

# The Use of Social Media and Its Relationship to Psychological Alienation and Academic Procrastination

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**Abstracts:** Although social media has been of great benefit to the flow of information and lifestyle inspiration, some negatives have radically changed an individual's life from a societal perspective. It enslaved its users psychologically and socially; Users have become victims of the digital product rather than the controller. Many psychological, social, academic, and cultural problems have emerged. Therefore, it was important to determine the extent to which social media was used by young people. Study the relationship between social media use, psychological alienation, and academic procrastination, and the differences between males and females in the study variables. The data was collected from 345 students from Najran University, of whom (186) were males and (159) were females. The average age of the sample ranged from (M = 21.3 years, and SD = 2.87 years). The results showed that 73.33% of the participants used social media more than four hours a day. Linear regression analysis also showed that students who would serve social media more than four hours a day had a higher level of psychological alienation and academic procrastination compared to those who used social media for less than two hours. In addition, there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in psychological alienation, while differences have emerged. A statistically significant function between males and females in academic procrastination in the direction of males. These findings suggest the importance of illustrating the negative effects of frequent use of social media on students, youth, and members of society in general. In addition to the importance of officials and relevant authorities such as universities, educational institutions, the family, and the media, to educate young people about the negative effects of the frequent use of social media on psychological, social, and academic aspects.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Psychological Alienation, Academic Procrastination, Saudi Society.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern society has witnessed significant and accelerated developments because of the emergence of modern technology until the era we live in has become described as the age of information and communication; This was accompanied by a massive explosion of knowledge that was reflected in various aspects of life [1]. Social media is one of the products of modern communication technology, which has benefited from internet applications [2, 3]. It has added a cultural, social, and political dimension to modern technology, produced virtual societies other than those that are recognized, and even reshaped the entire human relationship [4]. Relationships in the virtual world overlapped with the real lives of individuals, influencing the psychological and social compatibility of individuals. In addition to their negative impact on their interaction with their real environment, their desire to stay away from people, psychological alienation, and their love for isolation and the virtual world [5, 6].

Social media began to emerge in the late 1990s such as Class Mtes.com 1995 to connect classmates, In addition, the Six Degrees website in 1997 focused on direct connections between people [7, 8]. At the beginning of 2005, Myspace was created, which is considered one of the first and largest social networks in the world. Then many social media have appeared in abundance in recent years such as (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and others) and have become part of the daily and social lives of individuals, and one of the supplies of modern life [2, 9, 10]. Social media has allowed its surfers to share files, and photos and share videos. It has also enabled its users to create blogs and profiles, conduct instant conversations, and send messages. These social networks topped three important and major sites (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) [11, 12]. As a result of the growth and development of these social sites, more than two-thirds of Internet users have subscribed to them [13]. According to a news report from CNN and a study by the nonprofit organization Common Sense Media, it was reported that the average user still devotes 30% of their online time to social media interactions, which is up to about two hours a day. While we find that teens may spend nine hours, a day using social media for leisure time [14].

Social media plays an important role in driving people's behavior change [15, 16]. Social media can be educational in the process of people forming their identity, providing those with a sense of belonging and helping

them build self-esteem. It connects people around the world and updates the latest news globally [17, 18]. The use of social media has also helped to form and maintain social capital by connecting people. In addition, these methods facilitated many interactions allowing people to continue building relationships and sharing experiences at a faster and wider pace [19]. The use of social media also affects psychological well-being [20]. Despite the positive role of the use of social media in the field of human communication. This role has been accompanied by many negatives resulting from its misuse [21]. In addition, the associated psychological and social effects, such as addiction, social isolation, psychological alienation, aggressiveness and mental disorders [22]. Besides, there are some problems that appear in the form of psychological alienation, stress, anxiety, and internal conflicts [21]. Studies show a positive correlation between mental health issues and social media addiction [23]. People with poor mental health and low self-esteem also rely too much on social media, while considering it as compensation for daily social interaction[24]. In addition, studies have shown that excessive use of social media leads to a decrease in life satisfaction, self-reported physical health, and self-reported mental health [25, 26]. In addition, excessive use of social media can increase isolation, loneliness, and a sense of psychological alienation [26]. A study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine also found that people who use social media frequently are also more likely to feel socially isolated and psychologically alienated; In addition, A study has shown that having negative experiences on social media has to do with higher levels of social isolation [27]. Moreover, such groups of people are more likely to use social media as a sentiment management tool. However, when they are not satisfied, their minds head for the worse. Such an unexpected effect on an individual is usually seen as "alienation"[28].

The phenomenon of psychological alienation has spread among the groups of society [29]. Especially the youth groups due to many factors, such as their frequent use of social media [30]. Which affects their involvement in family, social and academic activities and practice [31]. Social media affects their adaptation and does not find themselves within this social formation, which makes them feel that there is no goal and isolate themselves from reality [28]. Several studies have indicated that the increasing use of social media leads to increased emotional burden, mental disorders, feelings of aggressiveness, social isolation, and psychological alienation, and leads to many aspects of psychological stress to which an individual is exposed [2, 19, 28]. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have found a strong correlation between this social isolation, alienation, and social media, finding on one of the popular social media platforms, Twitter, that posts with the words "lonely" or "alone" are associated with language markers of anger, depression, and anxiety, all consequences of smartphone addiction [32]. In addition, Lian, et al., [33]suggested that feelings of alienation and social isolation might stem from other means such as smartphone addiction and the multiple applications they include such as social media applications. The results of his study confirmed that smartphone addiction is an urgent new mental health problem, due to its association with sleep disorders, depression, anxiety, loneliness, psychological alienation, and pathological symptoms [33].

One of the main reasons for enrolling in any undergraduate academic program is to acquire advanced knowledge to achieve better academic achievement and to prepare students to conform to the global trend where education is an essential indicator of development [34]. Undergraduate academic programs expose students to rigorous academic tasks that require maximum effort. Teachers assign academic tasks to students to get them to explore ideas and knowledge aimed at preparing them for academic success [35]. Tasks mostly assigned to students include household tasks, projects, and self-discovery tasks. The majority of information can be accessed online because this is the age of information and technology [36].

Apart from the negative consequences of social media on young people such as the negative impact on aspects of mental health, psychological alienation, social isolation, low life satisfaction, and crime [26, 36, 37]. However, we may also find that students' preoccupation with social media comes at the expense of their academic responsibilities, causing delays in their academic tasks, which if not managed may lead to academic procrastination; which means unnecessary postponement of the implementation or completion of an academic assignment by students [36, 38]. In addition, Academic procrastination refers to leaving homework or preparing for a test or final projects until the last minute, which means irrational and deliberate postponement of the intention to do something. In addition, academic procrastination may frustrate a student's specific academic goals when they fail to prioritize properly [39, 40]. It is therefore important that students always prioritize their proper use of time to enable them to carry out their academic tasks appropriately without unnecessary delay [41]. However, most students seem

to procrastinate and postpone attending to their academic assignments depending on their preoccupation with other activities [42]. For example, academic procrastination results when students spend too much time using social media issues, which can lead to many addictive behaviors, distracting them from performing their academic tasks [43]. In addition, excessive use of social media and online games has diverted students' attention from their studies, which may make them vulnerable to symptoms associated with academic procrastination such as fear, laziness, loss of interest, and anxiety about incomplete tasks that are always postponed. This may negatively affect students' academic achievement [36]. A study [44] also suggests that academic procrastination behavior is very common among college students. The new generation spends most of their time on social media. They were born with technology. They make friends through social media, send text messages instead of talking on their phones and sleep with their phones so they can follow their tweets. As a result, they are described as the age group that uses the Internet frequently. Therefore, when analyzing recent studies, it was found that the relationship between the use of technology, especially social media, and academic procrastination is the focus of joint research [44, 45]. This is because studies analyzing academic procrastination behavior have concluded that failure to accomplish a task due to engaging in enjoyable activities may be associated with the use of the Internet, and the relevant literature also supports the negative relationship between technology use and academic procrastination [44-46]. Thus, it is important to conduct more research on the impact of social media use on psychological alienation and academic procrastination.

### **1.1. Present Study**

In an environment where the use of social media in everyday life is becoming more common, the relationship between social media use and psychological alienation in young people, and their procrastination academic behavior, is becoming increasingly important. Hence, the purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of social media use, which is becoming increasingly popular among young people, on psychological alienation and academic procrastination behavior. Therefore, the research questions are as follows:

1. What is the degree to which Najran University students in Saudi Arabia use social media?
2. Are there differences between the average scores of students on the psychological alienation scale according to the variable hours of use of social media?
3. Are there differences between the average scores of students on the scale of academic procrastination according to the variable hours of social media use?
4. Are there differences between the average scores of students on the scale of psychological alienation and academic procrastination according to the gender variable?

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. Participants**

For the study, we distributed 375 study tools to collect data; to the study sample of undergraduate students at Najran University in Saudi Arabia; 358 of them were retrieved from respondents; after analyzing the study tools, 13 of the 358 questionnaires from the respondents were incomplete - "Students did not finish the questionnaire" - and had to be deleted, making the remaining number 345, of which (186) were males, (159) females. The mean age of the sample ranged from ((M=21.3 years, and SD=2.87 years).

### **2.2. Data Collection Tools**

The scale of Alienation in Adolescents and Youth Preparation [47]

To determine the level of psychological alienation of university students, the Alienation Scale in adolescents and young people was used [47]. It is used to assess psychological alienation in university students. Respondents rate each element on the five-point Likert scale in terms of whether they have a sense of psychological alienation, with

responses from zero to four representing "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The scale consists of 80 paragraphs divided into five dimensions, and these dimensions are (social isolation, feeling helpless, negative, meaningless, and rejection). The scale has a high degree of reliability and stability, the internal consistency (with the Cronbach alpha above 0.80). In this study, the reliability of the scale was performed using the Cronbach alpha coefficient test; it indicated the Cronbach alpha reliability high for the overall score of the questionnaire ( $r = 0.87$ ).

### 2.3. Academic Procrastination Scale [48]

To determine the academic procrastination behaviors of university students, the "Academic Procrastination Scale" developed by Abu Ghazal [48] was used. The scale consists of (21) paragraphs, with responses from one to five representing "too large" to "not too low". A high score on this scale indicates that the individual has academic procrastination. In the original, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of this academic procrastination scale was found at 0.90. For the current study, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.89.

### 2.4. Data Form

An information form containing the student's data was distributed. In addition, asking how many hours a student spends using social media per day, responses were divided into (less than two hours, two to four hours, and more than four hours).

### 2.5. Data Collection Procedure

Because this research is based on examining the relationships between two or more variables, it is a relational study that follows the quantitative method of its suitability for the nature of this study. The Institutional Ethics Committee of the Deanship of Scientific Research at Najran University has approved the application of study tools. All participants completed the voluntary consent section of the questionnaire, emphasizing the freedom to withdraw from the questionnaire at any time without consequences, and confirming confidentiality. The researchers sent a questionnaire online and on social media pages on student websites from September 15 to 29, 2022. After reviewing all the questionnaires sent by students and excluding the incomplete ones, the number of the study sample became 345 students participating in this study.

### 2.6. Data Analysis

All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 20. Frequency and percentage were used to examine the number of hours each student spends on social media. In addition, means, standard deviations, and t-tests were used for differences between males and females. Finally, Scheffe test ANOVA and linear regression analysis were used to identify differences in psychological alienation and academic procrastination according to the number of hours a student spends on social media.

## 3. RESULTS

To answer the first question: What is the degree to which Najran University students in Saudi Arabia use social media? Percentages and iterations were extracted. Table 1 presents the results of this question, by showing the frequencies and percentages of social media use among Najran University students.

**Table 1.** Shows the frequencies and percentages of social media use among Najran University students.

The extent to which the study sample uses social media	Repetitions	%
Less than two more	20	5.79
hours two to four hours	72	20.86
than four hours	253	73.33
total	345	100

The output of Table 1 shows that 73.33% use social media more than four hours a day, while 5.79% use social media less than two hours. Hence, these results show that almost two-thirds of the study sample use social media

very heavily and have a significant association with these means.

To answer the third question: Are there differences between the average scores of students on the psychological alienation scale according to the variable hours of use of social media?

**Table 2.** ANOVA results examining psychological alienation scale scores by the number of hours of social media use.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	127835.009	2	63917.504	48.477	.001
Within Groups	452248.466	343	1318.509		
Total	580083.475	345			

Table 2 shows that F D values are statistically at the level of 0.001, indicating differences in the level of psychological alienation in students due to the hours of social media use. To find out the direction of these differences, the Scheffe test was used for dimensional comparison. Table 3 shows the results of this.

**Table 3.** Scheffe test comparison for the Number of hours of social media use in psychological alienation.

(I) Number of hours of social media use	(J) Number of hours of social media use	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(<2) hours	2-4 hours	-34.90556*	5.4578	.000	-48.3236-	-21.4875-
	(>4) hours	-49.87914*	5.0664	.000	-62.3349-	-37.4233-
2-4 hours	(<2) hours	34.90556*	5.4578	.000	21.4875	48.3236
	(>4) hours	-14.97359*	4.5052	.004	-26.0497-	-3.8975-
(>4) hours	(<2) hours	49.87914*	5.0664	.000	37.4233	62.3349
	2-4 hours	14.97359*	4.5052	.004	3.8975	26.0497

\*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 3 shows the existence of statistically significant differences in psychological alienation among students according to the variable of the number of hours using social media, where the results showed that there are differences between those who use communication means for less than two hours and those who use communication means from (2-4) hours in the direction of (2-4) hours, as well as between less than two hours and those who use four hours or more in the direction of those who use four hours or more. That is, the more hours of social media are used, the higher the level of psychological alienation in the study sample. To answer the third question: Are there differences between the average scores of students on the scale of academic procrastination according to the variable hours of social media use?

**Table 4.** ANOVA results examining academic procrastination scale scores by the number of hours of social media use.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	120128.923	2	60064.462	359.014	.001
Within Groups	57385.322	343	167.304		
Total	177514.246	345			

Table 4 shows that F D values are statistically at the level of 0.001, indicating differences in the level of academic procrastination in students due to hours of social media use. To find out the direction of these differences, the Scheffe test was used for dimensional comparison. Table 5 shows the results of this.

**Table 5.** Scheffe test comparison for the Number of hours of social media use in academic procrastination.

(I) Number of hours of social media use	(J) Number of hours of social media use	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(<2) hours	2-4 hours	-5.97043*	1.8558	.006	-10.5329-	-1.4080-
	(>4) hours	-40.69166*	1.7452	.000	-44.9823-	-36.4010-
2-4 hours	(<2) hours	5.97043*	1.8558	.006	1.4080	10.5329
	(>4) hours	-34.72123*	1.6259	.000	-38.7187-	-30.7238-
(>4) hours	(<2) hours	40.69166*	1.7452	.000	36.4010	44.9823
	2-4 hours	34.72123*	1.6259	.000	30.7238	38.7187

Note: \*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 5 shows the existence of statistically significant differences in academic procrastination between students depending on the variable of the number of hours using social media, where the results showed that there are differences between those who use communication for less than two hours and those who use communication means from (2-4) hours in the direction of (2-4) hours, as well as between less than two hours and those who use four hours or more in the direction of those who use four hours or more. That is, the more hours of use of social media, the higher the level of academic procrastination in the study sample.

To answer the fourth question: Are there differences between the average scores of students on the scale of psychological alienation and academic procrastination according to the gender variable? The T-test was done to illustrate the differences between males and females on the scale of psychological alienation and academic procrastination.

**Table 6.** shows the value of T between the average scores of males and females on the psychological alienation scale.

Variables	Males (186)		Females (159)		t	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
psychological alienation	248.21	22.07	243.88	23.08	1.77	0.07
Academic procrastination.	58.21	22.08	48.33	20.02	4.36	0.001*

Table 6 shows that the level of significance is greater than 0.05 in psychological alienation and therefore, it can be said that there are no statistically significant differences between the average scores of males and females on the psychological alienation scale. While the level of significance is less than 0.05 in academic procrastination, hence, it can be said that there are differences between males and females in academic procrastination in the direction of females.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Currently, people are replacing their physical ties with technological ones, which unfortunately has led to increased feelings of dissatisfaction and loneliness. However, there may be ways to reduce feelings that have arisen as adverse effects. For example, research has shown that reducing the amount of social media use simply leads to immediate benefits in life satisfaction while at the same time reducing social isolation, and achieving academic success for students. In addition, encouraging people to participate in activities that revolve around the virtues of interpersonal relationships, vitality, and conscience, can also increase a person's sense of belonging and reduce the level of psychological alienation. In the current study, the results showed that 73.33% of students use social media more than four hours a day. In addition, there is a positive correlation between the use of social media and both psychological alienation and academic procrastination. Furthermore, no differences between the sexes in social media use and psychological alienation were noted, and there were gender differences in academic procrastination in the direction of males. Most students' use of social media may be due to more than four hours a

day due to: the ease of use of these social media, their small costs, as well as the use of social media in education, especially during and after the lockdown period. The multiplicity of social media, and its interesting and attention-grabbing content, have also contributed to an increase in the hours of use of social media. This is confirmed by many studies such as [15, 17, 19, 20]. The results also indicated a correlation between increased social media use and psychological alienation. This may be due to human dependence on collaboration and communication for survival and prosperity. This can lead to a thirst for social interactions and communication, and this may be through the subsequent creation of modern technology and social media. Although there are many positives to the use of social media, the most important of which is social interaction with others, it has many negatives that were clear through the results of the study, where the excessive use of social media contributed to the increase in isolation, psychological alienation, and academic procrastination in students, and this is also noted by many studies such as [21, 23, 24, 26, 33], which indicated that the increased use of social media leads to many psychological and academic problems, such as psychological alienation, academic procrastination, introversion, and isolation. In addition, anxiety and feeling aggressive. However, studies have shown that higher use of social media can lead to people feeling psychologically alienated, socially isolated, and lonely compared to people who don't use social media much [27, 28]. In addition, it may be the frequent use of certain social networking platforms is associated with lower life satisfaction, which can then lead to more loneliness. Moreover, excessive use of social media may lead to the student not performing the assignments and assignments required of him because most of his time is busy with social media. In addition, he becomes an introvert, does not interact with those around him, avoids discussions and dialogues, and likes to be isolated in his small world through social media. In addition, his feeling of not belonging to society, not taking responsibility, school delays, and interest in the virtual world through these means, this is confirmed by many studies such as [21, 26-28]. The results show that there are no statistically significant differences between the degrees of psychological alienation of males and females, and this may be because the use of social media has become a prerequisite in communicating with others, and in the field of education and study, especially during and after the lockdown. The results of this study are consistent with several studies such as the study [49]. The results also indicated that there are differences in academic procrastination in the direction of males and this may be due to the fact that it may be due to spending many hours on social media, as well as that males have many responsibilities to meet their family needs. Males are also busy with recreational activities at the expense of their studies and enjoy a lot of freedom from the family, so they spend a lot of time outside the home; in addition, some students are busy working while studying to help themselves and their parents. While females are present for long periods at home due to the customs and traditions of society, they, therefore, have a greater chance of being interested in studying and carrying out the assignments and academic tasks required of them. This has been confirmed by several studies such as [50-52].

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

The main objective of this study was to determine the extent to which university students were using new media. Investigating the relationship between social media use and both psychological alienation and academic procrastination in Najran University students, the results revealed that almost two-thirds of the study sample spend more than four hours via social media. The results also indicated a positive correlation between the frequent use of social media, psychological alienation, and academic procrastination. There are also no statistically significant differences between males and females in psychological alienation, while statistically significant differences between males and females have emerged in academic procrastination in the direction of males. Young people have become in a state of psychological alienation and isolation, and this has affected academic performance have become inclined to academic procrastinate tasks, assignments, and duties, and have become more connected to their virtual world related to social media. Despite the positives of social media, it has many negatives including misuse and alienation of young people from the real world. Social media must be used rationally and consciously through self-monitoring of the time of use of social media. Isolation and alienation must be alleviated by paying attention to one's time on social media and self-monitoring. In addition, to mitigate the negative effects of overuse of social media, it is highly recommended for older adults, or even younger adults, to use social media in moderation, as a way to stay in touch with close relatives and friends to reduce isolation and loneliness.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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