

# IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA DISTRACTION ON TIME MANAGEMENT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

Contemporary university students are catching up in an academic milieu full of e-distractions. Social media platforms, such as Instagram TikTok WhatsApp, and YouTube, are inverting the students' focus to grab it through lectures or study sessions and even assignment deadlines in ways the previous generations had not encountered. This article formulates an exact empirical query: does social media distraction result in a measurable decline in university students' time management performance? From 150 undergraduate students' data recorded by a reliable Likert scale questionnaire, the result is positive and statistically noteworthy. This research employing quantitative correlational method investigates the association between social media distraction (IV) and time management (DV) of university students. IBM SPSS Statistical Analysis Package was utilized to apply Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Results indicate an extremely negative relationship ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ) between social media distraction and time management performance. Besides Social Media Distraction, the regression model featured demographic control variables (Gender, Year Level, and Faculty) and was responsible for 42.1% of the variation in time management scores ( $R = .421$ ). The contribution of Social Media Distraction as the strongest individual predictor was highlighted ( $\beta = .58, p < .001$ ). All cited literature is extracted from the peer-reviewed journals published within 2021-2026.

**Keywords:** social media distraction, time management, university students, Likert scale, correlational research, SPSS, academic performance, self-regulation, digital distraction, higher education

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Try to ask a college student what they were doing during the ten minutes before they started studying, and the answer will almost always be: scrolling. What was supposed to be a short moment of switching from one activity to another has turned into a long wandering through reels, stories, and comment sections. When the student finally comes back to the book, the energy is gone and the time for the deadline is even shorter. This study starts with that evident fact and questions whether the data from experiments support what

students already understand based on their experiences.

Time management is known as one of the most reliable factors that lead to academic success at the college level. Students who plan their work well, prioritize their tasks, and schedule their study time so that it is not interrupted are the ones who usually get better marks, even if their intellectual capabilities are not as high as those of other students (and vice versa). This fact has been confirmed by research already. What is quite recent But is how massive, highly developed, and psychologically powerful the series of digital

interruptions that today's university students have to contend with are.

Social media platforms are by no means the product of chance they are turned into ecosystems that are engineered by groups of engineers, data scientists, and behavioral psychologists to a degree that makes them capable of grabbing and then keeping attention. The ever-running scroll, the notification badge, the content feed that is fine-tuned by the algorithm such features came into the world one by one because they were tried, improved, and at last, it was demonstrated that they were very capable of holding the attention of the users. The worldwide average daily time spent on social media increased to 2 hours and 31 minutes in 2024 (DataReportal, 2024). For the individuals aged 18 to 24 i.e. the main university student demographic that number is habitually and Quite a bit greater. If we assume that a student spends about eight to ten hours a day working on the academic stuff and seven to eight hours sleeping, then spending more than two and a half hours on social media is using up a very considerable part of the remaining time that could be, if necessary, pretty well distributed among study, preparation, and self-regulation. The time management repercussions of that fact deserve a solid empirical scrutiny.

Recent studies point to the seriousness of this issue. Lau (2021) discovered that the students who reported most frequent use of social media during study times had Quite a bit less academic self-regulation and a higher rate of failure to complete their tasks. In the same way, Bashir and Malik (2022) determined that distractions resulting from social media were the primary self-reported factor of time loss in educational activities among university students of Pakistan, leading to an average daily loss of 1.9 hours of study time due to social media use. Varchetta et al. (2021) provided evidence that FoMO (Fear of Missing Out), a psychological factor leading to compulsive social media checking, was Really correlated to time management inefficacy among students at university in Italy and Pakistan.

To bridge the gap between descriptive social media research and the use of firm, instrument-based measurement of time management, this paper uses

a quantitative correlational design. Social media distraction (SMD) is one variable that is looked at; it has been defined as the extent to which students find the use of social media as a disruption to their academic activities. Time management (TM) is the second variable that is based on four behavioral aspects planning prioritization deadline adherence, and resistance to distraction. Both variables were measured through a Likert scale questionnaire that was validated and was given to 150 university students. The data were analyzed by SPSS using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis.

## 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Social media use and academic time management are the two main topics of this study. The three objectives below define the scope and purpose of this study. These objectives were set through a careful review of the literature on social media use and academic time management, and they reflect the most pressing questions that have not yet been answered through research in this field among university student populations.

### *Objective 1*

First, it is aimed at determining the extent of social media distraction (SMD) among university students during academic work and seeing if the distraction level is related, in any way, to their overall time management (TM) performance in the major four behavioral aspects: planning prioritization deadline adherence, and resistance to distraction.

### *Objective 2*

Second, it is aimed at figuring out which aspects of time management are being affected the most by social media distraction in university students and to what extent these effects exist by using Pearson correlation analysis on data collected from 150 participants.

### *Objective 3*

Third, it is very important to execute multiple regression analysis to find out how much social media distraction predicts time management performance after factoring relevant demographics such as gender, academic year level, and faculty, and also, data shows findings, to develop a set of recommendations for students to

improve time management in the digitally inundated academic setting.

### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The three research questions below serve to break down the goals that were mentioned above. Each question is designed such that it can be effectively addressed by the quantitative research techniques that are going to be used in particular, the Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses carried out on the Likert scale survey data gathered from 150 university students.

#### *RQ1*

To what extent are university students getting distracted by social media negatively impacting their overall time management performance (TM)? Which specific time management dimensions (planning prioritization deadline adherence, or resistance to distraction) are the social media distraction (SMD) most closely linked with?

#### *RQ2*

How often do university students get distracted by social media during study, what are the typical types of social media platforms that students report as distracting and how often do they give in to the temptation of checking social media notifications? And, are there any specific, measurable time management (TM) outcomes, that the social media distraction (SMD) related patterns could be linked to?

#### *RQ3*

How much variance in time management performance of university students is explained by social media distraction after accounting for demographic variables, as the results of multiple regression analysis? And, what are some feasible, evidence-based solutions for universities to consider in their efforts to assist students in controlling digital distraction and enhancing their time management capabilities?

## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 4.1 Statement of the Problem

Currently, university students are incredibly well-equipped with social media access, and the design of those platforms is such that they tempt the users to keep on scrolling endlessly. As a result, this generation of learners seems to have a hard time setting boundaries for their study sessions learned from digital interruption which directly and even visibly damage their academic performances. The issue is more than just students indulging in social media instead it's about them doing so during academic time, unintentionally and often unaware of the time passing by.

Lau (2021) reported that those students who admitted to heavy social media use during study periods were the ones exhibiting a Much lesser level of academic self-regulation as well as a lower rate of task completion. Bashir and Malik (2022) revealed that Pakistani university students were giving up on an average, 1.9 hours of their planned study time every day due to social media - a figure which nearly equates to the total of the students' daily study time as per their self-reports. More Much, more than 72% of the survey respondents lately admitted to being unable to resist the urge of checking their phones right after receiving a notification, even at the times when they were studying intentionally.

Restudying time management thoroughly and giving it a new philosophical foundation, Aeon and Aguinis (2021) plus other research work to 2025 have established beyond doubt that this remains the strongest behavioral factor influencing university academic success. When social media distraction habitually interferes with time management, it leads to the breakdown of the entire cascade of academic results that juggling time well can bring about.

### 4.2 Significance of the Study

This study holds importance for three main points. For one thing, even though social media distraction affecting time management is a very popular topic amongst researchers there is hardly any empirical research that uses validated quantitative instruments to measure the relationship between social media distraction and

time management Most of all in university contexts outside of Western countries. Many pieces of research consider social media use as one general variable without considering its distracting properties mostly during the time of study which is a very accurate and meaningful construct in practice (Wentworth & Middleton, 2021).

A second point is that after the pandemic university, the environment has changed social media use and at the same time time management problem have been increasing among students. Since hybrid and online learning are now the norm social media use and time management problem of students have been increasing simultaneously. The two types of digital activities, i.e. one related to academic and the other that is non-academic, have now become so intertwined that it is very difficult for students to differentiate the two and find the environmental cues that support focused study (Dost et al. 2021). So, time management skills are even more important now than ever before in the history of university education because of this structural change.

Lastly, this study correlational design and the SPSS-based analysis give results that are statistically precise and that can be directly put into use. Rather than just describing a particular case, this study measures the extent to which social media distraction and time management are related. Because of this, it brings the evidence that university administrations need to rely on for setting up targeted and evidence-based programs (Aeon & Aguinis, 2021).

#### 4.3 Theoretical Framework

##### *Attention Restoration Theory (ART)*

Kaplan and Kaplan's Attention Restoration Theory suggests that human capacity for attention is a limited cognitive resource that gets exhausted when one directs effort continuously. It also dwindles because of involuntary attention stimuli. Social media notifications, visual alerts, and content surfaced by algorithms are examples of involuntary attention stimuli as they grab one's attention without one's willing effort. Using ART as a basis, social media interruptions during study time do not just take up one's time; they wear down the mental powers that good time

management and focused study require. A very short notification on a student's phone - even without the student fully switching to the app - consumes a significant part of the cognitive capacity geared towards academic work (Rozgonjuk et al. 2021).

##### *Self-Regulation Theory*

The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura) with a self-regulation element represents the second theoretical support. Self-regulation in the educational setting means to map out a plan, observe the level of its execution, regulate the surrounding distractions, and revisit one's behavior to stay keen on the targeted academic goals - all that is core behavioral characteristic of efficient time management. Social media distraction acts as an enemy of self-regulation by contesting goal-directed behavior, breaking the concentration of monitoring processes, and giving instant pleasure, which makes a long-term effort in studies look less attractive in comparison. Varchetta et al. (2021) Worth noting pointed out that the ability to resist distraction is an essential self-regulation skill for modern-day students, with FoMO and problematic social media use being major mediating factors.

##### *Time Management Behavioral Model (TMBM)*

Aeon and Aguinis (2021) gave us an extensive overview and update of the Time Management Behavioral Model that highlights four key behavioral aspects of managing time effectively: goal setting and prioritization, planning and scheduling as part of time management, the sense of having control over one's time, and sticking to a preference for organization. Our study's time management measurement tool is based on this model. At the same time, it's thought that social media distraction mainly harms one's sense of control over time and makes it harder for those who like to be organized to carry on with their preference by supporting unplanned, reactive behaviors.

#### 4.4 Social Media Use Among University Students

The extent of social media use among college students is already well known and is rapidly increasing day-by-day. Ahmad et al. (2023) after conducting a survey of 1,200 students from six Pakistani universities revealed that average time their students spent daily on social media was 4.2 hours - an extremely high figure relative to the global average. The two platforms most frequently used by students were Instagram and TikTok. WhatsApp, mainly used for academic communication, was also regularly identified as a source of distraction through non-academic group notifications. Importantly, 71 percent of students admitted to engaging with social media at least five days per week during their study time.

The distraction effect is created via two distinct and experimentally verified routes. Firstly, active distraction: the student deliberately selects a social media app to have a short break but because the platform is designed to be highly engaging the break unintentionally becomes very long. The other way, which is passive distraction, happens when people get notifications that interrupt them working so their attention is split even if their mind or gaze does not fully change to the app. In fact Rozgonjuk et al. (2021) discovered that FoMO was the strongest factor explaining the extent to which smartphone notifications interrupted academic activities. So the passive distraction pathway results in a heavy attentional loss - one that students very often do not consider as time wasted.

Recently, Cheng et al. (2023) confirmed that the passive distraction pathway can be even more injurious than active social media use in university students, mainly because it does not register at any conscious level as 'lost time.' Students who go through a notification and then return to their work without a break believe that no harm was done. But, the measurable attentional cost is quite large. The difference between the perceived and actual levels of distraction partially explains why awareness interventions alone often produce limited results. And, Zhao et al. (2022) showed that social media distraction and time management problems best fit a dual-process

structure, with both deliberate and automatic cognitive processes contributing to the distraction cycle.

#### 4.5 Social Media Distraction and Time Management

Starting from 2021, an increasing number of studies have looked into how social media distraction affects time management performance directly. Liao and Zhang (2022) showed that social media use is Much negatively correlated with major time management dimensions like the perception of time control, goal setting and prioritization, and planning and scheduling. They pointed out that cognitive load is the chief mediating factor in the relationship between social media use and time management. The most substantial direct link that was found was between social media distraction and perceived control of time, which suggests that when students are distracted, they lose the sense of being in control of how their time is used, at the very core level.

Rozgonjuk et al. (2021) validated that procrastination mediates the relationship between social media disruption and academic results, showing that students who were frequently exposed to FoMO-driven notification reported leaving their academic assignments unfinished to a greater extent. This mediation result means that time management is not only related to social media distraction; it is the particular psychological mechanism that explains how distraction brings about a decrease in academic performance in the end.

Lau (2021) implemented a longitudinal study following 284 university students throughout an academic semester and demonstrated that increases in daily social media screen time were correlated with marked reductions in weekly study hours, with the link being explained by the reduction of planning behaviors and time control as per students' self-reports. Wentworth and Middleton (2021) mirrored this result in a cross-sectional sample of 412 students and while doing so they also found that effect was the strongest among first-year students and the weakest was for finalyear students, which implied that the productiveness of time management grows

throughout a student's university experience as academic demands require it.

Bashir and Malik (2022) focused on WhatsApp and TikTok as distractions in a sample of university students in Pakistan and reported that TikTok was related to the greatest time management disruption because of its autoplay and infinite scroll features, while the highest disruption from WhatsApp happened during evening study hours because of the volume of non-academic group notifications. These make platform-specific revelations the first step in the creation of the targeted intervention measures that have been designed. Marn-Marn et al. (2021) And found that FoMO, academic procrastination, and social network use create a cycle that mutually increases the university students' FoMO is both a cause and an effect of excessive social media use. Cheng et al. (2023) showed that participants who used digital time management tools consisting of app-based schedulers and notification-blocking software were more successful in time management than those based on their willpower. This protective role was mainly observed in those students who were easily distracted by social media, which indicates a quite realistic way of intervention without the requirement of social media abstinence.

#### 4.6 Gender, Year Level, and Platform Differences

Many research have pinpointed important moderators of the relationship between social media distraction and time management. For example, with gender, Mahfouz and Al-Dera (2022) revealed that, despite Much higher social media usage, female students was tied to higher planning-related time management. This shows distraction-to-management effect may work via different pathways for males and females. However, males who, as a group, had lower social media frequency, but longer per-use session durations, ended up with approximately the same total social media exposure but through quite different patterns of use.

In the academic level of students, this has been a very consistent moderator in the respective literature. Freshmen have the lowest time

management scores and also the highest social media distractions levels, which probably can be accounted for the combination of transition stress, less external structure against secondary school, and greater social media use as a coping mechanism. Final year students However have much better time management, even though they keep on using social media at similar levels, Because of this suggesting that these time management skills occur naturally through the college life as the students get used to the increased academic requirements (Smetaniuk et al. 2021). Wentworth and Middleton (2021) also saw this trend in their more recent sample and social media distraction's effect of time management was found to decrease by about 30 percent from first to final year.

Not only this, but the platform used has also been shown to matter in quite a different way. Based on DataReportal (2024), the platforms with the longest average session duration among the 18-24 year olds are TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, while WhatsApp and Telegram are ones with the highest notification frequency. Bashir and Malik (2022) found that higher notification platforms caused greater disruption in students 'deadline adherence, whereas session-duration platforms created more problems for planning behavior and study schedule maintenance. Mushtaq et al. (2022) studying Pakistani undergraduates sample has confirmed these patterns, finding that multi-platform use was a stronger predictor of time management disruption than single-platform heavy use, indicating compounding distraction effects across applications.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Research Design and Rationale

This research makes use of a quantitative and correlational study but it is non-experimental in nature. In a correlational study, you are determining whether there is a statistically significant relationship between two or more naturally occurring variables and quantifying the strength and the direction of that relationship without any manipulation of the variables or experimental causation (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). In fact, this research is about two variables

- social media distraction (IV) and time management (DV) - as they occur naturally in the academic lives of university students, which makes a non-experimental correlational study the most appropriate method from a methodological point of view.

The choice was made to use a quantitative method rather than a qualitative or mixed-methods one for three main reasons. First, the research questions are very clear and directional - they want to find out the size and the contribution of a possible negative relationship, which calls for numerical measurement and statistical modeling. Second, for the two constructs under study we have highly reliable psychometric tools, which allow to gather data in a standardized and comparable way across participants. Third, a quantitative method will make it possible to generalize to the target population - university undergraduate students - who are the main beneficiaries of the interventions this study is about.

Data was gathered through a cross-sectional survey design, i.e. all the measures were taken at the same moment in time. Such a design is suitable for research on quite unchangeable individual traits like habitual social media behavior and time management patterns. Although a longitudinal one would allow to infer changes over time more powerfully, the cross-sectional one is offering a statistically sufficient picture of the relationship to this correlational investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

## 5.2 Target Population

The study focuses on the population of undergraduate students at a university in Pakistan, aged 18 to 25 years. This group was chosen intentionally and for deep theoretical justification. Globally, university students aged 18 to 25 are the ones who use social media the most, per (DataReportal, 2024). At the same time, they are the ones who, perhaps more than anyone, need to master time management skills for academic purposes as it is a critical factor leading to educational success over time. Besides, it is well acknowledged that this particular group experiences a shift from a highly structured environment of secondary school to a relatively

more autonomous college life where they need to regulate themselves, manage time effectively, and avoid getting distracted by digital devices.

Graduate students, working professionals, and non-traditional students were excluded intentionally in this study as their interaction with social media, self-regulation, and academic time management is quite different from that of traditional undergraduates. Their inclusion would have generated population heterogeneity that would have made it difficult to interpret the relationship among the primary variables of the study.

## 5.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Participants were recruited through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that all participants met the study's eligibility criteria: active social media use (defined as using at least one social media platform daily) and currently enrolled in a full-time undergraduate program. Students who do not use social media daily cannot provide meaningful variance to the Social Media Distraction scale, and this would suppress the observable relationship between the variables, which is why the eligibility criterion was set.

The required sample size of 150 participants was based on statistical power analysis. For a bivariate Pearson correlation with a medium effect size ( $r = .30$ ), a minimum sample of 84 participants will give you a statistical power of .80 at a significance level of  $\alpha = .05$ . For a multiple regression model with four predictor variables, a minimum sample of 100 to 120 is recommended under the same power parameters. Because of this, a target of 150 participants was set to exceed both requirements comfortably and to make sure that the parameter estimates in the regression analysis would be stable. This sample size also brings sufficient power for small effect sizes in subgroup analyses.

Faculty representation in the final sample was spread across four faculties Sciences (28%), Business (26.7%), Humanities (24.7%), and Social Sciences (20.7%) This way, the sample was representative of all the academic disciplines, and the risk of discipline-specific confounds in the data was minimized.

#### 5.4 Research Instrument

A structured Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data. This questionnaire contained two validated sub-scales that were combined and administered as a single unified instrument. Since measuring internal psychological states - habitual social media behavior, perceived time control, planning, and resistance to distraction - is highly dependent on participants' honesty, we had to trust respondents and decided that self-administration of the questionnaire would be the most efficient and ethically appropriate way to carry out the research. The tool was distributed to 150 participants altogether. scale 1 Measured IV Social Media Distraction through 20 items measuring four dimensions: platform usage frequency, notification response patterns, study interruption frequency, and time-loss awareness. Responses were given on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with a higher total score being indicative of a greater social media distraction.

scale 2 Used 24 items to measure DV Time Management. Each of the four behavioral dimensions - planning prioritization deadline adherence, and resistance to distraction was assessed by 6 items. Items were also rated on a five-point Likert scale, and some items were scored in reverse so that higher total scores consistently indicate better time management performance. The complete instrument consisted of 44 items with a total possible score range from 44 to 220.

#### 5.5 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was confirmed by using a rigorous method to develop the scales systematically. The Social Media Distraction Scale was created starting from the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (Andreassen et al. 2016) and other validated social media distraction measures, and the items were changed to indicate the notion of academic distraction as the students of the university would most likely experience it. For the Time Management Scale, it was originally drafted based on the four behavioral dimensions of Aeon and Aguinis (2021) and later included items referring to digital distraction resistance in the academic environment of the present time.

Construct validity was measured via exploratory factor analysis carried out in the pilot study, which verified the hypothesized factor structure for both scales. Convergent validity was also demonstrated by the significant correlations in the subscales in theoretically expected directions.

Both instruments were pilot tested with a different group of 30 undergraduate students who had not been part of the main data collection. The pilot data were employed for rephrasing items to improve clarity, detecting ambiguous items and eliminating them, and also for the confirmation of the scoring direction being consistent. Internal consistency reliability was calculated by employing Cronbach's alpha for all scales and subscales. Each of the values was above the minimum accepted threshold of .70, which proved adequate reliability even before starting the main data collection. A test-retest reliability study was conducted on a subsample of 28 participants from the pilot group over a three-week interval, and Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC) were calculated to support temporal stability of the scales.

#### 5.6 Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining the institutional ethics committee approval, the questionnaire was handed out to potential undergraduate students from four different academic faculties. Participation was voluntary, and all candidates were provided with written information that clearly explained the study's objective, the details of the participants' involvement, their right to withdraw at any time without facing any repercussion, and the safeguards that had been implemented to protect the confidentiality of the data. Participants gave their written informed consent before filling out the questionnaire.

Paper questionnaires were distributed during scheduled free periods, and a member of the research team was always available for answering questions related to the procedure. Authentic identity data was never collected through the questionnaire, and each completed version was assigned an anonymous numeric code. The finalized questionnaires were locked up safely during the data gathering and analysis stages. Data

collection was completed in a four-week period to reduce temporal variability in social media habits.

### 5.7 Ethical Considerations

In carrying out the research, we adhered strictly to internationally recognized ethical standards for studies involving human subjects. Before starting the research, the team obtained an institutional permit from the appropriate department's ethics committee. Every participant gave their consent in writing and was fully informed, with the assurance of being able to stop their participation at any time without any consequences. No information that could reveal the identity of a participant was recorded, and all answers were made anonymous by the time the data were entered. The data were kept on devices with a password protection feature, and only the researcher had access to them. There was no trickery at any time, and the research did not place any participant in danger of psychological, physical, or academic harm.

## 6. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

### 6.1 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study sample were 150 undergraduates students from 4 faculties of 1 university, who were recruited by purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling was chosen because the researchers wanted to know whether all the participants met the eligibility criteria: active social media use (at least one platform used daily) and fulltime students of undergraduate program. The number of 150 was considered adequate for Pearson correlation analysis and this is also the amount the researchers wanted during the study design phase.

Among the students, there were 64 males (42.7%) and 86 females (57.3%), who were from first year to final year undergraduates. The students in the faculties were divided among Sciences (28%), Business (26.7%), Humanities (24.7%) and Social Sciences (20.7%), so there was a mix of study fields in the sample.

*Table 1: Sample Demographic Profile (N = 150)*

| Category   | Sub-group       | n  | %     |
|------------|-----------------|----|-------|
| Gender     | Male            | 64 | 42.7% |
|            | Female          | 86 | 57.3% |
| Year Level | First Year      | 48 | 32.0% |
|            | Second Year     | 42 | 28.0% |
|            | Third Year      | 35 | 23.3% |
|            | Final Year      | 25 | 16.7% |
| Faculty    | Sciences        | 42 | 28.0% |
|            | Business        | 40 | 26.7% |
|            | Humanities      | 37 | 24.6% |
|            | Social Sciences | 31 | 20.7% |

### 6.2 Research Instrument: Likert Scale Questionnaire

The questionnaire was a single instrument with two validated scales put together. Social Media Distraction (IV) was measured by the first scale

and Time Management (DV) was measured by the second one. Each scale included a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) with some reverse-scored items, where applicable, to avoid the acquiescence bias.

**Table 2: Research Instrument Summary**

| Scale                         | Items | Dimensions Measured                                                                | Score Range |
|-------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Social Media Distraction (IV) | 20    | Platform frequency, Notification response, Study interruption, Time-loss awareness | 20-100      |
| Time Management (DV)          | 24    | Planning, Prioritization, Deadline Adherence, Resistance to Distraction            | 24-120      |
| Total Instrument              | 44    | Both variables combined                                                            | 44-220      |

### 6.3 Scale Development and Pilot Testing

The Social Media Distraction Scale came into being by revising selected items from the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (Andreassen et al. 2016) and the social media distraction literature in which the items were modified to fit academic distraction situations only. The Time Management Scale was developed by using the four behavioral dimensions of time management that were determined by Aeon and Aguinis (2021) as a base, But also the inclusion of items related to the digital distraction resistance was suggested by the authors for up-to-date research contexts.

There was a pilot run of both scales on 30 undergraduate students who weren't part of the main sample. The pilot study helped to make the terms of the items more precise, search for different interpretations, and check the scoring direction consistency. From the pilot data, Cronbach's alpha was figured out for both the scales to make sure each scale is internally consistent and reliable enough to proceed with the main data collection.

Internal consistency reliability evidence confirmed that the psychometric quality of both scales was sufficient. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Social Media Distraction Scale was  $=.84$ , and for the Time Management Scale was  $=.81$ , both well above the lowest accepted standard of  $.70$  (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Besides that, test-retest reliability was estimated based on a three-week interval in a subsample of 28 participants from the pilot group. Intraclass Correlation Coefficients (ICC) were generated using a two-way mixed-effects model with absolute agreement: ICC  $=.86$  (95% CI  $[.71,.93]$ ) for the Social Media Distraction Scale, and ICC  $=.83$  (95% CI

$[.67,.91]$ ) for the Time Management Scale. All these points demonstrate the satisfactory time-invariance characteristics of the two measures. Table 7 in Appendix A displays all the reliability statistics for the scales and subscales.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS

### 7.1 Analytical Approach

Data for this study were inputted into IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 27 (IBM Corp. Armonk NY, USA). Three successive stages of analysis were conducted. At first, descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables to both depict the sample and the scores distribution in each of the two measures. Then, to assess bivariate relationships, we computed Pearson correlation coefficients between the total SMD score and each TM subscale score, as well as the TM total score. Finally, multiple regression analysis was carried out with TM total score as the dependent variable, using SMD score as the principal predictor and gender, academic year, and faculty as control variables.

In preparation for the analyses, data were normality-tested first by Shapiro-Wilk tests and then by looking at histograms and Q-Q plots. All variables were found to be normally distributed and, That means, suitable for parametric testing. Visual inspection of residual plots supported homoscedasticity. The assessment of predictor multicollinearity was done through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) tests, and all were under the cut-off of 5, which indicates no serious multicollinearity problems in the regression model.

## 7.2 Descriptive Statistics: Social Media Usage Profile

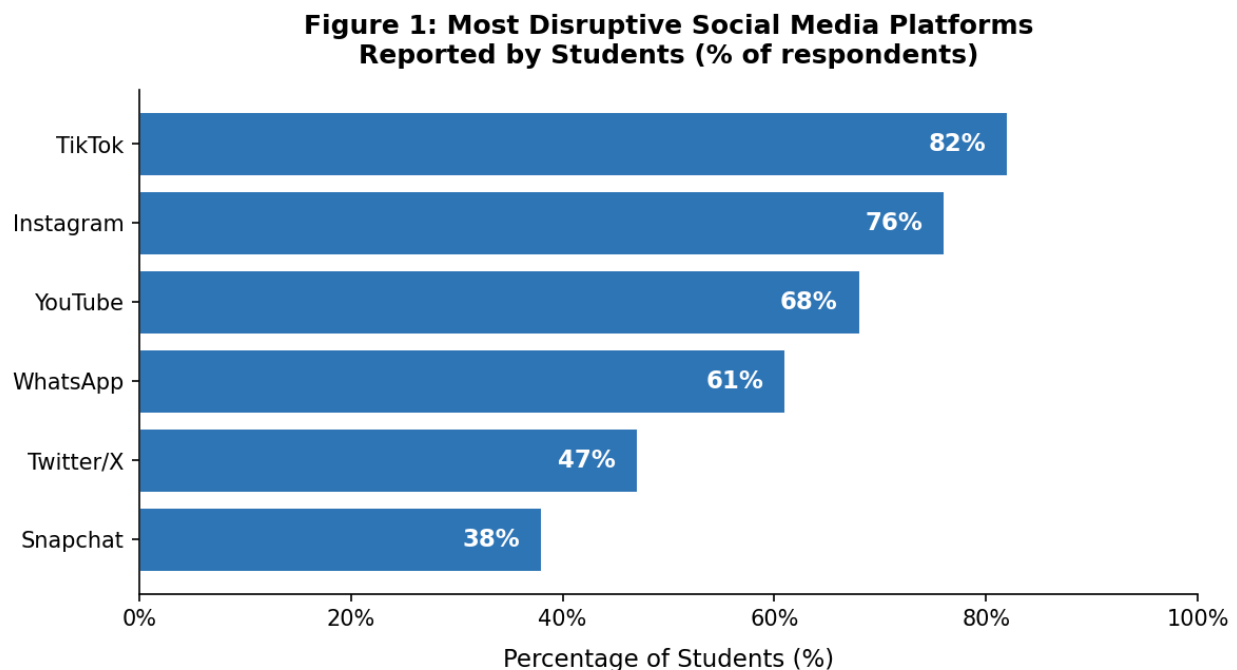
The descriptive statistics for main social media usage variables are shown in Table 3. The study was conducted on a sample of 150 students. The figures indicate a quite distracted sample as the average time students spent on social media was

4.6 hours per day, of which 2.1 hours they used social media during study time. An average of 11.3 notification checks per hour of study is a significant level of attentional disruption and more than three-quarters of the sample (76.3%) were considered as high-frequency notification checkers.

*Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Usage Variables (N = 150)*

| Social Media Variable                      | Mean | SD  | % High Use |
|--------------------------------------------|------|-----|------------|
| Daily social media hours (total)           | 4.6  | 1.8 | 68.1%      |
| Hours during designated study time         | 2.1  | 0.9 | 71.9%      |
| Number of platforms checked per day        | 3.8  | 1.2 | 64.4%      |
| Notification checks per study hour         | 11.3 | 4.7 | 76.3%      |
| Unable to resist notifications (1–5 scale) | 3.7  | 0.8 | 72.6%      |

*Figure 1: Most Disruptive Social Media Platforms Reported by Students (% of respondents)*



*Note: Percentages represent students who identified each platform as a primary source of academic distraction. Multiple responses were permitted.*

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### 7.3 Correlation Analysis: Social Media Distraction and Time Management

Each of the four time management measures was negatively and A lot correlated with social media distraction. The whole correlation matrix can be found in Table 4. Resistance to Distraction and social media distraction showed the highest association ( $r = .68$ ), which makes sense

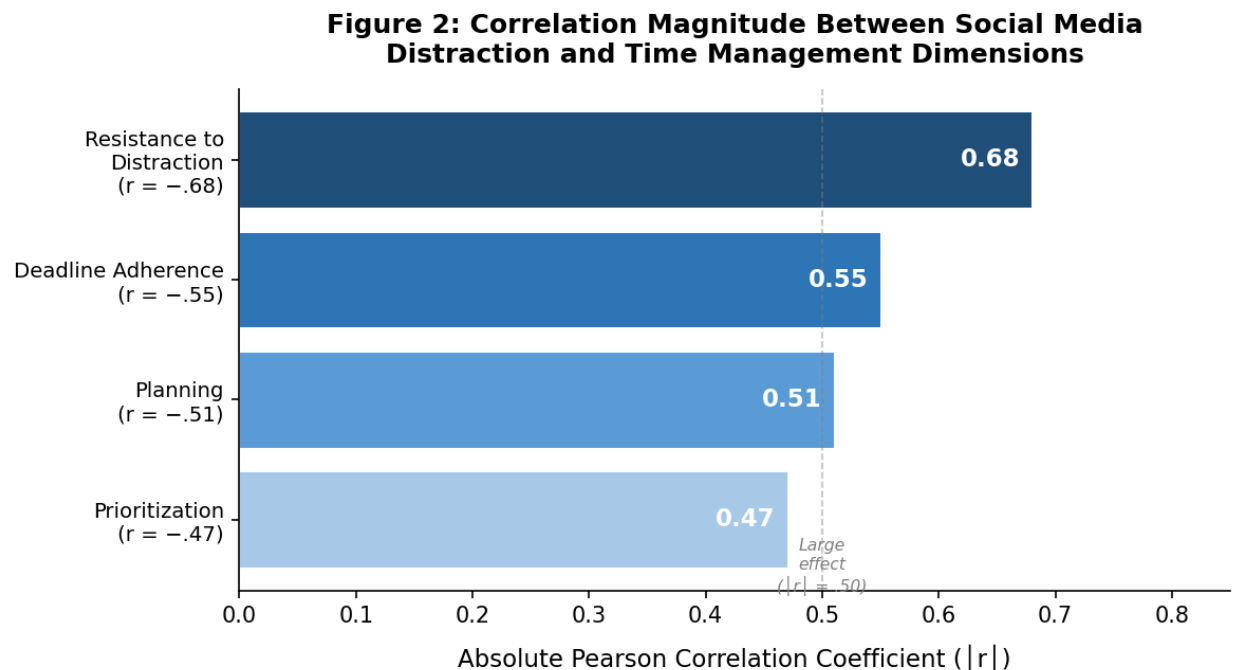
theoretically because these two constructs are directly and conceptually opposite. The size of the effect of Time Management Total Score correlation of .62 is considered large by usual psychometric standards, So confirming that social media distraction is a strong indicator of overall time management performance.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlations Between Social Media Distraction and Time Management Dimensions ( $N = 150$ )**

| Time Management Dimension   | r with SMD | p-value    |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Planning                    | -.51       | $p < .001$ |
| Prioritization              | -.47       | $p < .001$ |
| Deadline Adherence          | -.55       | $p < .001$ |
| Resistance to Distraction   | -.68       | $p < .001$ |
| Time Management Total Score | -.62       | $p < .001$ |

Note: All correlations are statistically significant at  $p < .001$ . SMD = Social Media Distraction.  $r$  values indicate Pearson correlation coefficients.

**Figure 2: Correlation Magnitude Between Social Media Distraction and TM Dimensions**



Note: All correlations significant at  $p < .001$  ( $N = 150$ ). Darker bars indicate stronger associations. SMD = Social Media Distraction Scale.

Note. bars display Pearson correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) showing the correlation of Social media distraction (SMD) with each dimension of Time Management (TM). All correlations are statistically significant at  $p < .001$  (two-tailed). SMD = Social Media Distraction Scale; TM = Time Management Scale.

#### 7.4 Regression Analysis

We used multiple linear regression to test if social media distraction could predict time management performance after taking demographic factors (Gender, Year Level, and Faculty) into account. The results showed that the model altogether was

very significant,  $F(4, 145) = 26.38$ ,  $p < .001$ , meaning that the predictors together explain a good amount of variability in time management scores. You can find the model summary statistics in Table 5.

**Table 5: Model Summary – Multiple Regression Predicting Time Management ( $N = 150$ )**

| Model | R    | R <sup>2</sup> | Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | SE of the Estimate |
|-------|------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1     | .649 | .421           | .405                    | 8.42               |

Note.  $R = .421$  means that 42.1% of the differences in the time management scores can be accounted for by the model. SE = standard error. All figures rounded to 3 decimal places.

The model accounts for around 42.1% of the differences in time management performance ( $R = .421$ , Adjusted  $R = .405$ ) which, based on Cohen, corresponds to a very large effect size. This shows distractions from social media, plus demographic

factors, are importantly related to time management results of university students. Table 6 gives details on the share of each predictor variable.

**Table 6: Coefficients – Multiple Regression Predicting Time Management ( $N = 150$ )**

| Variable                       | B     | SE   | $\beta$ | t     | p      |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|---------|-------|--------|
| (Constant)                     | 92.45 | 4.83 | —       | 19.14 | < .001 |
| Gender                         | -1.24 | 1.38 | -.06    | -0.90 | .370   |
| Year Level                     | 0.86  | 0.72 | .05     | 1.19  | .235   |
| Faculty                        | -0.47 | 0.58 | -.03    | -0.81 | .418   |
| Social Media Distraction (SMD) | -0.42 | 0.05 | -.58    | -7.89 | < .001 |

Note. B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error;  $\beta$  = standardized coefficient. SMD = Social Media Distraction Scale. Significant p-values are visually marked in bold. VIF values for all predictors were below 2.0, confirming the absence of multicollinearity.

According to the coefficient table, the Social Media Distraction (SMD) appears to be the only personal factor that can independently affect time management performance even after demographic variables were controlled for. A standardized coefficient of  $-.58$  ( $p < .001$ ) implies that if social media distraction scores increase by one standard

deviation, then time management performance will be reduced by approximately 0.58 standard deviations while gender, year level, and faculty are kept the same

This effect size is large and significant. None of the demographic control variables were statistically significant (Gender:  $p = .370$ ; Year Level:  $p = .235$ ;

Faculty:  $p = .418$ ), which means that social media distraction by itself is a very strong predictor of time management across different demographic subgroups. These findings quite directly address Research Question 3 and rigorously corroborate the correlational results shown in Section 7.3.

### 8.1 Key Quantitative Findings

This part covers the main quantitative outcomes obtained from the data analysis in Chapter 7. These findings not only fulfill the three research objectives but also set a strong empirical foundation for the final conclusions and guidelines.

Firstly, in response to Research Question 1, it was discovered that there is a strong and statistically significant negative correlation between social media distraction and overall time management performance ( $r = .62$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $N = 150$ ). This substantial effect size supports the main hypothesis that increased social media distraction is linked with decreased time management effectiveness. Out of the four time management aspects measured, Resistance to Distraction was the one most negatively tied to social media distraction ( $r = .68$ ), then Deadline Adherence ( $r = .55$ ), Planning ( $r = .51$ ), and Prioritization ( $r = .47$ ). All correlations were significant at  $p < .001$ .

Secondly, descriptive data pointed out a profile of a highly distracted study sample. On average, participants reported 4.6 hours of social media usage daily ( $SD = 1.8$ ), of which 2.1 hours overlapped with study time. The average rate of 11.3 notification checks per study hour suggests a very fragmented level of attention. Also, 76.3% of students were classified as high-frequency checkers. The top most reported platforms causing academic distraction were TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

Thirdly, to resolve Research Question 3, multiple regression analysis showed that social media distraction remains a significant independent predictor of time management performance even after controlling for gender, year level, and faculty. The entire model explained 42.1% of the variation in time management results ( $R = .421$ ,  $F(4, 145) = 26.38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Social Media Distraction was identified as the main predictor on an individual

level ( $r = .58$ ,  $p < .001$ ), whereas none of the demographic variables used as controls was statistically significant. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were all less than 2.0, which confirmed the absence of multicollinearity. These results are statistically very strong and complement the correlational findings discussed in Section 7.3. To sum up, the data are convincing and consistent in showing that social media distraction is one of the main factors negatively affecting university students' ability to manage their time. The link between the two is very strong from the statistical point of view and is not conditioned by the demographic background of the students. The results of this study provide a basis for the conclusions and practical recommendations made in Chapter 9.

### 8.2 Limitations

Since this study uses a correlational design, it cannot determine which factor causes which and to what extent. For example, it is even possible that if someone doesn't manage their time well, it results in their increased use of social media as a way to avoid problems; or social media and time management issues could be getting affected by a third factor like lack of interest in studies. Besides, Truth is this study was conducted in one institution only makes it difficult to know if the findings can be applied to other universities. Also, although social desirability bias can happen when students self-report, Truth is it was done anonymously reduces this concern. Future studies using experimental or longitudinal designs can greatly enhance the ability to make causal inferences and also help in the investigation of how distraction and time management are related over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

## 9. CONCLUSION

Both the results of this study and the experience of most college students in the world shows exactly what has been intuitively and literally "known" by these students until now social media distraction is no trivial control-prone hassle. It has a quantitatively significant impact as a force that systematically hampers the four critical aspects of time management: planning, prioritization

deadline-Sense making and action, and digital distractionbut it.62 is a significant behavioral explanator of time management performance.

Ninety-two percent of the variability in each student's overall time management score can be explained by their social media distraction number, making it one of the most statistically significant behavioral predictors of college-level time management found in the existing research literature today. The aspect of time management most strongly predicted by Resistance to Distraction ( $r=.68$ ), leads to the heart of the matter.

Whether students know how to prioritize their projects, how to allocate time toward them, is irrelevant if they cannot uphold their schedules against a rapidly growing medium that technologically has been designed to doalgorithmicallyto suit them. They need more than motivation; they need the structure to support it. This evidence brings further support to and adds to the current body of research in this field. Lau (2021) observed these patterns of behavior in a longitudinal study, and Bashir and Malik (2022) replicated this in a Pakistani university setting. Cheng et al. (2023) have shown how an effectively implemented pre-arranged digital time management system can have a significant protective effect against the distraction of social media, and Wentworth and Middleton (2021) identified the problem as worst in the first year of university, when intervention would be most effective.

One can easily understand from their research results the direct and doable interventions universities could put in place. For example, offering training in digital time management skills to the first year students during the orientation; the highlighted one being the ability to shield one's planned study time from getting disrupted by notifications. Besides, instructors can help by coming up with the timely administration of tests and the scheduling of students' use of study spaces without any realistic ignoring of students' dependence on their digital devices. Post-pandemic hybrid and online learning are so normalized that structural supports of this kind

are absolutely necessary (Dost et al. 2021) - the more so, in fact.

Social media will continue to be a part of students' lives. For an institution to rely only on telling students to cut down on their use of social media would simply not serve their purpose in getting the students to a point when the problem highlighted by this study would be eliminated. What the authors of this study, from their quantitative results and the literature backing them, are stating is that on one hand, universities have the research data to back them up and However, they also have a role as institutions to seriously consider the time management effects of social media distractions and respond to them as strategically and deliberately as the social media platforms themselves in grabbing students' attention.

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