



SOCIAL MEDIA PREDISPOSITION AND ACADEMIC WELLNESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A VARIABLE CENTRIC APPROACH UNDER KOHIMA DISTRICT

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Abstract

The present study entitled “*Social Media Predisposition and Academic Wellness Among Secondary Students: A Variable Centric Approach Under Kohima District*” was conducted to examine the relationship between social media usage and academic wellness among secondary school students in Kohima District, Nagaland. In today’s digital age, social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, and YouTube have become an important part of students’ daily lives. These platforms are widely used for communication, entertainment, information sharing, and educational purposes. While social media provides several opportunities for learning and interaction, excessive and uncontrolled use may also affect students’ academic performance, concentration, motivation, emotional balance, and overall academic wellness. Therefore, the study aimed to understand how social media predisposition influences the academic wellness of secondary school students.

A quantitative research approach was adopted for the study, and the descriptive survey method was used to collect data. The population of the study consisted of secondary school students of Kohima District during the academic session 2025–2026. A sample of 100 students was selected through random sampling technique from five different schools, including both government and private institutions. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire included different dimensions related to social media usage patterns, behavioural dependency, academic interference, social comparison, self-esteem, and psychological well-being. The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical methods to identify patterns, differences, and relationships among the variables.

The findings of the study revealed that social media has both positive and negative influences on students' academic wellness. Moderate and purposeful use of social media supported communication, access to educational information, and peer learning. However, excessive use was found to affect students' concentration, study habits, time management, sleep patterns, and classroom engagement. Many students reported that prolonged use of social media created distraction and reduced their focus on academic activities. The study also found differences between male and female students as well as between government and private school students in terms of social media predisposition and academic wellness. The study concluded that social media itself is not entirely harmful or beneficial; rather, its impact depends on the way students use it. Responsible and balanced use of social media can contribute positively to academic learning and communication, while uncontrolled usage may negatively influence academic wellness and emotional well-being. Overall, the study contributes to a better understanding of the relationship between social media predisposition and academic wellness among secondary school students in Kohima District. The findings may be useful for educators, parents, researchers, and policymakers in promoting responsible social media practices and supporting students' academic and psychological well-being in an increasingly digital society.

Keywords: *Social Media Predisposition, behavioural dependency, academic interference, social comparison, self-esteem, psychological well-being.*

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of students' everyday lives in today's digital age. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Telegram, WhatsApp, and YouTube have significantly reshaped the ways in which young people communicate, learn, and express themselves. For secondary students in Kohima District, social media is no longer used only for entertainment or social interaction; it has also become an important space for sharing academic information, accessing learning materials, and staying connected with peers and teachers (Pew Research Centre, 2022). While these platforms offer many benefits, their growing presence in students' daily routines has also raised concerns about their influence on psychological health, study habits, and overall academic well-being (Twenge, 2019).

Adolescence is a crucial stage of development marked by rapid emotional, cognitive, and social changes. During this period, students are especially sensitive to external influences, including digital media and online social environments (Erikson, 1968). Social media, in particular, plays a powerful role in shaping how young people see themselves and others. When used excessively, it can affect concentration, time management, and study routines. Continuous exposure to curated online content, peer comparison, and the pressure to gain likes or approval may lead to stress, anxiety, reduced self-esteem, and distraction from academic responsibilities (Appel et al., 2020; Keles et al., 2020). At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that social media can also serve as a positive tool when used purposefully, offering access to educational content, group discussions, and collaborative learning opportunities that support academic growth.

The concept of "social media predisposition" refers to an individual's tendency to engage with and form a psychological attachment to social networking platforms. This tendency varies from student to student and can influence academic well-being in both constructive and harmful ways. Academic well-being includes

not only academic performance but also emotional balance, motivation to learn, ability to handle academic pressure, and overall satisfaction with school life. As highlighted by Abi-Jaoude et al. (2020), excessive or uncontrolled use of social media can contribute to reduced productivity, disrupted sleep patterns, emotional exhaustion, and difficulty maintaining focus on studies. However, when used in moderation and with intention, social media can enhance communication, encourage peer support, and strengthen academic engagement.

In the context of Kohima District, where traditional values, close family relationships, and strong community ties continue to play an important role, the influence of digital culture brings both opportunities and challenges. Many students today find themselves balancing two worlds the physical world of family, school, and community, and the digital world of online interactions and virtual identities. This constant switching between real-life responsibilities and online engagement can sometimes affect their priorities, relationships, and emotional resilience (Bhattacharya & Basu, 2021). As a result, some students may struggle to maintain a healthy balance between academic demands and social media use, which can gradually influence their overall academic well-being.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media refers to digital platforms and applications that allow people to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and content in virtual communities. Common examples include WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Telegram. These platforms have become an essential part of students' daily lives, influencing the way they communicate, learn, and spend their time. In the present digital era, students use social media not only for entertainment and social interaction but also for academic purposes. It provides easy access to educational videos, online classes, study materials, and peer discussions, which can support learning and improve understanding of various subjects. It also helps students stay connected with classmates and teachers, making communication faster and more convenient.

Social media has become a regular part of everyday life in India, especially among young people. With the availability of affordable smartphones and low-cost internet, access to platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Telegram has increased rapidly. Today, social media is not just a tool for communication, but also a major source of information, entertainment, and learning. India now has hundreds of millions of social media users, and the number continues to grow each year. Most people access these platforms through their mobile phones, making social media a constant presence in daily routines. On average, users spend a few hours each day on these apps, showing how deeply they are integrated into modern lifestyles.

NAGALAND (KOHIMA)

Nagaland is a landlocked state in Northeast India covering an area of about 16,579 sq. km. It is mostly mountainous, with hills, valleys, and limited plain areas, and shares borders with Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Myanmar. Kohima District, the capital district of Nagaland, known for its scenic hills, cultural richness, and historical importance, Kohima plays a significant role in the social and educational development of the state. Despite strong traditional foundations, the district has gradually embraced modernization and digital transformation. Education is an important aspect of Kohima's development, and the district has maintained a relatively high literacy rate compared to many other regions of India. Both government and

private higher secondary schools contribute to student development, while recent improvements in digital infrastructure, smartphone access, and internet connectivity have significantly influenced students' learning habits and communication patterns. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Snapchat are widely used by students for communication, entertainment, academic support, and self-expression, bringing both opportunities and challenges to their daily lives.

In this context, academic wellness has become an important concern, as it reflects students' ability to balance academic responsibilities with motivation, concentration, time management, and emotional well-being. In Kohima, the growing influence of social media combined with traditional community values has created a unique environment where students experience both cultural grounding and modern digital exposure. This dual influence may affect their study habits, attention span, sleep patterns, and academic performance. Therefore, Kohima District provides a relevant setting for examining the relationship between social media predisposition and academic wellness among higher secondary students, offering insights into how digital engagement shapes educational behaviour in a rapidly changing society.

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

- Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

The Self-Determination Theory, developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), explains that individuals need autonomy, competence, and relatedness to maintain motivation and well-being. Social media can support relatedness by helping students stay connected with peers, but excessive dependence on likes, comments, and online approval may weaken self-control and academic motivation. Students who rely heavily on digital validation may struggle to maintain healthy study habits and independent learning. In Kohima District, where community relationships are important, this theory helps explain how social media influences students' motivation, self-regulation, and academic wellness.

- Media Dependency Theory (Ball-Rokeach & De Fleur, 1976)

The Media Dependency Theory, proposed by Ball-Rokeach and De Fleur (1976), explains that the more individuals depend on media to satisfy their informational, emotional, and social needs, the greater the influence media has on their behaviour and attitudes. Secondary school students often rely on social media for communication, entertainment, academic information, and social interaction. As this dependency increases, students may become emotionally attached to online activities, making it difficult to manage time effectively or focus on academic responsibilities. Excessive reliance on social media may therefore lead to distraction, procrastination, and reduced academic wellness. In Kohima District, where digital connectivity is rapidly increasing, this theory helps explain how dependence on online platforms can influence students' academic behaviour and overall educational well-being.

- Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977)

The Social Learning Theory, proposed by Albert Bandura (1977), explains that individuals learn behaviours, attitudes, and habits through observation, imitation, and interaction with others. Through social media, students are continuously exposed to influencers, celebrities, peers, and online personalities whose behaviours they may observe and imitate. This exposure can have both positive and negative effects—

encouraging creativity and learning on one hand, while also promoting distraction, unhealthy routines, or poor academic discipline on the other. In Kohima District, where peer influence is particularly strong during adolescence, social media plays a significant role in shaping students' academic attitudes and social behaviour. Therefore, this theory is useful for understanding how online interactions influence students' academic wellness and behavioural choices.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In recent years, social media has become a major part of young people's lives, going far beyond simple communication. For many secondary school students, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram are spaces where they interact, share ideas, and build social connections. While these platforms provide opportunities for communication, creativity, and access to information, excessive or uncontrolled use can also influence students' academic wellness. Adolescence is a sensitive stage marked by emotional, cognitive, and social development, and the growing engagement with social media may affect concentration, study habits, classroom participation, and overall academic performance. Students often spend significant amounts of time online, which can reduce time devoted to learning activities, sleep, and healthy routines essential for academic success.

In Kohima District, this issue has a unique cultural and educational context. Traditionally, discipline, community support, and family guidance played an important role in shaping students' educational values. However, the rapid expansion of digital culture has introduced new patterns of behaviour and lifestyle among young people. Many students are now balancing traditional expectations of academic responsibility with the attractions and distractions of social media. Parents and teachers have observed concerns such as reduced attention span, procrastination, irregular study patterns, and dependency on online interactions, all of which may negatively influence academic wellness. At the same time, social media can also support learning through educational content, collaboration, and communication when used responsibly. Therefore, this study seeks to assess social media predisposition and its relationship with academic wellness among secondary school students in Kohima District through a variable-centric approach, while also considering the influence of family, school environment, and cultural values on students' academic experiences.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To categorize and evaluate the prevalence of social media predisposition and academic wellness among students across low, average, and high levels
2. To explore the differences between male and female learners based on social media disposition and academic wellness variables.
3. To investigate the differences between government and private school students based on social media disposition and academic wellness variable.

METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a **quantitative research approach**. The quantitative approach is suitable for the present investigation because the study seeks to assess measurable dimensions of social media predisposition and academic wellness among secondary school students. It also allows the researcher to identify correlations, trends, and differences among variables in an objective and scientific manner.

The study employs a **descriptive survey research design**. Descriptive research aims to describe the existing conditions, behaviours, and relationships among variables without manipulating them (Kothari, 2013). The **population** of the present study consists of all secondary school students studying in Classes IX and X in government and private schools of Kohima District, Nagaland, during the academic session 2025–2026.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher used **random sampling technique** to select participants from the target population. A total of 100 secondary school students were selected from five schools in Kohima District, including both government and private institutions. After data collection, responses were coded and entered into a statistical software program such as SPSS or Microsoft Excel for analysis. The following statistical techniques were used:

- Descriptive Statistics: Mean, standard deviation, and percentage will be calculated to describe social media usage patterns and levels of addiction.
- Inferential Statistics: t-test and ANOVA will be used to compare mean differences among groups based on gender or school type.
- Pearson's correlation coefficient will be used to determine the relationship between the extent of social media use and mental health indicators such as anxiety and depression.

OBJECTIVE WISE DATA INTERPRETATION

Objective 1: To categorize and evaluate the prevalence of social media predisposition and academic wellness among students across low, average, and high levels.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants by Different Levels.

Different Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Low	20	20.0%	20.0%
Average	21	21.0%	41.0%
High	59	59.0%	100.0%

- The primary objective was to assess the levels of social media predisposition and academic wellness among the participants. As demonstrated in Table 1, the descriptive analysis reveals a predominant trend towards the higher spectrum. Specifically, a significant majority of the respondents (59 %) demonstrated a high level of social media predisposition and academic wellness, followed by average (21 %) and low (20 %) levels. The cumulative percentage indicates that over 80 % of the sample falls within the average to high categories, suggesting a generally positive predisposition and academic wellness within the studied cohort.

Objective 2: To explore the differences between male and female learners based on social media predisposition and academic wellness variable

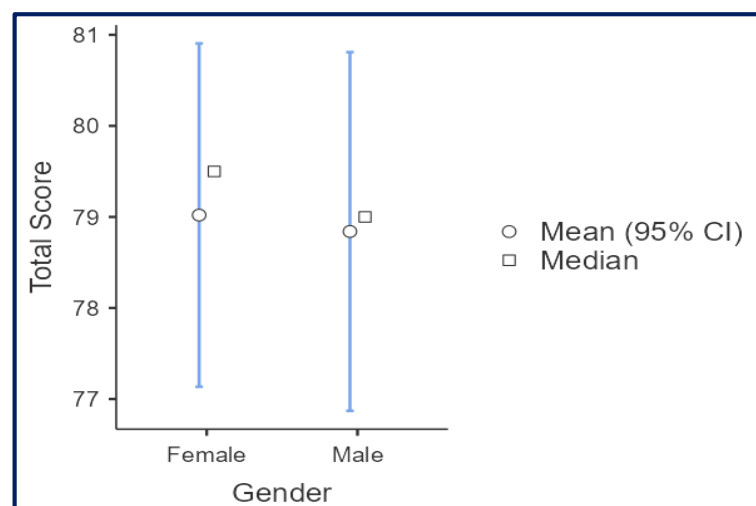
Table 2. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for Gender Differences

Panel A: T-test Result				Panel B: Group descriptives					
Comparison	t	df	p	Mean difference	Group	N	Mean	SD	Cohen's d
Female vs. Male	0.129	98	0.897	0.180	Female	50	79	6.8	0.0259
					Male	50	78.8	7.11	

Note. $H_a: \mu_{\text{Female}} \neq \mu_{\text{Male}}$ Confidence Intervals: ; 95%

- To address the second objective, an Independent Samples t-test was conducted to explore the differences between male (N=50) and female (N=50) learners regarding their social media predisposition and academic wellness. The results, as detailed in Table 2, indicated no statistically significant difference between the two groups, $t(98) = 0.129$, $p = .897$.
- The mean score for female learners ($M = 79$, $SD = 6.8$) was nearly identical to male learners ($M = 78.8$, $SD = 7.11$), with a negligible mean difference of 0.18. This lack of significance is further supported by the very small effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.0259$) and the 95% confidence interval for the difference, which crossed zero (-2.58, 2.94). Consequently, the null hypothesis was failed to rejected, suggesting that gender does not significantly influence the levels of social media predisposition and academic wellness among the participants.

Figure 1. Mean and Median Scores Comparison between Female and Male Learners



- Moreover, the visual comparison of mean and median scores across gender categories is further depicted in Figure 1. The graph depicts the Mean (95% Confidence Interval) and Median values for both Female and Male cohorts. Notably, the overlap between the 95% Confidence Interval error bars for both groups confirms the statistical finding that there is no significant difference in the total scores based on gender. Furthermore, the close proximity of the Mean (circles) and Median (squares)

indicators in both groups reinforces the earlier normality assessment, suggesting a well-balanced distribution of scores for both male and female learners.

Objective 3: To investigate the differences between government and private school students based on social media predisposition and academic wellness variable.

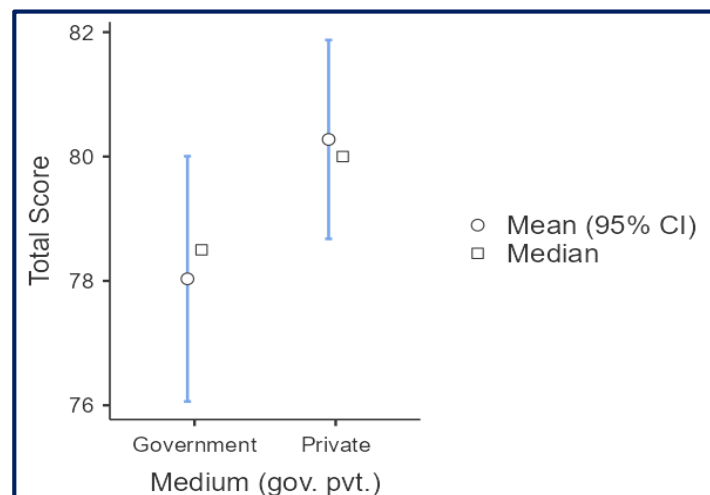
Table 3. Comparison of Total Scores by Institution Type (Government vs. Private)

Panel A: T-test Result				Panel B: Group descriptives					
Comparison	t	D f	p	Mean difference	Group	N	Mean	SD	Cohen's d
Government vs. Private	-1.60 ^a	98	0.11	-2.24	Govt.	60	78	6.8	-0.326
					Private	40	80.3	7.11	

Note. $H_a \mu \text{ Government} \neq \mu \text{ Private}$; Confidence Intervals: 95%

- To achieve the third research objective, an Independent Samples t-test was conducted to compare the total scores of learners from Government (N=60) and Private (N=40) institutions. As presented in Table 3, the mean score for private school students (M = 80.3, SD = 7.11) was slightly higher than that of Government school students (M = 78.0, SD = 6.8).
- However, the inferential analysis indicates that this difference is not statistically significant, $t(98) = -1.60$, $p = .11$. Since the p-value exceeds the .05 threshold, the null hypothesis is retained, suggesting no significant disparity in social media predisposition and academic wellness based on the type of institution. The calculated effect size (Cohen's $d = -0.326$) represents a small effect, further confirming that while a numerical difference exists, its practical impact is limited within the studied cohort.

Figure 2. Mean and Median Scores Comparison Institution Type



- Moreover, the visual comparison of mean and median scores across the type of institution is depicted in Figure 2. The graph illustrates the Mean (95% Confidence Interval) and Median values for both the Government and Private school cohorts. Notably, the significant overlap between the 95% Confidence Interval error bars for both groups visually confirms the statistical finding that there is no significant difference in the total scores based on institution type. Furthermore, the close proximity of the Mean (represented by circles) and Median (represented by squares) indicators within both groups reinforces the earlier normality assessment, suggesting a well-balanced distribution of scores across both school cohorts.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

• Findings of Objective One

The findings show that most students fall in the higher range of social media predisposition and academic wellness. About 59% of participants are in the high category, while 21% are average and 20% are low. Overall, more than 80% of students fall within the average to high levels, indicating a generally strong presence of both social media engagement and academic wellness among the respondents.

• Findings of Objective Two

The independent samples t-test showed that there is no significant difference between male and female learners in terms of social media predisposition and academic wellness, $t(98) = 0.129$, $p = 0.897$. The mean scores for females ($M = 79$) and males ($M = 78.8$) were almost identical, with a very small effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.0259$), indicating a negligible difference. This suggests that gender does not significantly influence students' social media predisposition and academic wellness in the study.

• Findings Of Objectives Three

The independent samples t-test revealed no statistically significant difference between Government and Private school students in terms of social media predisposition and academic wellness, $t(98) = -1.60$, $p = 0.11$. Although Private school students ($M = 80.3$) had slightly higher mean scores than Government school students ($M = 78.0$), the difference was small and not significant. The effect size (Cohen's $d = -0.326$) also indicates a weak practical difference, suggesting that the type of institution does not meaningfully influence students' social media predisposition and academic wellness in this study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Schools should conduct regular awareness programs on healthy social media use to help students balance online engagement with academic responsibilities.
- Parents and teachers should work together to monitor students' screen time and guide them toward more disciplined study habits and better time management.
- Schools may integrate digital literacy and mental well-being sessions into the curriculum to help students understand both the benefits and risks of social media use.
- Students should be encouraged to develop self-regulation skills and engage in offline activities such as sports, reading, and group discussions to maintain academic wellness.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study show that schools need to help students develop a healthy balance in their use of social media so that it does not affect their academic wellness. Teachers can play an important role by noticing students who may be struggling due to excessive social media use and offering them proper academic and emotional support. Parents also need to guide and monitor their children's digital habits so that study time and online activities are well balanced. Overall, the study suggests that educators and policymakers should work together to create awareness programs and digital literacy initiatives that encourage students to use social media in a more responsible and meaningful way.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that secondary school students in Kohima District generally show a high level of social media predisposition along with a moderate to high level of academic wellness. Most students fall within the average to high categories, indicating that they are actively engaged with social media while still maintaining their academic responsibilities to a reasonable extent. This suggests that social media has become an important part of students' daily lives and learning environment. The findings further reveal that there is no significant difference in social media predisposition and academic wellness based on gender or type of school. This indicates that these factors do not meaningfully influence students' experiences in the context of the study. Overall, the impact of social media on academic wellness appears to depend more on usage patterns and self-regulation rather than demographic differences.

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