-Based Differences in PWB Factors among University Students

Factors of PWB	*Gender*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*F*	*df*	*t*	*p*
Psychological well-being	Male	49	27.86	6.62	4.445	127	-2.294	.037
	Female	80	30.26	5.20				
Social well-being	Male	49	31.45	7.37	.003	127	-.001	.955
	Female	80	31.45	7.44				
Workplace well-being	Male	49	28.24	6.04	.755	127	-1.735	.387
	Female	80	30.00	5.27				
Subjective well-being	Male	49	12.53	2.84	.656	127	-1.181	.420
	Female	80	13.19	3.20				

Table 9 presents gender-based differences in psychological well-being among university students across four dimensions. Female students reported a higher mean score for psychological well-being (*M*=30.26, *SD*=5.20) than male students (*M*=27.86, *SD*=6.62), and this difference was statistically significant (*t*=-2.294, *p*=.037). For social well-being, both male and female students reported an identical mean score (*M*=31.45), indicating no meaningful gender difference (*t*=-0.001, *p*=.955). Female students also reported higher workplace well-being (*M*=30.00, *SD*=5.27) than male students (*M*=28.24, *SD*=6.04), although the difference was not statistically significant (*p*=.387). Similarly, subjective well-being was slightly higher among female students (*M*=13.19, *SD*=3.20) than male students (*M*=12.53, *SD*=2.84), but the difference was not statistically significant (*p*=.420). Overall, only psychological well-being showed a statistically significant gender difference.

Discussion

Social media has significantly transformed communication and become an integral part of university students' everyday lives. Previous research has highlighted its potential effects on individuals' psychological, intellectual, and emotional well-being (Kim & Kim, 2017). The findings of the current study indicate that social media engagement is widespread

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among university students, with 97.7% reporting the use of social networking platforms. WhatsApp was the most frequently reported platform (64.3%), followed by YouTube (31.0%). Furthermore, 57.3% of respondents reported spending at least five hours daily on social media, suggesting substantial engagement with digital platforms. These findings highlight the importance of examining how social media use relates to students' psychological and social experiences. Social media may provide opportunities for maintaining relationships with family members, friends, and peers, thereby facilitating social connection and belonging. This interpretation is consistent with Ellison et al. (2007), who associated social networking site use with the development of social capital. Similarly, Gong et al. (2021) highlighted the relevance of social networking connections to psychological well-being. The current study also found gender-based differences in psychological well-being, with female students reporting significantly higher psychological well-being scores than male students (p=.037). However, no statistically significant gender difference was observed in social well-being (p=.955). These findings suggest that the relationship between digital engagement and well-being warrants further investigation, particularly across different demographic groups. Previous studies by Bano et al. (2019) and Chen and Li (2017) also provide relevant context for understanding the role of social networking platforms, including WhatsApp, in students' social and psychological experiences. Nevertheless, the present findings should not be interpreted as evidence that social media directly improves psychological well-being, as the reported results do not establish causality.

Although social media provides opportunities for communication and maintaining relationships, excessive use and negative online experiences may contribute to social isolation and adversely affect psychological well-being. Individuals may experience difficulties maintaining meaningful relationships when online interactions replace face-to-face communication or involve cyberbullying, privacy concerns, and a lack of trust in digital platforms. Hajek and König (2021) highlighted the relevance of social isolation to individuals' well-being, while Choi and Noh (2019) reported a negative association between social isolation and mental health. Furthermore, excessive smartphone use and phubbing, the act of ignoring people during face-to-face interactions to focus on a mobile phone, may interfere with interpersonal communication and social engagement. Jeong et al. (2016) found that frequent smartphone use for social networking, entertainment, and gaming was associated with a greater likelihood of problematic mobile phone use. Similarly, Tangmunkongvorakul et al. (2019) reported lower emotional well-being among students with higher levels of smartphone use, while Shoukat (2019) identified a negative association between smartphone habits and psychological well-being. Zheng et al. (2015) also emphasized the importance of psychological well-being in individuals' overall functioning. In the context of the current study, these findings provide a basis for understanding the potential implications of intensive social media engagement for university students. However, because the present results primarily describe students' usage patterns and differences in well-being across demographic groups, further analysis is required to determine whether social media use is significantly associated with psychological well-being.

Conclusions

There are numerous links between online platforms and the emotional well-being of today's people. Kids' mental health will certainly decline as the availability of technology and internet use increases, as a result of the detrimental effects of electronic devices. Additionally, as the prevalence of social media use increases, mental illnesses like anxiety, sleep issues, and depression will certainly rise among people of all ages as a result of the role social media plays in their growth. However, by developing methods for finding potential psychological disorders that digital media consumers may be experiencing, scholars are

leveraging social media to advance beneficially. The WhatsApp platform is the social networking platform that young learners use the most. There is a link connecting undergraduate students' use of SNS and their state of mind. The moderate link between freshman pupils' digital openness and happiness demonstrates that there is a marginally beneficial connection between social networking site use and mental wellness. Based on the results, the current research concludes that teachers were making less use of the medium of instruction, with 38% using social media to promote students' PWS. University students were making less use of SNWS 2% for enhancing university students' social media use through PWB. The incorporation of social media into pedagogical approaches raises teachers' apprehensions regarding possible diversions, privacy concerns, or inadequate acquaintance with the platforms. Similarly, college students may be using social networking sites (SNWS) less for PWB because they would rather use other approaches or are concerned about the negative effects of excessive online use on mental health. It is concluded that students were making less use of SNWSU Facebook, Webmail, Hotmail, and Gmail (1%) for enhancing university students' social media use through PWB. The observed minimal utilization of social networking sites (SNWSU) such as Facebook, Webmail, Hotmail, and Gmail (1%) among university students in enhancing their social media use for personal well-being (PWB) could be attributed to the potential benefits of integrating these specific platforms into their PWB strategies. Improving use of social media for personal well-being, university students have been found to use social networking sites (SNWSU) like Facebook, Webmail, Hotmail, and Gmail only 1% of the time. Due to a preference for other platforms for communication, worries about security and privacy, or ignorance of the advantages of incorporating these particular platforms into PWB strategies. It is concluded that students were making less use of PDSMU, with 14% using social media in promoting students' PWS. When it comes to promoting personal well-being (PWS), students are using social media more frequently (14%) than the Personal Development and Self-Management Unit (PDSMU). This difference may be due to convenience, perceived efficacy, or a preference for the interactive and real-time engagement that social media platforms provide. These platforms may be more user-friendly or customized to meet the specific needs of each student, which could explain why the PDSMU is used less frequently in this situation.

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