

## NEXUS BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA AND POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF TWIN CITIES, PAKISTAN

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Received: June 26, 2024

Revised: August 02, 2024

Accepted: August 17, 2024

Published: August 29, 2024

### ABSTRACT

Many youth-related organizations have concentrated their efforts on offering high-quality chances to encourage early participation in civic engagements to develop youngsters to become responsible and active citizens with upstanding ideals. Many organizations use social media actively to achieve their objectives in the most efficient way possible. Social media has the power to connect with young people, communicate with them, and ultimately support their positive development. Given how popular social media is among young people, it's imperative to know how to use it as a tool for youth development. Building on young people's strengths and abilities to support their growth and general well-being is the main goal of positive youth development. In this modern age where digital platforms are an integral part of students' daily lives, it is imperative to understand how they impact youth development. The objective of this study is to check the relationship between social media and positive youth development in Rawalpindi/Punjab, Islamabad. The study examines the relationship between social media use and several favorable aspects of youth development, including academic achievement, social connectedness, and personal growth. The primary objective of this study is to comprehend the relationship between Social media and positive development in public universities. The results indicated that ( $r = 0.753$ ,  $P = 0.000^{**}$ ) two-tailed, which indicates that the results are statistically significant. The findings will be used to design targeted plans and initiatives that support the overall positive youth development of young people in context of social media usage.

**Keywords:** Public Sectors, Positive Youth Development, Social Media, Universities.

### INTRODUCTION

For students, universities, colleges, and schools are the most important places in society where they can grow as people. Students' future performance will rest on how well they do in college and how well others have done in the past. Every student is different, and when they finish school, they all want to start working, but they have a hard time doing so. A lot of things, including social, economic, biological, and psychological ones, get in the way of college students' good growth as young people. This essay was mainly about college students and their lack of good youth development. It also looked at what getting in the way of their performance. As defined by the United Nations

Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), youth, defined as individuals who are between the ages of 15 and 24, is a crucial phase in terms of both physical and mental development. It is also a time for learning vital qualities and values that are necessary to become a responsible citizen or future leader (Fraley & Haltigan, 2013; Lee & Cole, 2009).

According to Schmidt and Kackar (2007), individuals who acquire a decent set of virtues at this stage frequently exhibit active civic engagement, maintain positive attitudes, and perform tasks that serve as indicators of their potential to become future leaders in society.

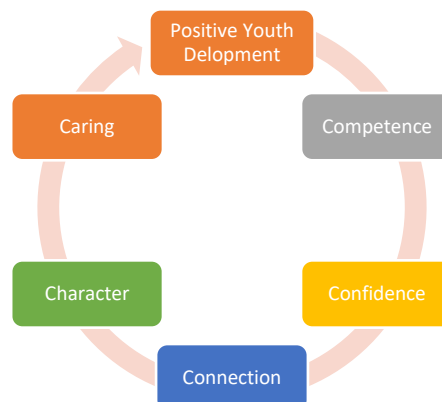
Numerous forms of media have been investigated by researchers and educators as a means of efficiently fostering healthy growth and appropriate values.

According to Rideout and Roberts (2010), many forms of social media have garnered a great deal of attention. These forms of communication are deeply ingrained among young people. Because young people are tech-savvy and like to try new things, social media are especially important tools for them. In a time when technology changes quickly, young people easily learn how to use new technologies and become the main people who use social media (Liang & Duffy, 2010; Lusk, 2010). With the help of different smart tools, young people are also able to Social media have also shown a lot of promise as useful tools for promoting healthy growth in young people and getting them involved in their communities.

Taylor & White (2001) and Waters & Lucas (2009) found that social media can help people get to know each other better, learn about environmental or charitable issues, and get involved in and talk about campaigns and issues (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Briones & Catala Jin, 2011; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Smith, 2010; Waters & Lo, 2012). According to Park and Stemmler (2011), the positive functions of social media show that they have the potential to be a channel that provides chances and services too young to nurture positive youth development (PYD). PYD emphasizes the importance of offering opportunities and services to youth to draw favorable results and developments for youth. (Lerner & Anderson, 2003) The framework identifies six characteristics that are essential for the development of positive characteristics in young people.

These characteristics are competence, confidence, connection, character, caring or compassion, and contribution. It is possible to promote these 6Cs through educational messages, interactions, and empowerment through the use of social media, which is particularly important when considering the significance that social media plays among young people. The present study occurred at two universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

### Conceptual Framework of Positive Youth Development



**Figure 1:** (Lerner, 2011; Bowers et al., 2010)

Lerner (2011) and Bowers et al. (2010) say that PYD is the agreement of the 5C elements that make up this idea. These 5Cs 1) Competence, 2) Confidence, 3) Connection, 4) Character, and 5) Caring were made after reading a lot of books and thinking about my own experiences. Being competent means having a good opinion of your actions in certain areas, such as in the social, cognitive, academic, health, and professional areas. Besides that, "social competence" includes the ability to deal with conflicts and get along with others. Thinking competence means being able to make decisions that show you have good thinking skills. Academic competence is how well you do in school, as shown by things like marks, attendance, test scores, and how often you show up for class. To stay healthy, people need to show that they are physically fit by working out and getting enough rest. Innovative ideas, good work habits, and awareness of one's career path make up vocational ability (Phelps et al., 2009). According to Phelps et al. (2009), a young person's confidence is their feeling of self-efficacy and self-worth. Connection shows up as strong, positive ties and supportive relationships with family, friends, and other people. These connections make it possible for people and communities to work together in a good way (Phelps et al., 2009). According to Bowers et al. (2011), character is following the rules, and traditional and social norms, having a strong sense of what is right and wrong, and being honest. According to Phelps et al. (2009), caring means showing that you understand and care about other people.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. To check the relationship between social media and positive youth development in Rawalpindi-Islamabad

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **YOUTH AND CONTROL OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

According to Bittman and Unsworth (2011), young people nowadays are naturally inclined to learn through active experiences, are skilled at multitasking, and use several digital devices and platforms simultaneously to pursue their own informal learning goals. The distinctive qualities of young people have granted them a singular sense of self, enhancing their ability to be the first to embrace new technologies and shape opinions in the rapidly evolving digital realm. Millennials have rapidly embraced and adapted to new surroundings, leading to strong ties with social media and making them the main users (Ahn, 2011; Boyd, 2007; Koh, 2009; Livingstone, 2002; Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Prensky, 2001). Given their influence on digital platforms and the future of society, the significance of educating young people through social media for good growth and broader societal progress has captured the interest of educators and nonprofit organisations (NPOs).

Extensive research has investigated the function of social media as primary means of communication, education, civic and political involvement, and consequently, societal transformation (Bresciani & Schmeil, 2012; Damodar, 2012; Gladarev&Lonkila, 2012). Social media serves as a communication tool that provides cost-effective and innovative ways to share information and engage the public. Numerous non-profit organizations (NPOs) have made use of social media platforms to enhance communication and facilitate the exchange of information (Curtis et al., 2010; Nelson, 2012). Active engagement with different audiences through social media has a good impact on organizational branding and the management of relationships.

YouTube video clips featuring nonprofit organizations can significantly contribute to the formation of organizational identities (Waters & Jones, 2011). Furthermore, social media platforms have a significant impact on fostering civic participation in a democratic society by facilitating the political discourse of citizens, hence exerting an

influence on societal transformation (Guo & Saxton, 2014; Halpern & Gibbs, 2013; Kent, 2013; Warren, & Jaafar, 2014). Furthermore, while the majority of social media platforms were not initially created with educational intentions (McEwan, 2012), there are a few social media platforms that are recognized for their educational use and potential (Crews & Stitt-Gohdes, 2012). Increasingly, university faculty members are utilizing social media platforms to establish connections with students, disseminate information and course materials, and offer a wide range of learning opportunities and interaction (Blumberg & Oates, 2013; Wang & Wu, 2013).

Aydin (2012) and Mazman and Usluel (2010) found that Facebook's three dimensions of communication, cooperation, and resource and material sharing make it a potentially successful instructional tool. Evidence suggests that playing games online can have positive effects on children's growth and development (Blumberg et al., 2013; Grosbeck, 2009; Blumberg et al., 2013). According to Bers (2010), there are new and significant ways to influence the development of young people and their impact on society through the integration of digital technology and education. Organizations focused on youth have begun to use social media as their primary platform for youth-to-youth communication and educational initiatives due to the inherent qualities of young people and the many possible uses of social media. Since young people, who are the organizations' primary target audience, use social media regularly, youth-serving organizations have shown signs of relatively rapid adaption to this trend.

Organizations can reach out to young members of their groups through online platforms by educating them on important social issues, giving them a voice in discussing these topics with their peers, modeling good character traits, and providing them with opportunities to take action (Carpini & Michael, 2000). Organizational communications and interactions with and among young people are made easier by the particular characteristics of internet media platforms like Facebook. As a result, the organizations' efforts with kids will be significantly more influential, which will help them achieve their aims, including positive youth development (Valenzuela & Kee, 2009).

### **SUPPORTING POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA**

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a framework that emphasizes the significance of giving opportunities and resources to adolescents to support positive outcomes and developments (Park et al., 2011). The Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach takes a positive stance towards young people and emphasizes the development of their capacities, which include social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and moral competence. PYD has been shown to foster bonding, resilience, self-determination, spirituality, self-efficacy, and positive identity, according to previous research in the fields of child development and educational psychology (Catalano & Hawkins, 2004).

As a result of these good things happening, kids can do well in school, in their communities, and society at large. They also develop into responsible, empathic, resilient, appreciative, and leadership-ready adults (Lerner et al., 2003).

During childhood and adolescence, the first five Cs are thought to represent signs of contemplative, constructive, and healthy developmental behaviors. What this means is that when children display these Cs, they are more likely to lead a life away from risky behavior and towards idealized adulthood" (Benson & Sesma, 2006; Bowers et al., 2010; Bruyere, 2010; Lerner et al., 2005). The five PYD traits suggest that young people who exhibit them make a moral and ethical impact on society through their civic responsibilities (Lerner et al., 2013). This integrated impact is likely to persist into adulthood.

Many groups aimed at educating young people have sought to incorporate PYD's tenets into their own youth programs since the 1990s, when the program first gained popularity (Ersing, 2008). Researchers discovered that these courses helped students develop all six characteristics. For instance, according to Chung and McBride (2015), PYD-based service learning assists kids in developing social and emotional competencies, which in turn impact PYD characteristics. The United States Department of Agriculture (2014) notes that the 4-H Program has been instrumental in establishing positive youth development as its primary goal and offering a variety of initiatives to support it.

Social media communication can also help young people grow and get involved in their communities by changing the features of PYDs (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2011). People often use social media to share educational content and get feedback, which motivates students to do better in school and maybe even get better at what they're doing (Aydin, 2012; Blumberg et al., 2013). Specifically, social media help young people communicate with others in and outside of their generation, which boosts their self-efficacy and self-esteem and has a big impact on how they develop personality traits like connection, confidence, and character (Schwartz et al., 2014; Valkenburg & Schouten, 2006).

Moreover, the variety of opportunities for young people to connect with social phenomena and concerns through social media has greatly increased their civic involvement, which in turn has increased their capacity for empathy and service (Bennett & Freelon, 2011). When planning their communications through online social networks, youth-related organizations should keep the positive development of youth in mind, as social media has the potential to play a significant role in this area (Bachen & Philippi, 2008; Yang, 2009).

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Through the utilization of the 5C model, the purpose of the present investigation was to evaluate the level of positivity among young people. Character, confidence, connection, compassion, and competence were hypothesized to be strongly connected with positive youth development. This was because these components are closely associated with each other. An additional hypothesis was developed to investigate the connection between healthy behavioral patterns and the development of young people.

The sample for the research project consisted of three hundred and fifty students from two separate universalities. There are two universities in Pakistan: 1) Quaid-i-Azam University, which has 175 students, and 2) PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, which also has 175 students. Methods of simple random sampling were utilized to get the total sample size of 350 students.

For researching positive youth development, Lerner et al. (2006) constructed a research instrument that consisted of the 5C Model. The



tool's reliability can be demonstrated by its internal consistency, which is equal to  $\alpha=.836$ . To carry out this study, a quantitative research approach was utilized. For data gathering, an interview schedule was utilized. The data was analyzed using version

22 of the software known as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). To investigate the relationship between the various variables, an analysis of correlation was carried out.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1. Correlation between Social Media and Positive Youth Development**

	Correlation	PYD	Social Media
Positive youth development	Pearson Correlation	1	.753**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
Social media	Pearson Correlation	.753**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

A Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was calculated among these two variables of social media usage and Positive Youth Development to check the correlation. Table no 1 shows that bivariate of these two variables. The results indicated that ( $r = 0.753$ ,  $P = 0.000^{**}$ ) two tailed, which indicates that results are statistically significant. There has been positive correlation found among these variables. As the use of social media usage increase than the Positive Youth Development will also increase. Through the provision of platforms for interaction, learning, and self-expression, social media has developed into an essential component of the culture of young people. Through the provision of opportunities for social contact, civic participation, and identity exploration, it has the potential to promote positive youth development that is beneficial.

## CONCLUSION

Researchers at public universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi are looking into the link between social media and good youth development. This shows how much digital platforms affect the lives of students. Social media is like a double-edged sword: it can help you grow as a person, connect with others, do well in school, and get involved in your community, but it can also be dangerous, exposing you to harmful material, encouraging cyberbullying, and even making you become addicted to it. The study shows that social media can be a strong tool for promoting healthy growth in young people if it is used carefully and strategically. It makes students feel better about

them, helps them make new friends, and gives them access to a lot of knowledge and tools that help them learn and grow as people. But the benefits depend on a lot of things, like how well someone knows how to use technology, whether they have parental or institutional help, and their socioeconomic situation. To get the most out of social media, we need specific programs and rules that encourage responsible use, keep kids safe from the risks that come with it, and connect digital activities with learning goals. By taking these things into account, public universities in the twin cities can make sure that social media helps their students grow in all areas, getting them ready for the challenges and opportunities of the digital age. The results of this study show that there is a direct relationship between the usage of social media and positive youth development.

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