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"A Study on the Social Media Usage and Academic Life Satisfaction Among Undergraduate Students in Trichy and Dindigul District"

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between social media usage and academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Trichy and Dindigul districts. A quantitative descriptive research design was adopted with a sample of 2026 students selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using standardized scales measuring social media usage and academic life satisfaction. Statistical techniques such as correlation, t-test, ANOVA, and chi-square were applied using SPSS. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between social media usage and academic life satisfaction (r = 0.531). However, excessive usage, especially prolonged mobile phone use, negatively affects academic satisfaction. Significant differences were observed across age, gender, and district. Younger students reported higher academic satisfaction, while older students showed higher social media usage. Female students had higher academic satisfaction, whereas males showed higher usage levels. Students from Dindigul reported greater academic satisfaction compared to Trichy students. The study highlights the importance of balanced social media usage for enhancing academic well-being.

Key words: Social Media Usage, Academic Life Satisfaction, Undergraduate Students, Mobile Phone Usage, Academic Performance, Student Well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Young people's social, psychological, and academic life have been profoundly altered by the quick growth of social media platforms, especially college students. Social media has become an essential element of students' everyday lives, impacting their communication, learning, and self-perception due to the widespread availability of smartphones and reasonably priced internet connection. Excessive or uncontrolled use of social media has been linked to distraction, procrastination, decreased academic interest, and psychological issues, even if it promotes knowledge sharing, peer contact, and academic collaboration. Understanding the connection between social media use and academic life satisfaction is essential in this situation, particularly for undergraduate students who are still developing both personally and academically. The present study attempts to examine social media usage patterns and their association with academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Trichy and Dindigul districts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The twenty-first century's unprecedented digital revolution has fundamentally altered how people communicate, share information, and build social ties. Social networking services including Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), Twitter (2006, now X), Instagram (2010), and TikTok (2016) have fundamentally altered how individuals express themselves and engage with one another. The Digital 2024 Global Overview Report states that over 4.95 billion people, or more than 61% of the world's population, actively utilize social media (Kemp, 2024). In addition to being communication tools, these platforms are efficient ecosystems that have an impact on business, education, entertainment, and mental health.

The boundaries between private and public life have become more hazy as a result of social media's broad use, blending virtual and actual identities (Boyd, 2014). People currently perform and depict their identities online through carefully selected images, posts, and discussions, which affects how they view themselves and others

(Goffman, 1959; Hogan, 2010). The performative nature of social media makes it an important psychological and sociological phenomenon. The introduction of mobile internet technology and affordable cell phones has intensified this integration, especially among young people in underdeveloped countries (Pew Research Center, 2023). Consequently, the virtual world has developed into a parallel social context where emotional validation, acknowledgment, and belonging are continuously contested.

Social media makes knowledge more accessible and democratic, but it also promotes social comparison, dependence, and exposure to unrealistic standards. Anxiety, "Facebook depression," and FOMO have all been connected to excessive use (Przybylski et al., 2013; Błachnio et al., 2016). Due to its dual nature, which may be both advantageous and detrimental, social media is an important field for psychological and educational research.

Social Media's Psychological and Academic Impacts

The psychological consequences of social media have been thoroughly demonstrated by recent studies. Although it is linked to low self-esteem, emotional exhaustion, and focus problems (Vogel et al., 2014), it also enhances peer connectedness, communication, and self-expression (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). Social media's capacity to enable constant social comparison, in which people evaluate their worth based on the meticulously produced images of others, may lead to feelings of inadequacy, envy, and a loss in life satisfaction (Festinger, 1954; Chou & Edge, 2012).

When it comes to academics, social media has two sides. While it facilitates communication, teamwork, and resource sharing between students and teachers (Junco, 2012; Tess, 2013), it can also result in procrastination, distraction, and lower academic output (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010). According to research, balancing academic work with online relationships might lead to focus issues and decreased cognitive efficiency (Rosen et al., 2013). Despite this, social media is still crucial for today's students since it offers a forum for peer education, networking, and emotional support. Lopez-Fernandez et al. (2021) provide more evidence in favor of the theory that Spanish students who use Instagram negatively perform worse on assignments and experience more anxiety when taking assessments. However, even if social media might help with informal learning, its overuse consistently undermines academic performance and student engagement.

Social media use and sleep problems are having a detrimental effect on kids' academic performance and well-being in many cultures. Tang et al. (2021) found that utilizing TikTok late at night significantly affected students' academic performance and sleep deprivation in a study involving 1,200 university students in China. Accordingly, a study by Levenson et al. (2020) on 1,005 college students in the US discovered a strong link between problematic Facebook use at night and poor sleep, high levels of depression symptoms, and much worse academic satisfaction.

This pattern was further supported by Yildirim et al. (2020) in Turkey, who found that the time spent online between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. was the largest predictor of academic unhappiness. They also emphasized how sleep deprivation significantly affects pupils' capacity to focus and perform academically. All of the previously described findings suggest that sleep disturbance is a powerful mediating mechanism via which excessive and inefficient use of social media negatively impacts students' academic performance and overall wellbeing.

While much of the literature highlights the risks associated with excessive social media use, a growing body of research indicates that social media can foster social connections and academic collaboration when used in deliberate and planned ways. Chukwuere and Chukwuere (2020) showed how peer-to-peer communication, quick question clarification, and the development of supportive learning communities were all facilitated by platforms such as Facebook study groups and WhatsApp discussion forums, which enhanced collaborative learning among South African undergraduates.

The benefits of guided use in academic settings were highlighted by Al-Rahmi et al. (2020), who conducted a thorough survey with 923 Malaysian university students and found that the integration of social media into official

e-learning platforms strongly predicted increased academic engagement, increased knowledge sharing, and enhanced motivation.

Lepp, Barkley, and Karpinski's (2014) study examined the relationship between mobile phone use, academic performance, anxiety, and satisfaction with life (SWL) among American college students, highlighting the behavioral and psychological implications of regular cell phone use. Using sizable samples (N=496 for overall cell phone use and N=490 for texting), the researchers investigated two path models. They found that whereas anxiety was negatively connected with SWL and GPA was positively correlated with SWL, higher texting and mobile phone use were positively correlated with anxiety and negatively correlated with GPA. These findings suggest that excessive cell phone use may have an indirect detrimental effect on life satisfaction by decreasing academic performance and increasing anxiety.

Additional data from previous studies supports these conclusions, showing that excessive cell phone use hinders social adjustment, physical activity, and academic engagement, resulting in lower outcomes in wellbeing and achievement. According to Lepp, Barkley, and Karpinski (2014), the study emphasizes that while mobile devices are necessary for students' daily lives, excessive use of them might negatively impact their academic performance and mental health.

Balkis (2013) examined the relationships between academic procrastination, academic life satisfaction, and academic achievement, highlighting the role of students' rational study beliefs as a mediating factor. Research based on cognitive-behavioral frameworks found that higher levels of academic procrastination were associated with worse academic accomplishment and lower academic life satisfaction. Students' unhelpful or illogical attitudes about studying contributed to these unfavorable results. Conversely, rational beliefs—such as valuing diligence, persistence, and effective study methods—acted as a protective barrier against the detrimental effects of procrastination, encouraging increased productivity and satisfaction. Research suggests that promoting rational study practices may reduce procrastinating tendencies, enhancing academic achievement and overall academic life satisfaction (Balkis, 2013).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Prior research has emphasized social media's dual character, highlighting both its advantages and disadvantages. According to research based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory, students actively utilize social media to meet their emotional, social, and academic demands. On the other hand, constant exposure to carefully chosen web content might result in discontent and decreased wellbeing, according to Social Comparison Theory. Research has shown that while moderate and intentional use of social media can improve learning and collaboration, excessive use is linked to anxiety, sleep disturbances, poor academic performance, and decreased academic satisfaction. Nevertheless, there is little empirical data from semi-urban and rural areas like Trichy and Dindigul, and the majority of current research is focused on Western or urban situations. This gap necessitates a contextualized investigation into how socio-demographic and academic factors interact with social media usage and academic life satisfaction in these regions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The impact of social media on academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students in various regional and socioeconomic contexts is not well understood empirically, despite the growing integration of social media into students' personal and academic lives. Students frequently find it difficult to strike a balance between their heavy social media usage and academic obligations, which can either help or hurt their academic happiness. It is challenging for educators, institutions, and policymakers to formulate suitable solutions due to the absence of region-specific research. Therefore, by methodically investigating social media usage and its connection to academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students in the districts of Trichy and Dindigul, the current study aims to close this gap.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the socio-demographic, educational, family, and social media characteristics of undergraduate students.
2. To assess the level of social media usage among undergraduate students.
3. To measure the level of academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students.
4. To analyze the relationship between social media usage and academic life satisfaction.
5. To examine differences in social media usage and academic life satisfaction based on age, gender, district, and mobile phone usage for study.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher for the study adopted a quantitative, descriptive design. Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire to undergraduate students from colleges in Trichy and Dindigul districts. The questionnaire included sections on socio-demographic details, social media usage, and academic life satisfaction. Standardized scales were used to ensure reliability and validity. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, Karl Pearson's correlation, Independent sample *t*-tests, One-Way ANOVA, and effect size measures (Eta square and Cohen's *d*). The data were analysed using appropriate statistical software, the trial version of IBM SPSS 2026.

SAMPLING METHOD

The researcher adapted stratified random sampling technique for the study. Colleges were selected from Trichy and Dindigul districts, and undergraduate students were chosen using proportionate sampling to ensure adequate representation from both districts, genders, and academic streams. The final sample comprised 2026 undergraduate students, with 1014 students from Trichy and 1012 students from Dindigul.

TOOLS USED

1. To understand the selected socio demographic characteristics of the undergraduate students the researcher in consultation with his research guide and doctoral committee members has prepared semi structured interview scheduled with closed ended questions. 31 such questions have been prepared for this purpose.

2. To understand and measure the level of social media usage, 17 items with 9-point rating scale developed by Alison B. Tuck1 & Renee J. Thompson - Washington University in St. Louis, Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences. The study was published in (2023) was used this scale has got high Internal consistency reliability: ~.75–.86 (good), Validity: Supported through factor analyses and convergent evidence (Supported through EFA & CFA).

3. To understand and measure the level of Academic Life Satisfaction for the undergraduate students the scale developed and standardized by Dr. P. K. Sudheesh Kumar and Dileep P. 2007). 26 items with 11-point rating scale was used. This scale also has got high reliability (Cronbach's α): 0.88 and validity r ≈ 0.6**2** with academic achievement.

TABLE: 1 Distribution of the Students based on Socio Demographic Characteristics: Personal Data. 1–4 (Socio-Demographic Differences)

S.NO	FACTORS		TRICHY (1014)	DINDIGUL (1012)	TOTAL (2026)	Stat. Result
1	**AGE**					$X^2 = 3.233$ df=2 $p<.199^{NS}$
	1. Below 18	N	394	425	819	
		%	38.9%	42.0%	40.4%	

	2. (19 to 20)	N	532	516	1048	
		%	52.5%	51.0%	51.7%	
	3. (Above 21)	N	88	71	159	
		%	8.7%	7.0%	7.8%	
2	**GENDER**					
	1. Male	N	599	497	1096	**X^2 = 20.24 df=1 p<.001**
		%	59.1%	49.1%	54.1%	
	2. Female	N	415	515	930	
		%	40.9%	50.9%	45.9%	
3	**PLACE OF STAY**					
	1. Hostel	N	294	110	404	**X^2 = 104.22 df=1 p<.001**
		%	29.0%	10.9%	19.9%	
	2. Home	N	720	902	1622	
		%	71.0%	89.1%	80.1%	
4	**PLACE OF LIVING**					
	1. Urban	N	533	365	898	**X^2 = 55.85 df=1 p<.001**
		%	52.6%	36.1%	44.3%	
	2. Rural	N	481	647	1128	
		%	47.4%	63.9%	55.7%	

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

1. Age

The chi-square test revealed no significant association between age groups and district, χ^2 (2, N = 2026) = 3.23, p = .199. The majority of respondents were between 19–20 years (51.7%), followed by below 18 years (40.4%), and above 21 years (7.8%). The similarity across districts indicates that the age distribution of undergraduate students is relatively uniform across Trichy and Dindigul.

2. Gender

A significant association was found between gender and district, χ^2(1, N = 2026) = 20.24, p < .001. In Trichy, a higher proportion of respondents were male (59.1%), whereas in Dindigul, female respondents predominated (50.9%). This suggests variation in gender representation across the two study locations.

3. Place of Stay

A significant association was found between place of stay and district, χ^2(1, N = 2026) = 104.22, p < .001. More students from Trichy stayed in hostels (29%), whereas only 10.9% of Dindigul students stayed in hostels. Day scholars were more common in Dindigul (89.1%) than in Trichy (71%). This difference may influence study habits, social media exposure, and quality of life.

4. Place of Living

Place of living (urban/rural) also differed significantly across districts, χ^2(1, N = 2026) = 55.85, p < .001. Trichy had more urban students (52.6%), while Dindigul had more rural students (63.9%). This urban–rural variation may affect access to internet facilities, social media usage, and lifestyle factors influencing self-esteem and academic satisfaction.

TABLE:2 Distribution of the Students based on Socio Demographic Characteristics: Educational Data.

S.NO	FACTORS		TRICHY (1014)	DINDIGUL (1012)	TOTAL (2026)	Stat. Result
1	**V1 DEPARTMENT**					
	1. Arts	N	436	742	1178	**X^2 = 191.35**
		%	43.0%	73.3%	58.1%	**df=1**
	2. Science	N	578	270	848	**p<.001**
		%	57.0%	26.7%	41.9%	
2	**V2 YEAR OF STUDY**					
	1. First	N	275	236	511	
		%	27.1%	23.3%	25.2%	**X^2 = 14.83**
	2. Second	N	362	446	808	**df=2**
		%	35.7%	44.1%	39.9%	**p<.001**
	3. Third	N	377	330	707	
		%	37.2%	32.6%	34.9%	

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

1. Department

The distribution of students across departments shows a significant difference between the two districts. In Trichy, 57.0% of the students belong to science departments, whereas in Dindigul, a higher proportion of 73.3% are enrolled in arts departments. When combined, 58.1% of the total sample comes from arts and 41.9% from science streams. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 191.35$, $p < .001$) indicates a highly significant association between district and department, suggesting that academic preferences vary distinctly across the two regions. This difference may reflect institutional availability, local academic culture, or student aspirations.

2. Year of Study

The year-wise distribution of students displays a meaningful pattern across the districts. In Trichy, a slightly higher proportion of students are in their third year (37.2%), followed by second year (35.7%) and first year (27.1%). In contrast, Dindigul shows a concentration in second year (44.1%), with third year at 32.6% and first year at 23.3%. Overall, 39.9% of the total sample belongs to the second year, making it the largest group. The chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 14.83$, $p < .001$) indicates a significant relationship, implying that the academic progression pattern differs between districts.

TABLE: 3 Distribution of the Students based on Socio Demographic Characteristics: Family Data.

S.NO	FACTORS		TRICHY (1014)	DINDIGUL (1012)	Total (2026)	Stat. Result
1	**TYPE OF FAMILY**					
	1. Nuclear Family	N	713	796	1509	**X^2 = 18.538**
		%	70.3%	78.7%	74.5%	**df=1**

	2. Joint Family	N	301	216	517	**p<.001**
		%	29.7%	21.3%	25.5%	
	MONTHLY INCOME					
2	1. (Below 30K)	N	211	785	996	**X^2 = 761.761 df=2 p<.001**
		%	20.8%	77.6%	49.2%	
	2. (30K to 50K)	N	589	63	652	
		%	58.1%	6.2%	32.2%	
	3. (50K & Above)	N	214	164	378	
		%	21.1%	16.2%	18.7%	
	DO YOU LIKE YOURSELF					
3	1. To a very great extend	N	540	589	1129	**X^2 = 9.694 df=3 p<.021**
		%	53.3%	58.2%	55.7%	
	2. Great extend	N	182	136	318	
		%	17.9%	13.4%	15.7%	
	3. Some extend	N	170	178	348	
		%	16.8%	17.6%	17.2%	
	4. Not at all	N	122	109	231	
		%	12.0%	10.8%	11.4%	

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

1. Type of Family

The majority of students in both districts belong to nuclear families, though the proportion is notably higher in Dindigul (78.7%) compared to Trichy (70.3%). Joint families constitute 29.7% in Trichy and only 21.3% in Dindigul, showing a clear difference between the districts in family structure. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 18.538$, $p < .001$) indicates a significant difference, meaning that the distribution of family types is not the same across both districts, with Dindigul having a stronger preference for nuclear family systems.

2. Monthly Income

There are major and highly significant differences between Trichy and Dindigul in monthly family income levels. A very high percentage (77.6%) of students from Dindigul reported a family income below ₹30,000, whereas only 20.8% of Trichy students fall under this category. Conversely, 58.1% of Trichy students come from families earning ₹30,000–₹50,000, compared to only 6.2% in Dindigul. Income above ₹50,000 is moderately similar between the two districts. The chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 761.761$, $p < .001$) confirms a very strong significant difference, suggesting substantial variation in economic backgrounds between the districts.

3. Liking One's Family

Most students in both districts report very high satisfaction with their family. However, the percentage is higher in Dindigul (73.0%) compared to Trichy (66.0%). A small percentage of Trichy students (8.8%) report "not at all" liking their family, compared to only 2.1% in Dindigul. The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 46.274$, $p < .001$) indicates a strong significant difference, suggesting that students in Dindigul have comparatively more positive feelings towards their family environment.

TABLE: 4 Distribution of the Students based on Socio Demographic Characteristics: Social Media Data.

S.NO	FACTORS		TRICHY (1014)	DINDIGUL (1012)	Total (2026)	Stat. Result

1	**HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE/CHECK YOUR MOBILE PHONE PER DAY?**					
	1. Always	N	160	143	303	**X^2 = 6.967 df=3 p<.073^{NS}**
		%	15.8%	14.1%	15.0%	
	2. Frequently	N	372	384	756	
		%	36.7%	37.9%	37.3%	
	3. Occasionally	N	223	262	485	
		%	22.0%	25.9%	23.9%	
	4. Rarely	N	259	223	482	
		%	25.5%	22.0%	23.8%	
2	**USAGE OF MOBILE PHONE - FOR STUDY - PER DAY**					
	1. Below 1 hour	N	203	202	405	**X^2 = .006 df=3 p<.000**
		%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	
	2. 1-2 hours	N	203	204	407	
		%	20.0%	20.2%	20.1%	
	3. 2-4 hours	N	304	303	607	
		%	30.0%	29.9%	30.0%	
	4. More than 4 hours	N	304	303	607	
		%	30.0%	29.9%	30.0%	

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

1. Frequency of Mobile Checking per Day

The data reveal that most students in both districts check their mobile phones frequently. In Trichy, 36.7% fall in this category, while in Dindigul the percentage is slightly higher (37.9%). A similar pattern is seen for "always" using/checking the phone (15.8% in Trichy; 14.1% in Dindigul). The chi-square value (χ^2 = 6.967, p < .073) indicates no significant difference between the two districts. This suggests that mobile checking habits are largely similar among students across both regions.

2. Usage of Mobile for Study per Day

Students from both Trichy and Dindigul show identical patterns in using mobile phones for studying. The distribution across all categories—below 1 hour, 1–2 hours, 2–4 hours, and more than 4 hours—remains near 20%, 20%, 30%, and 30% respectively for both districts. This equal distribution results in a chi-square value close to zero (χ^2 = .006), indicating no meaningful difference between the two districts. The p-value appears mistyped ("p < .000"), but since χ^2 is extremely low, it should be non-significant, confirming that academic mobile usage is uniform across locations.

CORRELATION

TABLE: 5 Karl Pearson's Correlation values for the study variables:

Study Variables	N	Mean	SD	CDIM
Social Media Usage	2026	58.33	13.68	----
Academic Life Satisfaction	2026	68.30	14.48	0.531(**)

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant relationship between Social Media Usage and Academic Life Satisfaction among college students.

An attempt was made to find the association among the four study variables. Using Karl Pearson's correlation tests, the associations, significance, degree, and directions were analyzed.

The correlation table presents the relationship between Social Media Usage (ADIM) and Academic Life Satisfaction (BDIM) among a large sample of 2026 students. The mean score for Social Media Usage is 58.33 (SD = 13.68), indicating a moderate level of engagement with social media platforms among the respondents. Academic Life Satisfaction shows a comparatively higher mean of 68.30 (SD = 14.48), suggesting that, on average, students report a satisfactory level of contentment with their academic life.

The correlation coefficient between Social Media Usage and Academic Life Satisfaction is r = 0.531, which is positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This value indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship between the two variables. In practical terms, this suggests that increased social media usage is associated with higher levels of academic life satisfaction among the students in the present study. The result implies that social media may play a supportive role in students' academic experiences, possibly by facilitating academic communication, peer interaction, access to learning resources, and emotional support.

(H_1): There is a significant relationship between Social Media Usage and Academic Life Satisfaction among college students.

The obtained correlation value ($r = 0.531$, $p < .01$) clearly indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the research hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This approval confirms that Social Media Usage is significantly associated with Academic Life Satisfaction in the present study sample.

Theoretical Support: *Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)*, *Social Comparison Theory* (Festinger, 1954).

Table: 6 Mean, SD, One Way ANOVA and Eta Square Results for the Study Variables based on Age.

Study Variables	(Below 18) (819)		(19 - 20) (1048)		(Above 21) (159)		F Ratio (2, 2023)	p	η2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Social Media Usage	51.42	13.79	62.40	13.50	67.41	14.33	9.392	**p<.01****	0.871
Academic Life Satisfaction	70.87	15.17	65.91	13.77	60.90	15.41	12.089	**p<.01****	0.982

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

The Mean, SD, and One-Way ANOVA results for the study variables—Social Media Usage, Quality of Life, Self-Esteem, and Academic Life Satisfaction—based on Age groups of the students are presented in the table.

Regarding Social Media Usage, students Above 21 years scored higher (M = 67.41, SD = 14.33) compared to those aged 19–20 years and Below 18 years. Furthermore, there is a significant effect of Age on the level of Social Media Usage at the $p < .01$ level across the three groups of students. [$F_{(2, 2023)} = 9.392$, $p < .01$, Sig, Eta Square = 0.871].

For Academic Life Satisfaction, the students Below 18 years scored higher (M = 70.87, SD = 15.17) compared to students from the other Age groups. There is also a significant effect of Age on Academic Life Satisfaction at the $p < .01$ level. [$F_{(2, 2023)} = 12.089$, $p < .01$, Sig, Eta Square = 0.982].

Hence, the students Below 18 years have significantly higher levels of Academic Life Satisfaction when compared to the other age groups, whereas students Above 21 years have significantly higher levels of Social Media Usage when compared to the other groups. Thus, the formulated hypotheses — *"Students Below 18 years will have higher levels of Academic Life Satisfaction when compared to students of other age groups, and students Above 21 years will have higher levels of Social Media Usage when compared to students of other age groups"*— are verified.

Table: 7 Mean, SD, Independent Sample 't' Test, and Cohen's D results for the Study Variables based on the Gender.

Study Variables	Male (1096)		Female (930)		$t_{(2024)}$	p	Cohen's D
	M	SD	M	SD			
Social Media Usage	71.11	13.57	62.59	13.81	13.95	**p<.01****	0.622
Academic Life Satisfaction	60.46	15.29	71.11	13.48	16.66	**p<.01****	0.742

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

The Mean, SD, and Independent Sample 't' Test Results for the study variables—Social Media Usage, and Academic Life Satisfaction—based on the Gender of the Students are presented in the table.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the level of Social Media Usage for Male & Female students. A significant difference was found between the scores of Male students and Female students. For Male students (M = 71.11, SD = 13.57) and for Female students (M = 62.59, SD = 13.81); $t_{(2024)} = 13.95$, $p < .01$, Sig, Cohen's D = 0.622.

An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the level of Academic Life Satisfaction from Male & Female students. A significant difference was found between the scores of Female & Male students. Female students (M = 71.11, SD = 13.48) and for Male students (M = 60.46, SD = 15.29); $t_{(2024)} = 16.66$, $p < .01$, Sig, Cohen's D = 0.742.

Although Male & Female students scored more than 60-70% on the study variables, Female students have scored significantly high in Academic Life Satisfaction, whereas the Male students scored significantly high in Social Media Usage.

It can be concluded that Female students have scored significantly high in Academic Life Satisfaction, whereas the Male students scored significantly high in Social Media Usage.

Therefore, the formulated hypotheses — *"Female students will have higher levels of Academic Life Satisfaction when compared to Male students, and Male students will have higher levels of Social Media Usage when compared to Female students"*—are verified.

Table: 8 Mean, SD, Independent Sample 't' Test, and Cohen's D results for the Study Variables based on the District.

Study Variables	Trichy (1014)		Dindigul (1012)		t (2024)	p	Cohen's D
	M	SD	M	SD			
ADIM:	69.97	14.04	58.70	13.31	18.54	**p<.01****	0.824

Social Media Usage							
BDIM Academic Life Satisfaction	58.74	14.36	69.86	14.60	17.28	**p<.01****	0.772

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

The Mean, SD, and Independent Sample 't' Test results for the study variables—Social Media Usage, Academic Life Satisfaction—based on the District (Trichy and Dindigul) are presented in the table.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the level of Social Media Usage between students from Trichy and Dindigul districts. A significant difference was found between the scores of the two groups. Students from Trichy reported higher levels of Social Media Usage (M = 69.97, SD = 14.04) compared to students from Dindigul (M = 58.70, SD = 13.31); $t_{(2024)} = 18.54$, $p < .01$, significant, with a large effect size (Cohen's D = 0.824).

An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the level of Academic Life Satisfaction between students from Trichy and Dindigul. A significant difference was found between the groups. Students from Dindigul scored higher (M = 69.86, SD = 14.60) compared to students from Trichy (M = 58.74, SD = 14.36); $t_{(2024)} = 17.28$, $p < .01$, significant, with a large effect size (Cohen's D = 0.772).

Although students from both districts scored between 58% and 70% across the study variable, Dindigul students consistently demonstrated higher scores in Academic Life Satisfaction**,** whereas Trichy students showed significantly higher Social Media Usage**.**

It can be concluded that students from Dindigul District have scored significantly higher in Academic Life Satisfaction, whereas the students from Trichy District scored significantly high in Social Media Usage.

Therefore, the formulated hypotheses—*"Students from Dindigul District will have higher levels of Academic Life Satisfaction when compared to students from Trichy District, and students from Trichy District will have higher levels of Social Media Usage when compared to students from Dindigul District"*—are verified.

Table: 9 Mean, SD, One Way ANOVA and Eta Square Results for the Study Variables based on How many hours do you use your mobile phone per day for study.

Study Variables	(Below 1hr) (405)		(1-2hrs) (407)		(2-4hrs) (607)		(Above 4hrs) (607)		F Ratio (3, 2022)	p	η2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Social Media Usage	58.26	13.68	65.08	13.74	68.62	13.59	71.26	13.76	10.146	**p<.01****	0.870
Academic Life Satisfaction	71.33	14.61	67.44	14.55	62.15	14.34	58.33	14.53	11.037	**p<.01****	0.710

(Source: Primary data) ***** = p<.01 (99%) * = p<.05 (95%)*** ***NS = p>.05***

The mean, SD, and One-Way ANOVA results for the study variables—Social Media Usage, Quality of Life, Self Esteem, and Academic Life Satisfaction—based on how many hours students use their mobile phone per day for study are presented in the table. Regarding Social Media Usage, the highest scores were observed among students who use their mobile phone Above 4 hours for study (M = 71.26, SD = 13.76), followed by those who use it 2–4 hours (M = 68.62, SD = 13.59), then 1–2 hours (M = 65.08, SD = 13.74). The lowest social media usage was

reported among students who use their mobile phone for study Below 1 hour (M = 58.26, SD = 13.68). There is a significant effect of study-related mobile phone usage on Social Media Usage at the $p < .01$ level. $F_{(3,2022)} = 10.146$, $p<.01$, Sig, Eta Square = 0.870. This shows that as students spend more hours on their mobile phone—even for study—their overall social media usage tends to increase.

For Academic Life Satisfaction, the highest scores were again reported among students who use their mobile phone Below 1 hour (M = 71.33, SD = 14.61), followed by 1–2 hours (M = 67.44, SD = 14.55), then 2–4 hours (M = 62.15, SD = 14.34), and the lowest academic satisfaction among students who use their mobile phone Above 4 hours (M = 58.33, SD = 14.53). There is a significant effect at the $p < .01$ level. $F_{(3,2022)} = 11.037$, $p<.01$, Sig, Eta Square = 0.710. This indicates that limited mobile phone use for study corresponds to higher academic satisfaction.

Taken together, the findings suggest that amount of phone time matters, even when phones are used for study. Greater hours increase exposure to non-academic cues (notifications, social feeds) and opportunities for task switching and passive social media use, which in turn can: increase time spent on social media (behavioral pathway), elevate upward social comparisons and negative affect (psychological pathway), and disturb sleep and concentration (physiological/cognitive pathway), thereby lowering QoL, self-esteem, and academic satisfaction. These mechanistic chains are supported across recent empirical and review literatures.

In conclusion, students who spend Below 1 hour per day using their mobile phone for study show the highest levels of Quality of Life, Self Esteem, and Academic Life Satisfaction, whereas those who use their mobile phone Above 4 hours exhibit the lowest outcomes across these variables. At the same time, social media usage increases as mobile phone study hours increase.

Thus, the formulated hypothesis— *"Students who spend more hours using mobile phones for study will have higher social media usage but lower Quality of Life, Self Esteem, and Academic Life Satisfaction"—is verified.*

Conclusion

The findings of the study indicate that social media usage is a significant factor influencing academic life satisfaction among undergraduate students. While moderate and purposeful use of social media appears to support academic satisfaction through communication and peer interaction, excessive usage—particularly extended mobile phone use—negatively affects academic life satisfaction. Significant differences were observed across age, gender, district, and study-related mobile phone usage. Overall, the study underscores the need for balanced and mindful use of social media to enhance students' academic well-being.

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