

## ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING PAKHTOON CULTURE IN KHYBER PAKHTOON KHAWA

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### ABSTRACT

This research article examines the substantial influence of social media platforms on the dissemination and promotion of Pakhtoon culture in the region of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa (KPK), with particular emphasis on the city of Mardan. A descriptive survey methodology was employed to gather data from a sample of 200 participants, utilizing interviews and questionnaires as the primary data collection instruments. The research findings indicate that social media platforms have a significant impact on the development and reinforcement of cultural identity, as well as facilitating intercultural interactions. It enables the exchange of knowledge, fosters political consciousness, and promotes social interactions among individuals. The impact of social media on individuals' lifestyles and interpersonal connections has been predominantly positive; however, it has also given rise to apprehensions regarding addictive behaviors and improper usage. The results underscore the significance of conscientious utilization of social media in order to harness its capacity for societal change.

**Keywords;** Social media, Intercultural connections, political awareness, Pakhtoon Culture

### INTRODUCTION

The advent of social media platforms has brought about a significant transformation in the manner in which different cultures engage and adjust to each other, surpassing the limitations imposed by physical distance and enabling the establishment of worldwide connections (Miladi, 2016). It functions as a manifestation of personal values, cultural practises, ideological convictions, and societal standards, thereby establishing a distinctive identity for each nation (Altuwayjiri, 2019). Social media platforms facilitate the acquisition of knowledge about foreign nations, the establishment and sustenance of social connections, and the exchange of opinions regarding events and circumstances in individuals' countries of origin (Oparaocha, 2016). The integration of new media and globalisation has resulted in a global village, where the boundaries of time and space appear to converge, thereby establishing a sense of interconnectedness throughout the world (Zembylas & Vrasidas, 2005).

The profound influence of social media on intercultural adaptation has been underscored by Chen's (2010) research, which emphasises the accelerated communication and interaction facilitated by these platforms. The capacity to effectively communicate and interact with individuals from various cultural backgrounds significantly contributes to the impact of social media on cultural dynamics.

The influence of 2G and 3G technologies is evident across multiple domains of life in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province. Technological advances have made many things easier and more accessible. Google Maps can help people navigate unfamiliar places with mobile phones and data connections. Travel and exploration have changed due to rapid information availability. Social networking platforms provide enable access to many resources and services. Social media in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) has improved people's

lifestyles by providing access to a wide variety of recipes and the ability to order Careem at any time. 2G and 3G technology allow people to connect, communicate, and interact at all times. The behaviour reported allows older people to preserve familial relationships and make new economic ties. These technologies have helped KPK build a more connected and efficient society, raising living standards (Pagani et al., 2008).

Social media and mobile broadband affect KPK beyond convenience and economic development (Hanif et al., 2018). The above technologies have contributed to the region's socioeconomic growth. 2G and 3G networks have improved connectivity, boosting the economy and creating jobs. New infrastructure and broadband connections have impacted job creation, particularly in the construction and telecommunications sectors (Cambini & Jiang, 2009). Mobile technology have helped entrepreneurs create new businesses by fostering innovation and efficiency. Technological advances have promoted economic growth and social cohesiveness by making society more interconnected. 2G and 3G technologies shape KPK's development beyond individual use (Ybarra et al., 2008).

Social media adoption in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) has increased due to cheaper internet and smart device availability. The enhanced accessibility and cost-effectiveness of these technologies have facilitated greater inclusion and engagement of individuals within the digital realm. Government initiatives targeting the provision of digital access to students have significantly contributed to the rise in social media utilisation. However, it is noteworthy that although social media is employed for educational purposes, such as the exchange of assignments and the availability of tutorial videos, its predominant utilisation among students in KPK is frequently oriented towards entertainment and social interaction. The findings of surveys conducted among graduate students in universities located in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province indicate a greater preference for utilising social media platforms as a means of communication and information sharing, as opposed to educational objectives. The accessibility of social media platforms has facilitated the ability of students to maintain connections with friends and family,

resulting in a substantial allocation of their daily time towards engaging in social media interactions. The influence of social media on the younger generation in KPK is multifaceted, involving both advantageous and disadvantageous elements (O Keeffe et al., 2011).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Through an examination of the attitudes held by individuals residing in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province towards social media, as well as an analysis of their usage patterns, significant insights can be obtained regarding the types of social media platforms that are both advantageous and favored within this particular region. This comprehension allows for the evaluation of the most efficient strategies to effectively engage and communicate with the individuals residing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) by utilizing social media platforms. The role of social media in facilitating knowledge sharing, cultural exchange, and the dissemination of vital information for the progress and development of individuals and communities in KPK is apparent. Furthermore, this research underscores the significance of employing responsible and conscientious practices when utilizing social media platforms. By advocating for ethical practices and increasing awareness regarding the potential adverse outcomes of misuse, we can effectively steer individuals in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province towards employing social media in a productive and beneficial manner. Highlighting the importance of critical thinking, verification of facts, and engaging in respectful discourse on social media platforms can aid individuals in effectively navigating the extensive array of information and diverse viewpoints accessible on the internet. The impact of social media on the population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) should not be underestimated. The medium possesses the capacity to influence perspectives, galvanize collectives, cultivate cross-cultural empathy, and facilitate societal transformation.

### **Objectives of the Study**

To evaluate the attitude of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa people towards social media and measure the spending time on it.

To assess the beneficial and preferred form of social media for Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa people.

To recommend some measure for proper use of social media in right direction to inform and educate the people

The current study provides insights into the significant influence of social media on the individuals residing in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa (KPK) in diverse aspects of their existence. The pervasive integration of social media into the daily lives and social interactions of individuals in KPK has resulted in a notable impact on various aspects of their lives, including social dynamics, political consciousness, religious observances, educational endeavors, cultural patterns, and other domains.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The utilization of social media has become an essential component of contemporary society, as individuals allocate a substantial portion of their time to actively participating in diverse online platforms. Kandell (2000) noted that people are compulsive users of social media. "Social media addiction," or excessive social media use, can affect daily life. Kohals' (2001) study also shows how social media affects intercultural communication by showing people's stages of adaptation and culture shock when interacting with varied cultures online. Baruah (2002) stressed the importance of social media as a platform for forums, blogs, microblogging, and other communication channels. Online knowledge sharing allows people from varied backgrounds to collaborate and share information. Despite its many benefits, Arthur (2002) warned of the ethical and privacy risks of misusing social networking. This research review emphasizes the importance of understanding how social media affects human behavior and intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural adaptation is crucial to building and maintaining functioning connections in a new culture, according to Gudykunts (2003). Sunden (2003) studied how different social media platforms help social networks connect. These platforms let individuals express themselves and converse. In a world of interrelated cultures, Vicere (2004) stressed the significance of a global worldview. Global communication competency, which includes cognitive, behavioral, and value-based dimensions, promotes intercultural understanding and effective

communication, according to Chen (2005). The literature review emphasizes the different effects of social media on intercultural adaptation and communication, underlining the need for further research.

Java et al. (2007) examined how Twitter affects intercultural discussions. Twitter lets people share current news and engage with others, encouraging interconnectedness and cultural curiosity. Twitter has become a popular platform for people to interact with friends, public figures, and varied interests, fostering intercultural debate and knowledge sharing. Social media's influence on intercultural contacts needs a careful evaluation of its ability to promote cross-cultural understanding and its addiction and privacy issues. This academic paper examines how social media affects intercultural dialogue.

Social media has changed how people communicate and connect, both within their personal social circles and beyond cultures (Haythornthwaite, 2005). Twitter can provide real-time updates and foster a sense of connectivity, according to Dan (2006). Social media platforms help people connect with friends, family, and peers. This virtual space fosters communal unity. These platforms allow creative expressions and spoken commentary. However, understanding how social media use affects intercultural communication and behavior is crucial. Businesses may connect with customers and promote their products and values through social media (Stockdale et al., 2012). Moore and Susan (2008) recommended firms use Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to actively engage with the public and build stronger relationships with their target audience. Online contact between publics and brands allows for rapid feedback and support. Nowak (2008) also noted that devices like the iPhone can connect users to social media platforms, allowing them to interact regardless of location. However, Bradley (2009) warned that social media success depends on following six essential principles, with a focus on authentic online interactions and user sovereignty.

The influence of social media on youth culture has been substantial, as evidenced by the widespread popularity of platforms such as Facebook among adolescents (Lenhart & Smith, 2010). The advent of social media platforms has significantly transformed interpersonal interactions and communication patterns, offering individuals the ability to reconnect

with past acquaintances, establish new relationships, and exchange thoughts, multimedia content, and visual representations. According to Chen Wenli (2009), immigrants derive advantages from social media platforms as they utilize them for the purpose of maintaining communication with both their family and friends in their countries of origin, as well as individuals residing in their host countries. Nevertheless, Madge (2009) issued a warning regarding the potential adverse impacts of Facebook's widespread popularity on youth culture, despite acknowledging its potential for educational purposes. Notwithstanding these apprehensions, it is indisputable that social media has emerged as a potent instrument for facilitating intercultural communication. It allows individuals hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds to establish connections, comprehend one another's language and way of life, and bridge the divide engendered by geographical separations (George Town University, 2010).

### **Social Media's Impact on KPK's Cultural Identity and Entrepreneurship**

Among Diverse CulturesThe world we live in is incredibly diverse on a cultural level, and social media plays an essential part in fostering affinities and interdependence. It provides a variety of services including conversation, texting, the sharing of descriptions, rapid publishing, and multimedia material. People's lives now inextricably incorporate the use of social media due to the medium's ever-increasing popularity and pervasive presence in their lives. It enables people to connect with one another, carry on conversations, and interact with the massive amounts of information that are easily accessible on the internet. The engaging conversations that are encouraged on social media platforms contribute to a greater depth of understanding of a variety of points of view. According to research published by Georgetown University in 2010, new forms of social media have enabled users to become both publishers and critics, hence facilitating active engagement in debates and dialogues. The democratisation of communication has had a tremendous impact on the ways in which people engage with one another and the experiences that define their cultures.

### **Social Media's Impact on KPK's Cultural Identity and Entrepreneurship**

The effects of social media are felt not just on a personal and regional scale, but also at a worldwide level. The advent of the World Wide Web in 1989 has brought about a significant transformation in global communication. Social media has emerged as a prominent platform facilitating intercultural connections, information sharing, and diverse modes of communication. Cultural variances, such as the inclination towards individualism or collectivism, exert an impact on the communication and behavioural patterns of social media users. Individualistic cultures value new connections and visibility, while collectivistic societies value close relationships within a limited social circle. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), social media has promoted cultural heritage, entrepreneurship, and interpersonal connections. This website allows local entrepreneurs to promote and sell traditional products, allowing women to work from home. Social media's impact on KPK shows its ability to affect people's experiences, foster social relationships, and progress society (Afzal, 2015).

As seen in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa, social media affects communities outside the global realm. Social media has given individuals in this region a voice they never had that may be heard by many. When discussing various topics online, people feel more confident. Social media has raised users' political and social awareness, improving their lives and access to global information. Social media allows Pakhtoons to display their traditional clothing and engage in cross-cultural discussion (Boyd, 2007). Social media has boosted participation, awareness, and expression in many areas of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa's life. Second- and third-generation (2G and 3G) technology have greatly impacted KPK's social media use. Social media has become a powerful tool for communication in the 21st century, which is marked by advances in information and technology. Mobile internet and cellular technology have changed worldwide communication practises, along with radio, television, and telephones. This is especially prevalent among Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's younger population. Despite KPK's reputation for technical underdevelopment, people from diverse backgrounds have enthusiastically adopted mobile technology, transcending socioeconomic class, race,

religious views, and societal prejudices. In this technologically advanced era, social media has become a vital part of people's lives, significantly changing their lifestyles (Pagani et al., 2008).

Social media has changed communication, intercultural encounters, and individual behavior, as shown by the literature study. Social media has changed how people connect, share, and interact across borders. The digital revolution may cause addiction and privacy concerns. However, social media remains a powerful tool for businesses to reach their target market and for individuals to stay in touch with friends and family. Social media's dynamic interaction with international communication has revolutionized how cultures interact, enabling global distribution of ideas, information, and personal encounters. To develop, we must understand social media and its effects on culture, communication, and morals. To build a more linked and inclusive global society, understanding its strengths and weaknesses is crucial.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive survey examined social media's impact on Mardan's Pakhtoon population. To achieve this goal, a simple random sample of 200 Mardan residents was selected. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data about social media use and society.

The study area, Mardan, holds significance due to its status as a vibrant urban center situated in the Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa Province. It is noteworthy for its relatively high literacy rate and superior standard of living in comparison to numerous other cities within the region. Gaining an understanding of the social dynamics and influence exerted by social media within a given context can yield valuable insights into the ways in which digital communication affects individuals' daily lives and interpersonal connections.

Interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data from community members who use social media. The interview schedule was carefully designed to meet the research goals, featuring parts on social media use and efficacy. The researcher's supervisor and supervisory committee members examined and finalized the interview schedule to ensure accuracy and relevance. Statistical analysis followed data collection. Frequency distribution and

percentage computations were used to appropriately describe the data. Bivariate analysis, notably chi-square tests, was used to examine potential correlations between independent and dependent variables.

The precisely constructed methodology allowed a systematic assessment of social media's impact on Mardan's Pakhtoon population, providing important socio-cultural insights. This study could contribute to sociology and help us understand how social media shapes modern cultures.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Data research shows how social media affects the Pakhtoon community in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa. To understand the sample, the study evaluated demographic variables such as gender, age, educational attainment, occupation, income level, and family size. 70% of responses were men. The 20-40 age group was also prominent. 77.5% of respondents had master's degrees. 70% of respondents worked in the private sector, and income varied by category.

Social media's impact was investigated. 93% of participants used social media and 71% said it promoted Pakhtoon culture. A social media usage analysis showed that Facebook (56.5%) and Skype (33.5%) were the most popular platforms. Social media affects language (20%), clothes (76.5%), and food (48%). This phenomenon also affected social interactions, with 87% of respondents reporting changes in family structures and 76.5% in marital patterns.

Social media has both beneficial and bad effects, according to study. 53.5 percent of participants accepted social media-induced lifestyle changes and educational possibilities. Nonetheless, apprehensions were raised regarding potential adverse consequences, specifically in relation to cross-gender friendships, which accounted for 59.5% of concerns, as well as the potential influence on teenagers with regards to smoking and drinking, which constituted 48% of concerns. Moreover, the impact of social media on political participation was apparent, as a majority of participants (68%) recognized its importance in influencing political perspectives and rallying backing for political causes.

**Table:**  
*Social Media Influence on Respondents*

Aspect	Description	Percentage
Gender	Male	70%
	Female	30%
Culture	Plays a Basic Role	71%
	Does Not Play a Role	29%
Behavior and Routine	Strongly Agree	48%
	Agree	23.5%
	Neutral	11.5%
	Disagree	17%
Dress Pattern	Strongly Agree	32.5%
	Agree	44%
	Neutral	16.5%
Food Pattern	Disagree	7%
	Strongly Agree	13.5%
	Agree	34.5%
	Neutral	39.5%
	Disagree	9%
	Strongly Disagree	3.5%

The aforementioned findings indicate that social media has become a potent instrument in influencing the cultural and social milieu of the Pakhtoon community, thereby exemplifying the growing assimilation of technology into their everyday routines. Nonetheless, it also draws focus to the prospective difficulties associated with upholding conventional values and customs in the midst of the digital revolution. Additional investigation and heightened consciousness are imperative in order to establish a harmonious and enduring cultural progression amidst the influence of social media.

**Result and Conclusion**

The research undertaken to examine the impact of social media on the promotion of Pakhtoon culture in the region of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa resulted in significant and enlightening results. The study unveiled that social media has become an essential tool in the contemporary era, facilitating global and local connectivity among individuals. The findings of the survey conducted in Mardan city indicate that social media platforms, including Facebook, Skype, and Twitter, are extensively utilized. Among these platforms, Facebook emerges as the most prevalent, with a usage rate of 33.5%. Skype follows closely behind with a usage rate of 56.5%, while Twitter lags behind with a usage rate of 9%.

The findings of the study suggest that social media exerts a substantial influence on the lifestyle and behavior of individuals. The platform has provided a

means for the residents of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa to assert their opinions and address their concerns with increased confidence. The utilization of social media platforms has additionally played a role in fostering heightened political and social consciousness within society, facilitating active engagement in substantive discussions and dialogues pertaining to a wide range of topics.

The study additionally emphasized the influence of social media on the physical activities and sports participation of young individuals, as they are progressively inclined to allocate their time towards social media usage instead. Nevertheless, it has also yielded favorable transformations, such as cultivating intercultural comprehension and acquainting individuals with diverse norms, values, and customs.

The study revealed several drawbacks related to the utilization of social media, including the receipt of unsolicited messages, the presence of politically contentious links, and the dissemination of unethical or inconsequential material. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the overall influence of social media has proven advantageous, as it fosters socio-political consciousness, improves linguistic aptitude and online communication abilities, and empowers women across diverse domains.

In summary, social media has brought about a significant transformation in the modes of communication, interaction, and information retrieval for individuals residing in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa and beyond. The utilization of this tool has proven to be highly effective in the promotion of Pakhtoon culture and the cultivation of a shared sense of interdependence among individuals. Although there exist apprehensions regarding the potential adverse effects, the favorable aspects of the subject surpass the associated limitations. Social media possesses the capacity to influence and would societies, foster cultural understanding, and enable individuals to actively engage in diverse aspects of life. The ongoing advancement of technology necessitates the strategic utilization of social media to maximize its potential for positive societal outcomes, thereby promoting equilibrium and fostering constructive effects.

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