SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND NEEDS GRATIFICATION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF LAGHMAN UNIVERSITY, AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT
The study examines how students at Laghman University, Afghanistan, use social media to gratify their academic needs. The data was collected through an online questionnaire from 324 students from various departments at the university, which was analyzed through quantitative research methods. Facebook and YouTube were found to be the most frequently used social media forums among students for the gratification of their educational needs. Access to educational materials, study groups, and up-to-date information were found as means that social media helps students meet their academic requirements. The benefits of students' and instructors' use of social media for more accessibility and better communication are also highlighted in the research. Students were found gratified with their usage of social media for education, especially in the time of corona pandemic and the law and order situation after the regime change in Afghanistan in 2021. The study also identifies themes for future study to understand better the developing role of social media in satisfying the academic demands of students and offers ideas for maximizing the use of social media in academia.
Key Words: Academic Needs, Afghanistan, Gratification, Laghman, Social Media

INTRODUCTION
Background and Context
In this era of instantaneous global communication, knowledge dissemination, and self-expression, the emergence of social media has been a game-changer. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are just a few examples of social media sites that have become standard tools of mass communication strategies. To facilitate the free flow of information, ideas, and artistic expression, these sites provide users with unparalleled access to one another.

Significant societal changes have resulted from people's increased reliance on social media, and these shifts have affected all facets of people's life, including their schooling. Social media's role in students' lives has grown significantly in recent years. It opened up new possibilities for education, teamwork, and data gathering. Despite these benefits, others worry that social media use in higher education might harm students' ability to focus on their studies and satisfy their demands (Kan, 2022).

In today's competitive academic environment, it is essential to appreciate social media's significance in meeting students' demands. Learning outcomes, student-teacher relationships, and general academic performance are all areas that need more study as these platforms continue to develop and alter how students interact with educational materials.

This research examines the level of gratification among Laghman University, Afghanistan students, especially during the coronavirus pandemic and after the regime change in August 2021, when physical classes were suspended for obvious reasons.

The context of this research at Laghman University in Afghanistan's east is really interesting. Ghaforzai and Khargoti (2023) note that Laghman University, one of the most prestigious universities in the area, is illustrative of the academic climate across Afghanistan. Examining how students at Laghman University use social media to meet their educational goals will help understand the possibilities and obstacles these students encounter.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid growth of the internet and the emergence of social media platforms have opened up new ways for individuals to interact with each other. This has resulted in an increasing number of university students across the globe using social media daily. While social media usage has been linked to several positive outcomes, such as improved communication and social connectedness, it has also been associated with negative consequences, including decreased attention spans, problems with mental health, and a need for instant gratification.

Furthermore, the widespread use of social media has led to a significant change in how people interact, including in the context of learning. While social media platforms offer new opportunities for collaboration and information sharing, they can also negatively affect learning patterns, especially in the absence of face-to-face interactions with teachers or supervisors

This study has investigated the relationship between social media usage and academic needs gratification among Laghman University, Afghanistan students. The study also looked into the level of satisfaction among the students while learning through social media, as compared to attending classes physically when taking classes online was the only option.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main Research Question:

The study has answered the following research questions:

What is the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of university students?

Sub-Questions:

How do students at Laghman University, Afghanistan, perceive the gratification of their academic needs through different social media applications when physical learning is suspended?

How does low interaction with teachers/supervisors due to social media usage affect students' learning ability and academic performance?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To investigate the level of gratification of the academic needs of students through social media at Laghman University, Afghanistan.

To analyze the impact of low interaction with teachers/supervisors due to social media usage on students' learning ability and academic performance in an extraordinary situation, compared with their learning in physical classes in a normal situation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has important implications for theoretical developments and policy implementation in education. The study's overarching goal is to address various important issues by exploring social media's function in meeting university students' educational demands. This study has contributed to understanding how social media affects students' success in the classroom and their ability to satisfy basic human needs. While several researchers have already examined the impact of social media on different facets of human life, its function in academic pursuits has yet to be well

investigated. This research fills that need by offering a holistic perspective on how students' engagement with social media platforms influences their learning.

Second, the results of this research provide important information on the history and culture of Afghanistan's Laghman University. This adds to the little literature on higher education in the area. The study examined the institution's unique cultural, social, and educational peculiarities to learn how social media use affected the satisfaction of academic demands at Laghman University. These findings provide the groundwork for future studies and contribute to formulating.

THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

The Uses and Gratifications Theory, proposed by Jay G. Blumler and Elihu Katz in 1974, holds that people choose media specifically because it meets a certain need or wants. This theory posits that people are not only recipients of media but also active participants who make strategic decisions over which media outlets best serve their needs.

The motivation of students at various institutions, and the gratification of their academic needs, especially when physical classes are suspended for certain reasons, the usage of social media may be better understood through the lens of the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Students may utilize social media for various reasons, including recreation, peer interaction, research, stress relief, and more.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is relevant to this research because it can explain how using social media helps university students at Laghman University, Afghanistan meet their educational goals and keep learning going on without interruption. It gives a chance to learn more about how students benefit from social media, including communication, self-improvement, and socialization. Researchers may learn how social media helps students by

focusing on their satisfaction when using it for academic purposes.

The researchers have used the Uses and Gratifications Theory to find how students at Laghman University feel various social media tools meet their academic demands. Using the Uses and Gratifications Theory as a theoretical framework during this study verified a deep comprehension of the interplay between students' use of social media, the satisfaction of their academic demands, and their incentives for continuing to do so. Researchers have been able to draw relevant findings and provide well-informed suggestions because of the theory's role in data processing and interpretation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review serves as a critical component of the research process, offering a comprehensive examination of existing scholarly work related to social media usage and the academic needs gratification of university students. The literature reviewed for this study aims to synthesize and analyze the relevant literature to gain a deeper understanding of the theoretical and empirical foundations that inform this study.

Numerous studies have examined the negative effects of social media distractions on students' concentration and focus, which can subsequently impact their academic performance. Social media platforms, with their constant notifications and easy accessibility, often compete for students' attention during study or class time (Cardoso-Leite et al., 2021). There has been much interest in studying how social media use affects students' performance in the classroom. Others argue that the relationship is complex and influenced by factors like time management, self-regulation, and the types of activities students engage in while on social media (Abbas et al., 2019), while some studies suggest a negative association between excessive social media usage and academic performance (Azizi et al., 2019).

For instance, studies have shown that mindless scrolling through news feeds or reading irrelevant information on social media may negatively affect academic performance (Collis & Eggers, 2022). Social media usage for educational objectives, such as participating in online discussion forums or accessing educational materials, may, nevertheless, have a favourable impact on academic performance, according to studies (Kolhar et al., 2021).

Students may be tempted to neglect their studies to spend time on social media because of the continual connectedness and rapid pleasure offered by these platforms. This may cause problems with time management and the ability to set priorities in the classroom (Alblwi et al., 2021).

Social media platforms offer students a rich source of information and knowledge, enabling them to fulfil their information-seeking needs. Through social media, students can access a wide range of educational content, including articles, research papers, blogs, and videos. They can follow academic institutions, subject experts, and educational pages to stay updated on relevant topics and access the latest research findings (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Moreover, social media platforms often provide opportunities for students to engage in discussions and ask questions, facilitating the exchange of information and the sharing of perspectives among peers and experts. Students can participate in online forums, join academic groups, and collaborate on shared projects, enhancing their understanding and expanding their knowledge base (Ansari & Khan, 2020).

Social media platforms foster social interaction and collaborative learning opportunities, enabling students to connect with peers, share ideas, and engage in academic discussions. These platforms allow students to form study groups, seek assignment feedback, and discuss course materials (Faizi & Fkihi, 2018).

Through messaging, commenting, and sharing, students can interact in real-time and provide instant feedback to their peers. They can collaborate on group projects, co-create knowledge, and engage in collective problem-solving activities (Haleem et al., 2022). The social interaction facilitated by social media platforms enhances students' learning experiences, promotes active engagement, and nurtures a sense of belonging within the academic community.

Social media platforms offer students channels for self-expression and creativity, allowing them to showcase their academic achievements, projects, and ideas. Students can create and share multimedia content, such as videos, presentations, and visual representations of their work (Rahman et al., 2020). These platforms provide opportunities for students to receive feedback, gain recognition for their efforts, and build their online presence (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Social media platforms are gateways to vast educational resource repositories and online learning opportunities. Through social media platforms, students can access open educational resources, webinars, virtual lectures, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (Lopukhova & Makeeva, 2017).

In summary, social media platforms fulfil various academic needs for university students. They provide access to information, promote social interaction and collaborative learning, facilitate self-expression and creativity, and offer a gateway to educational resources and online learning opportunities. Using social media platforms enables students to enhance their learning experiences, engage in meaningful academic interactions, and expand their knowledge beyond the confines of the traditional classroom. Understanding the role of social media in meeting academic needs is essential for harnessing its potential and maximizing its benefits for students' learning and academic growth.

Social media platforms offer convenient and accessible channels for students to communicate

with their teachers or supervisors. Platforms such as email, messaging apps, discussion boards, and virtual classrooms provide opportunities for students to ask questions, seek clarification, and receive feedback outside of traditional classroom settings (Mishra et al., 2020). By utilizing social media, students can engage in asynchronous communication with their teachers/supervisors, allowing for flexible interaction and overcoming barriers of time and physical presence (Singh et al., 2022).

There are advantages and disadvantages to having students and teachers/supervisors communicate online. The necessity for educators to control their online presence and preserve professional behaviour is only one of the challenges posed by the blurring of personal and professional boundaries in the digital era (Gillett-Swan, 2019). Online communication has some drawbacks, but it also has many advantages. Wong et al. (2020) note that social media platforms may improve communication, allow for more individualized feedback, and boost timely assistance with students' academic advancement.

In conclusion, there are consequences for student-teacher communication due to the prevalence of social media use. These mediums improve communication, broaden participation, and provide a setting for more natural, person-to-person exchanges. Improved student-teacher connections, higher levels of engagement and continued support for students' academic advancement are only some of the advantages of online contact, despite the issues linked to boundaries and professionalism that might arise. However, other research has shown concerns with online education as well. Others learn better face-to-face, where they may ask questions and get answers immediately. Sometimes in online learning settings, a lack of nonverbal indicators and face-to-face interactions may lead to feelings of isolation or a lack of interest (Rawashdeh, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The research approach employed for this study is a quantitative research design. Quantitative research focuses on collecting numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to identify patterns, relationships, and trends (Creswell, 2014). This approach is particularly suitable for investigating the impact of social media usage on academic needs gratification and academic performance among university students.

The quantitative research design allows for the collection of data from a large sample size, facilitating the generalization of findings to the wider population of university students at Laghman University, Afghanistan. By employing a survey method, the researcher can gather information on social media usage, academic needs gratification, and academic performance directly from the participants, providing valuable insights into their experiences and perceptions.

The chosen research design aligns with this study's research questions and objectives. It allows for exploring the relationship between social media usage and academic needs gratification, as well as the impact of social media on academic performance.

In summary, the chosen research design for this study is a quantitative research approach. It is relevant to the research questions and objectives, as it enables the exploration of the relationship between social media usage and academic needs gratification among university students at Laghman University, Afghanistan. The quantitative approach provides a systematic and structured data collection and analysis framework, facilitating generalizability and potential future research in this area.

DATA COLLECTION

The survey method was chosen as the primary means of data collection for this study. Surveys are a commonly used research tool for gathering information from a large number of participants in a structured and standardized manner

(Creswell, 2014). Surveys allow for the collection of quantitative data, which is well-suited to addressing this study's research questions and objectives.

A questionnaire was developed to gather data on social media usage, academic needs gratification, and academic performance. The questionnaire consisted of a combination of closed-ended and Likert-scale items to elicit specific participant responses. The items were designed to align with the research questions and objectives and cover relevant aspects of social media usage and academic needs gratification among university students.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE SIZE

The sampling procedure employed for this study was a combination of random and probability sampling. Participants were randomly selected from different faculties and departments at Laghman University, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample. This approach enhances the sample's representativeness and allows for the generalization of the findings to the wider population.

The sample size was determined based on the Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967). With a total population of 3,500 students at Laghman University, a sample size of 324 participants was determined using a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 5%. This sample size adequately represents the population while considering practical constraints such as time and resources.

In summary, the data collection process for this study involved the use of a survey method with a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed to capture relevant information on social media usage, academic needs gratification, and academic performance. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were ensured through a literature review, pilot testing, and statistical analysis. The sampling procedure employed a combination of random and probability sampling, with a determined sample size of 324 participants.

DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was utilized to analyze quantitative data. SPSS is a widely-used software program that provides a range of statistical analysis tools, making it suitable for analyzing survey data and identifying patterns, relationships, and trends (Field, 2013). By using SPSS, researchers can conduct various statistical tests and generate descriptive statistics to examine the relationship between social media usage, academic needs gratification, and academic performance.

In addition to quantitative data, qualitative data was collected through open-ended survey questions or interviews. The content analysis method has been used to analyze and interpret the qualitative data. Content analysis involves systematically examining the content of text-based data to identify themes, patterns, and meanings (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Through this method, the researcher can identify common themes and extract relevant information related to social media usage and academic needs gratification.

After coding, the data was analyzed to identify the responses' patterns, commonalities, and variations. Themes and sub-themes were identified, and excerpts from the data were selected to support and illustrate these themes.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data has been collected from 324 university students out of 358 who were approached for responses through an online questionnaire at Laghman University. The sample consisted of 36% female and 64% male respondents, as shown in the pie chart.
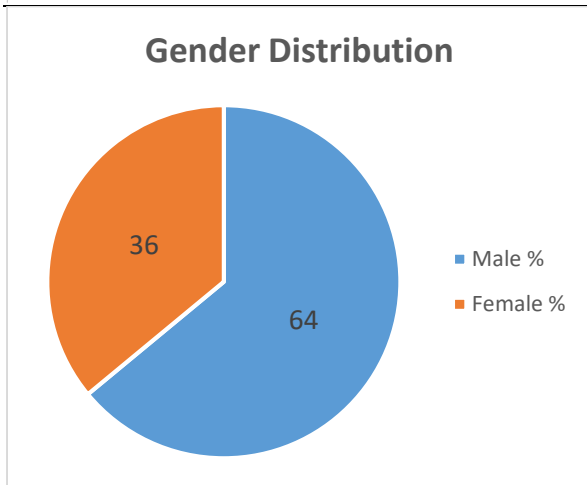
Figure 1. *Gender Distribution*

Demographic Distribution
Table 1
Demographic Distribution of Participants

Gender	Number of Participants	Percentage
Female	117	36%
Male	207	64%
Total	324	100%

As shown in Table 1, the sample included 117 female participants, accounting for 36% of the total respondents, and 207 male participants, making up 64% of the total respondents.

The data collected from the survey reveals the proportion of university students who use different social media platforms.

Table 2 presents the details of the usage:

Table 2
Social Media Platform Usage

Platform	Proportion (%)
Facebook	34
YouTube	25
Instagram	13
TikTok	9
Twitter	10
Snapchat	6
LinkedIn	3

As depicted in Table 2, Facebook is the most widely used social media platform among the participants, with 34% of the students reporting its usage. Following Facebook, YouTube is the second most popular platform, utilized by 25% of the respondents. Instagram and TikTok are also frequently used, with 13% and 9% of students engaging with these platforms, respectively.

Other social media platforms like Twitter, Snapchat, and LinkedIn are used by 10%, 6%, and 3% of the participants, respectively.
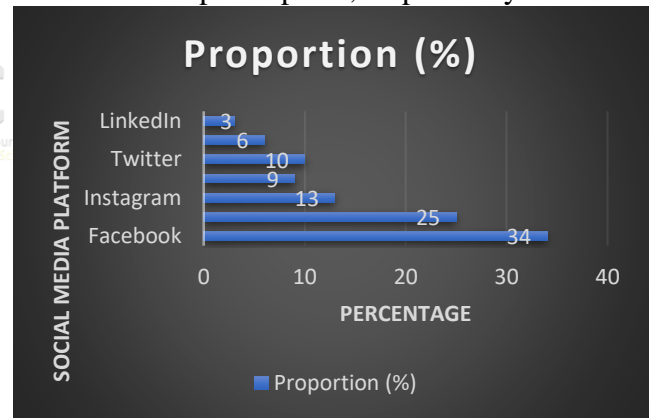

Figure 2: Proportion of Social Media Platforms

Time Spent on Social Media per Day
Table 3 shows the time university students spend on social media platforms daily. The data collected from the survey provides insights into the proportion of participants who spend varying amounts of time on social media each day. The table also presents the details of social media usage duration.

Table 3
Time Spent on Social Media per Day

Time	Proportion (%)
Less than 1 hour	4
1-2 hours	38
2-3 hours	25
3-4 hours	17
More than 4 hours	17

As depicted in Table 3, most university students (38%) spend 1 to 2 hours on social media platforms daily. Following this, 25% of the respondents allocate 2 to 3 hours to social media activities. A similar proportion of 17% spend 3 to 4 hours or more than 4 hours on social media daily. Notably, a small proportion of participants (4%) report spending less than 1 hour on social media daily.

Purpose of Social Media Use

Table 4 explains various purposes for which university students use social media platforms. The data collected from the survey reveals the proportion of participants who engage with social media for different purposes.

Table 4
Purpose of Social Media Use

Purpose	Proportion (%)
Entertainment	19
Socializing/Connecting with friends and peers	20
Information/news consumption	34
Academic purposes	23
Escaping from daily life stress	4

Table 4 shows that university students utilize social media platforms for various purposes. The most prominent purpose is information and news consumption, with 34% of the participants engaging with social media to stay updated on current events and news. Socializing and connecting with friends and peers is another significant purpose, reported by 20% of the respondents. This emphasizes the role of social media in fostering social interactions and maintaining relationships within university communities.

Academic purposes account for 23% of social media usage among students. This suggests that a considerable proportion of participants use social media as a tool for academic-related activities, such as accessing educational resources, collaborating on group projects, or seeking academic support.

Entertainment is also a notable purpose, with 19% of students using social media for leisure and enjoyment. A smaller proportion of participants (4%) reported using social media to escape daily life stress.
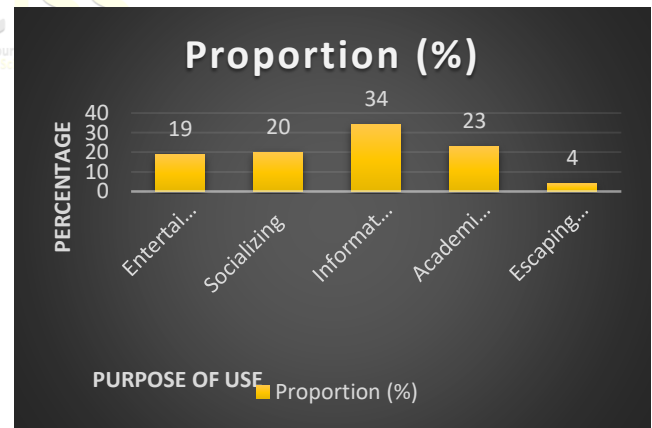

Figure 3: *Purpose of Use*

Use of Social Media for Academic Needs

Table 5 discusses how university students use social media platforms to fulfill their academic needs. The data collected from the survey provides insights into the proportion of participants who utilize social media for academic purposes. The table presents the

details of the use of social media for academic needs.

Table 5
Use of Social Media for Academic Needs

Use of Social Media for Academic Needs	Proportion (%)
Yes	90
No	4
Not Sure	6

As depicted in Table 5, most university students (90%) reported using social media for academic needs. This indicates that a significant proportion of participants view social media as a valuable resource for supporting their academic pursuits.

A small percentage (4%) of respondents indicated that they do not use social media for academic purposes. On the other hand, 6% of participants were unsure whether they utilize social media for academic needs.

The finding that 90% of students use social media for academic purposes highlights the importance and relevance of social media platforms in the educational context. These platforms offer a wide range of educational resources, opportunities for collaborative learning, and communication channels with peers and instructors, all of which contribute to academic needs gratification.

Effect of Social Media on Interaction with Teachers

Table 6 depicts the impact of social media usage on the interaction between university students and their teachers. The data collected from the survey provides insights into the proportion of participants who believe that social media affects their interaction with teachers. The table presents the details of the effect of social media on interaction with teachers:

Table 6
Effect of Social Media on Interaction with Teachers

Effect of Social Media on Interaction with Teachers	Proportion (%)
Yes	94
No	4
Not Sure	2

As shown in Table 6, a large majority of university students (94%) believe that social media affects their interaction with teachers. This suggests that social media platforms shape the dynamics of communication and engagement between students and their instructors.

A small percentage (4%) of respondents indicated that social media does not impact their interaction with teachers. Additionally, 2% of participants were unsure about the influence of social media on their interactions with teachers.

The findings say that 94% of students perceive social media to affect their interaction with teachers, highlighting the significance of these platforms in facilitating communication and collaboration in the educational context. Social media provides convenient channels for students to seek academic support, clarify doubts, and engage in discussions with their teachers outside traditional classroom settings.

Effect of Social Media on Academic Performance

Table 7 reveals the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of university students. The data collected from the survey provides insights into the proportion of participants who believe that social media affects their academic performance. The table presents the details of the effect of social media on academic performance.

Table 7

Effect of Social Media on Academic Performance

Effect of Social Media on Academic Performance	Proportion (%)
Yes	88
No	8
Not Sure	4

As depicted in Table 7, a substantial proportion of university students (88%) believe social media affects their academic performance. This indicates that a significant number of participants perceive a relationship between their social media usage patterns and their academic achievements.

On the other hand, 8% of respondents indicated that social media does not impact their academic performance. Additionally, 4% of participants were unsure about the influence of social media on their academic performance.

The findings say that 88% of students perceive social media to affect their academic performance, which raises important considerations regarding the potential benefits and drawbacks of social media usage in an academic setting. It also indicates the need for further investigation into the specific ways in which social media usage may impact students' academic outcomes.

Chi-square test:

The Chi-square test explored the association between three variables: academic needs, interaction with teachers, and academic performance. The results are presented in the tables below:

Table 8

Chi-square Test Results for Academic Needs

Response	Academic Needs	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	-1.00	13	108.0	-95.0
Not sure	0.00	21	108.0	-87.0
Yes	1.00	290	108.0	182.0
	Total	324		

Table 9

Chi-square Test Results for Interaction with Teachers

Response	Interaction With Teachers	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	-1.00	14	108.0	-94.0
Not sure	0.00	7	108.0	-101.0
Yes	1.00	303	108.0	195.0
	Total	324		

Table 10

Chi-square Test Results for Academic Performance

Response	Academic Performance	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	-1.00	27	108.0	-81.0
Not sure	0.00	14	108.0	-94.0
Yes	1.00	283	108.0	175.0
	Total	324		

Table 11

Test Statistics

Test Statistics	Academic Needs	Interaction With Teachers	Academic Performance
Chi-Square	460.352a	528.352a	426.130a
df	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000
Monte Carlo Sig.	Sig.	.000b	.000b
	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000
		Upper Bound	.009

The Chi-square test resulted in statistically significant associations between academic needs, interaction with teachers, and academic performance, with p-values less than 0.001 in all three cases. The observed and expected frequencies in each variable's categories reveal how the responses are distributed and how they deviate from the expected distribution if there are no associations.

In all three Chi-square tests, no cells had expected frequencies less than 5, and the minimum expected cell frequency was 108.0. This indicates that the sample size and distribution were adequate for the tests.

Learning Satisfaction through Social Media

The study examined the level of learning satisfaction among university students when using social media for educational purposes when physical classes were suspended due to corona pandemic and regime change in Afghanistan in August 2021.

Table 12

Learning Satisfaction through Social Media

Satisfaction Level	Proportion (%)
Not satisfied at all	10
Slightly satisfied	31
Moderately satisfied	25
Very satisfied	27
Completely satisfied	6

As shown in Table 12, the responses indicate that learning satisfaction through social media varies among university students. A considerable proportion of participants (31%) reported feeling slightly satisfied with their learning experiences on social media. Additionally, 25% of students expressed a moderate level of satisfaction, while 27% reported being very satisfied with their learning experiences through these platforms.

A smaller percentage (6%) of respondents indicated being completely satisfied with their learning experiences on social media. On the other hand, 10% of participants reported not being satisfied with their learning experiences through social media

Satisfaction Level	Proportion (%)
Not satisfied at all	13
Slightly satisfied	19
Moderately satisfied	23
Very satisfied	25
Completely satisfied	21

Contribution of Social Media to Academic Needs Gratification:

During the analysis, the open-ended responses regarding how social media contributes to academic needs gratification were systematically examined and categorized into distinct themes. The table provided below summarizes the results of the content analysis.

Table 13

Contribution of Social Media to Academic Needs Gratification

S.No	Theme	Code	F	Proportion (%)
1	Information Sharing and Discovery	I	81	25
2	Online Learning Communities	O	66	20
3	Collaboration Opportunities	CO	51	16
4	Communication and Networking	CN	39	12
5	Exposure to Diverse Perspectives	E	33	10
6	Real-World Applications	R	30	9
7	Personalized Learning	P	24	7
	Total Responses		**324**	**100**

The content analysis revealed seven distinct themes that emerged from the responses of the participants:

1. **Information Sharing and Discovery (25%):** The largest proportion of responses highlighted social media's role in facilitating the sharing and discovery of academic information, including educational articles, research papers, and study materials.

2. **Online Learning Communities (20%):** Participants mentioned the presence of online learning communities and study groups on social media platforms, which provide opportunities for peer learning and knowledge exchange.

3. **Collaboration Opportunities (16%):** Social media offers avenues for collaborative learning and group projects, enabling students to work together on academic tasks and share insights.

4. **Communication and Networking (12%):** Many respondents emphasized the importance of social media in enhancing communication and networking with peers, teachers, and academic professionals, facilitating academic discussions and interactions.

5. **Exposure to Diverse Perspectives (10%):** Social media platforms expose students to diverse perspectives and opinions on various academic topics, fostering critical thinking and a broader understanding of subjects.

6. **Real-World Applications (9%):** Some participants highlighted that social media allows them to explore real-world applications of academic concepts, making learning more practical and relevant to their lives.

7. **Personalized learning (7%):** A subset of respondents mentioned that social media enables personalized learning experiences, as they can access content tailored to their specific interests and learning preferences.

Impact of Social Media Usage on Interaction with Teachers/Supervisors:

The research explored how social media usage impacts university students' interaction with teachers and supervisors. The open-ended responses were carefully analyzed and categorized into themes to understand the various effects of social media on this aspect of academic life. The table below summarizes the results of the content analysis.

Table 14

Impact of Social Media Usage on Interaction with Teachers/Supervisors

S.No	Theme	Code	F	Proportion (%)
1	Enhanced Communication	E	99	31
2	Increased Accessibility	I	84	26
3	Building Relationships	B	57	18
4	Sharing Academic Resources	S	51	16
5	Recognition and Appreciation	R	33	10
	Total Responses		**324**	**100**

The analysis reveals five distinct themes that illustrate the impact of social media usage on students' interaction with their teachers and supervisors:

1. **Enhanced Communication (31%):** The largest proportion of responses highlighted how social media facilitates enhanced communication between students and their teachers or supervisors. Participants mentioned that

social media platforms offer quick and convenient channels for communication, enabling timely responses to queries and providing opportunities for clarifications.

2. **Increased Accessibility (26%):** Many respondents emphasized that social media enhances accessibility to teachers and supervisors outside regular class hours. Through social media, students can easily reach out to their instructors and receive academic guidance, making educational support more accessible.

3. **Building Relationships (18%):** Social media usage was reported to aid in building positive relationships between students and teachers or supervisors. Participants mentioned that engaging with instructors on social media humanizes them, creating a friendly and approachable learning environment.

4. **Sharing Academic Resources (16%):** Social media platforms are valuable tools for sharing academic resources. Students can access and distribute study materials, assignments, and other educational content through these platforms.

5. **Recognition and Appreciation (10%):** A subset of participants expressed that social media usage allows for recognition and appreciation from teachers and supervisors for academic achievements or contributions. Public acknowledgement and encouragement on social media positively impact students' motivation and confidence.

Impact of Social Media Usage on Academic Performance:
The researcher explored how social media usage affects university students' academic performance. The open-ended responses were carefully analyzed and grouped into themes to gain insights into the various impacts of social media on academic achievement. The table

below presents the results of the content analysis.

Table 15
Impact of Social Media Usage on Academic Performance

S. No	Theme	Code	Frequency	Proportion (%)
1	Access to Educational Resources	A	93	29
2	Online Study Groups and Collaboration	O	72	22
3	Timely Information and Updates	T	66	20
4	Networking Opportunities	N	51	16
5	Motivation and Support	M	42	13
	Total Responses		324	100

The analysis reveals five distinct themes that illustrate how social media usage impacts students' academic performance:

1. **Access to Educational Resources (29%):** The largest proportion of responses emphasized how social media provides students with access to educational resources. Participants mentioned that social media platforms are valuable repositories of study materials, academic articles, research papers, and educational videos, facilitating self-directed learning.

2. **Online Study Groups and Collaboration (22%):** Many respondents highlighted the role of social media in fostering online study groups

and facilitating collaborative learning. Virtual study groups enable students to exchange ideas, clarify concepts, and work on assignments or projects collectively.

3. **Timely Information and Updates (20%):** Social media usage was reported to keep students informed about academic updates, such as changes in schedules, assignment deadlines, and exam dates. Timely information helps students plan their studies effectively.

4. **Networking Opportunities (16%):** Participants mentioned that social media provides networking opportunities with peers, seniors, faculty, and professionals in their field of study. Building a network of contacts through social media can lead to potential academic and career opportunities.

5. **Motivation and Support (13%):** A subset of participants expressed that social media offers motivation and support for academic endeavours. Encouraging messages, study tips, and academic achievements shared on social media contribute to students' motivation and self-belief.

Effectiveness of Learning Modes for Academic Needs Gratification:

The researchers have explored students' opinions on the effectiveness of different learning modes, specifically comparing social media-based learning with traditional physical classes. The open-ended responses were systematically analyzed and categorized into themes to understand students' preferences and perspectives on academic needs gratification. The table below presents the results of the content analysis.

Table 16

Effectiveness of Learning Modes for Academic Needs Gratification

S.No	Theme	Code	F	Proportion (%)
1	Individual's learning style	IL	60	19
2	Subject matter	S	39	12
3	Quality of the resources available	Q	84	26
4	Classes Schedule	C	75	23
5	Interaction with each other	I	66	20
	Total Responses		324	100

The analysis reveals five distinct themes that shed light on students' perceptions of the effectiveness of learning modes:

1. **Individual's Learning Style (19%):** A significant proportion of responses emphasized the importance of individual learning styles in determining the effectiveness of a learning mode. Students expressed that their personal learning preferences and styles might align better with one mode over the other.

2. **Subject Matter (12%):** Participants mentioned that the nature of the subject matter influenced their preference for learning modes. Some subjects may be better suited for social media-based learning, while others may require face-to-face interactions in physical classes.

3. **Quality of the Resources Available (26%):** Many respondents highlighted the significance of the quality and availability of educational resources in

both modes. Learning effectiveness depends on the accessibility and relevance of study materials and resources.

4. **Classes Schedule (23%):** Social media-based learning offers greater flexibility in terms of class schedules, allowing students to study at their own pace. On the other hand, physical classes follow fixed schedules, which may or may not align with individual preferences.

5. **Interaction with Each Other (20%):** Students mentioned the importance of interaction with peers and teachers for academic needs gratification. Some expressed that face-to-face interactions in physical classes enhance communication and foster collaborative learning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, researchers can draw several conclusions regarding the role of social media in academic needs gratification among university students. The research questions were carefully examined, and the data analysis provided valuable insights into the relationship between social media usage, academic needs fulfilment, and its impact on academic performance and interactions with teachers. It is concluded that the majority of university students reported using social media for academic needs gratification, with a significant proportion acknowledging its positive impact on their academic experiences. The study revealed that a significant number of students believed that social media positively influenced their academic performance, primarily through access to educational resources, online study groups, and timely information updates when physical classes were suspended due to corona pandemic and regime change in Afghanistan in August 2021.

The findings highlighted that social media significantly enhanced students' interaction with teachers and supervisors, leading to increased accessibility and building better relationships between them. This research recognizes the significance of integrating social media platforms into academic settings to promote engagement and interaction between students and educators. It recommends that educational institutions can leverage social media to facilitate academic discussions, share resources, and create a sense of community among students and faculty.

The findings emphasize the need for policymakers to recognize social media's potential in addressing academic needs and explore ways to harness these platforms effectively. Policymakers can support initiatives that promote responsible social media use for educational purposes. The study also provides university students with insights into the diverse benefits of social media for academic needs gratification. It encourages students to utilize social media platforms responsibly, balancing entertainment with educational purposes.

The study recommends that universities should conduct awareness campaigns and workshops to educate students about the responsible use of social media for academic purposes, emphasizing information accuracy and credibility and avoiding misinformation. Academic institutions should integrate social media platforms into their learning management systems to encourage academic discussions, resource sharing, and virtual collaboration among students and faculty.

The findings also recommend that universities should provide training and support to faculty members to effectively use social media platforms as supplementary teaching tools to engage students and foster academic discussions so that when needed, they can make the best use of technology.

The research has illuminated the significant role of social media in meeting the academic needs of university students. The study's findings highlighted the positive impact of social media

on academic performance, interaction with teachers, and academic needs gratification when physical classes were postponed. By leveraging social media effectively, educational institutions, policymakers, and students can enhance the overall learning experience and foster a positive academic environment. This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge and provides practical implications for optimizing the use of social media in the academic sphere. As technology continues to evolve, further research is warranted to explore the ever-changing dynamics between social media and academic needs gratification for the benefit of students and educators alike.

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QUESTIONNAIRE
The Role of Social Media and Academic Needs Gratification of University Students: A Case Study of Laghman University, Afghanistan

Section 1: Demographic Information
1. Gender: [ ] Male [ ] Female
2. Age: _____
3. Department/Faculty: _____

Section 2: Social Media Usage
4. Which social media platforms do you actively use? (Select all that apply)
[ ] Facebook
[ ] Instagram
[ ] Twitter
[ ] Snapchat
[ ] TikTok
[ ] YouTube
[ ] LinkedIn
[ ] Other: _____

5. On average, how many hours per day do you spend on social media?
[ ] Less than 1 hour
[ ] 1-2 hours
[ ] 2-3 hours
[ ] 3-4 hours
[ ] More than 4 hours

6. What purposes do you use social media for? (Select all that apply)
[ ] Entertainment
[ ] Socializing/Connecting with friends and peers
[ ] Information/news consumption
[ ] Academic purposes (e.g., accessing educational resources, discussions with classmates)
[ ] Escaping from daily life stress
[ ] Other: _____

Section 3: Academic Needs Gratification
7. Do you feel that social media helps you satisfy your academic needs?
[ ] Yes

[ ] No
[ ] Not sure

8. How does social media contribute to your academic needs gratification? (Open-ended)

Section 4: Interaction with Teachers/Supervisors

9. Do you feel that social media usage affects your interaction with teachers/supervisors?
   [ ] Yes
   [ ] No
   [ ] Not sure

10. How does social media usage impact your interaction with teachers/supervisors? (Open-ended)

Section 5: Academic Performance

11. Do you believe that your social media usage affects your academic performance?
    [ ] Yes
    [ ] No
    [ ] Not sure

12. If yes, in what ways do you think social media usage affects your academic performance? (Open-ended)

Section 6: Satisfaction and Comparison with Physical Classes

13. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate your satisfaction with learning through social media.
    [ ] 1 - Not satisfied at all
    [ ] 2 - Slightly satisfied
    [ ] 3 - Moderately satisfied
    [ ] 4 - Very satisfied
    [ ] 5 - Completely satisfied

14. On a scale of 1 to 5, rate your satisfaction with learning in physical classes.
    [ ] 1 - Not satisfied at all
    [ ] 2 - Slightly satisfied
    [ ] 3 - Moderately satisfied
    [ ] 4 - Very satisfied
    [ ] 5 - Completely satisfied

15. In your opinion, which mode of learning (social media or physical classes) is more effective for your academic needs gratification? Why? (Open-ended)

Section 7: Additional Comments

16. Do you have any additional comments or thoughts regarding the role of social media and academic needs gratification? (Open-ended)

Thank you for your participation! Your responses will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.