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**INVESTIGATING HOW SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECTS STUDENTS IN HIGHER  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS' SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE**

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**Abstract:** The study investigates how high school students' engagement with social media influences the growth of their social intelligence. The adolescents in this digital era are flooded by various social media platforms. They are sometimes affected, stuck and fall as a prey to this chatroom or forum. The study looks at how these digital relationships and exchanges affect students' reputations in life and how social intelligence might provide experiences that help students become more inwardly or self-aware. In order to understand the complex relationships between students' use of social media and the development of social intelligence and to provide guidance and counselling at this crucial stage of life, the findings of this study are extremely important for students, educators, parents, and policy makers.

**Key words:** relationships, social media, social intelligence, and schoolchildren

## **1. Introduction**

Kids can use a variety of devices these days, including laptops, desktop and laptop computers, iPods, tablets, cell phones, and social networking sites. Deng and Tavares (2013) state that social networking is currently viewed as an educational tool that may be used to improve student performance and engagement. It now plays a major role in our kids' social life. Through social networking and media platforms, students may interact, communicate, get information, carry out research, and hold discussions (Abdulahi et al., 2014; Ahn, 2011). Thorndike defined social intelligence in 1920 as the reflecting in many contexts and capacity to comprehend and manage interpersonal relationships, which is essential for success in a variety of spheres of life. It entails effectively interacting in many contexts, reflecting on interpersonal relationships.

The significance of social intelligence is highlighted in our technology-driven society, where people often engage happily online but disregard real-world communication. Boundaries created by technology often limit genuine human interaction, leading to a lack of meaningful connections. The research investigates how these digital connections and interactions impact the reputation of students' life and how social intelligence can be a source of experience for the students to develop an inner or self-awareness.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Inderjit (2019) examined how University of Sharjah students used social networking sites (SNS), examining how gender differed in this regard. A total of 328 medical students from different study years participated in their cross-sectional research. When comparing female students' SNS usage patterns to those of male students, the results showed a significant association between the two groups' academic achievement. On the other hand, male students showed greater degrees of SNS platform addiction. The study also revealed notable variations in academic achievement impacted by social media use.

Hugues Sampasa-Kanyinga (2019) studied the relationships between SNS usage habits, school connectivity, and academic achievement in middle and high school students. Using information from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey's 2013 cycle, they looked at factors including age, gender, and kind of school. Their results demonstrated that there were substantial age-related differences in the link between SNS and school connectivity, with older pupils showing notably higher relationships. Gender was not shown to be a major moderator, though. According to the study's findings, academic achievement and school connection were adversely affected by rising social media use.

Jijish Elias and Mirunalini (2017) focused on the social intelligence of higher secondary school students in relation to their SNS usage. They conducted a survey among 360 respondents from Palakkad District, using a structured inventory. The study found no significant effect of SNS usage on

social intelligence. Moreover, there were no notable differences observed among gender, rural/urban background, or school type.

According to Thomas and Rathina's 2017 study, "Interactional effect of social intelligence and emotional intelligence on mental health status of secondary school students," both social and emotional intelligence had a major impact on the mental health status of In "Investigating Social Intelligence Among Higher Secondary School Students in Nagaland," a 2016 research, Dhingra and Tia Kala discovered notable differences in social intelligence between male and female students in the areas of cooperativeness, confidence, and sensitivity. The findings showed that guys showed more confidence, while girls showed higher degrees of cooperation and compassion.

Karanam and Vardhini's 2016 research explored the social intelligence of secondary school teachers, considering gender and age factors. They observed comparable levels of social intelligence among both male and female secondary school teachers. However, significant differences were noted among various age groups of teachers regarding their overall social intelligence. Moreover, distinct variations were observed across different dimensions of social intelligence among various age groups of teachers, excluding tactfulness and sense of humor. Notably, teachers aged 46 and above demonstrated higher levels of social intelligence, particularly in dimensions such as patience, cooperativeness, confidence, sensitivity, and memory, compared to their counterparts.

Nagra's 2014 investigation examined the correlation between "Social Intelligence and Adjustment Among Secondary School Students." The study revealed that secondary school students generally exhibited an average level of social intelligence, indicating a corresponding average level of adjustment. Moreover, no significant differences were observed between government and private school students, nor between male and female students, as indicated by insignificant t-test values applied to both social intelligence and adjustment level scores. Additionally, the study found no notable distinctions between government and private school students, nor between male and female students, in terms of their levels of social intelligence and adjustment.

In their 2010 study titled "Predictors of Adolescent Popularity: Social Intelligence and Academic Achievement," Meijs, Cillessen, Scholte, Segers, and Spijkerman found that girls displayed notably higher levels of social intelligence compared to boys, while boys were perceived as more popular than girls. Furthermore, the study identified a positive correlation between social intelligence and perceived popularity among both genders. secondary school students, with evidence of a substantial combined effect and interaction.

### **3. Need for the study**

Social media usage has become widespread among students with the rise in smartphone usage and the increased accessibility of the internet at lower costs. Given the escalating tensions, stresses, and complexities in modern lifestyles, social intelligence holds heightened significance. Timely cultivation of social intelligence could empower students to emerge as independent and self-assured individuals within society. The current study represents a crucial endeavor to investigate the usage and perceptions of social media among higher secondary students. The current study will aim to give further insight into this area by measuring the intensity with which students use social media and the effects that varying frequencies of use may have on their social intelligence.

#### **3.1 Objectives of the study**

3.1.1 The study's objectives are to Examine how higher secondary students utilize social media differently depending on their gender, region, and method of instruction.

3.1.2 To investigate how higher secondary pupils' social intelligence varies based on demographic factors. Region, Gender, and Instructional Medium

3.1.3 To look at the connection between higher secondary students' usage of social media and social intelligence.

#### **3.2 The Study's Hypothesis**

**3.2.1** Depending on a person's location, gender, or language of instruction, upper secondary students' usage of social media does not change much.

**3.2.2** The use of social intelligence by upper secondary pupils does not show any discernible differences because of individual differences such gender, location, and language of instruction.

**3.2.3** Utilizing social media does not significantly correlate with social intelligence.

**3.2 METHODOLOGY**

Generally, research problems have different methods for investigation. The method followed in the present study is normative survey method.

**3.3 Sample**

Students in the sample came from higher secondary public, government-aided, and private institutions. The sample for the study was selected at random. Three hundred pupils from two government schools, one government-aided school, and two private schools made up the sample. Three hundred pupils, including 149 males and 151 females, were selected from the subsequent higher secondary school cohort.

**Tool used in the study:**

The data for the current investigation was gathered using the following instruments.

- ❖ Use of social media platform developed by Dr. Jasmine Christy A (2016).
- ❖ Social Intelligence Tool-developed by Dr. Jasmine Christy A (2016).

The social media inventory is used in the present study consists of fifty items rating scale has been developed by investigator for the study of uses of social media among higher secondary students. It is inferred that the sample is classified into three groups on the basis of total scores obtained in Use of social media: Students are classified as high, average, and low level according to their level of Use of social media by using quartiles.

The tool used for measuring the social intelligence of the higher secondary students were constructed and standardized by Jasmine Christy A (2016). All the 53 items were retained as the final items for measuring social intelligence among higher secondary students. Students are classified as high, average and low level according to their level of Social Intelligence by using quartiles.

**3.4 Reliability and Validity**

The Statistical Package for Social Science was utilized to calculate the efficacy of the tool. (SPSS). A metric called Cronbach's alpha is used to assess a scale or test item's internal consistency or reliability. Given the theoretical understanding of the relevant scale, many methodologists advise a Cronbach's alpha of 0.65 to 0.8 (or more in many circumstances); values below 0.5 are typically deemed undesirable.

**4 DATA ANALYSIS**

**Table 1** showing the critical ratio of the difference in their use of social media of higher secondary students owing to differences in Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	df	Level of significance
Social Media	Boys	149	152.54	101.493	8.315	1.432	298	.156 p>0.05
	Girls	151	140.15	31.587	2.570			

According to the preceding table, the t value is 1.432 and the P value is 0.156, both of which are higher than the 95% confidence level p value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis that higher secondary students' usage of social media is not significantly different based on gender is accepted. Consequently, we conclude that there is no appreciable difference in the way higher secondary students use social media based on their gender

**Table 2** showing the critical ratio of the difference in their use of social media of higher secondary students owing to differences in Medium of Instruction

Variable	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	Df	Level significance
Medium of Instruction	English	143	153.64	103.440	1.623	298	.121 p>0.05
	Tamil	157	139.61	31.170			

According to the preceding table, the t value is 1.623 and the P value is 0.121, both of which are higher than the 95% confidence level p value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis that upper secondary students' usage of social media is not significantly different from that of lower secondary students due to differences in teaching medium is accepted. We thus conclude that there is no appreciable change in upper secondary students' use of social media, notwithstanding the variations in the medium of instruction.

**Table 3** showing the critical ratio of the difference in their use of social media of higher secondary students owing to differences in region

Variable	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	df	Level significance
Region	Rural	137	163.03	106.979	3.608	298	.001 P<0.05
	Urban	163	132.24	19.034			

According to the preceding table, the t value is 3.608 and the P value is .001, both of which are less than the 95% confidence level p value of 0.05. Therefore, it is not acknowledged that there is a major variation in upper secondary students' usage of social media based on where they live. Thus, we conclude that there are considerable variances in upper secondary students' usage of social media due to geographical differences.

**Table 4** showing the critical ratio of the difference in their use of social intelligence of higher secondary students owing to differences in Gender.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	Df	Level significance
Social Media	Boys	149	286.34	102.781	8.420	.613	298	.540 p>0.05
	Girls	151	292.98	83.972	6.834			

From the above table the t value is .613, the P value is .540 which is greater than the p value of 0.05 at 95% level of confidence. Hence the hypothesis assumed that there is no significant difference in their social intelligence of higher secondary students owing to difference in gender is accepted. Therefore, we draw the conclusion that gender does not significantly affect higher secondary students' social intelligence.

**Table 5** Demonstrating the important ratio of the variation in higher secondary pupils' usage of social intelligence due to variations in their instruction medium.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	df	Level significance
Medium of Instruction	English	143	284.25	104.148	.958	298	0.339 p>0.05
	Tamil	157	294.63	83.057			

From the above table the t value is .958, the P value is .339 which is greater than the p value of 0.05 at 95% level of confidence. Hence the hypothesis assumed that there is no significant difference in their social intelligence of higher secondary students owing to difference in medium of instruction is accepted. Hence, we conclude that there is no significant difference in social intelligence of higher secondary students owing to the difference in medium of instruction.

**Table 6** showing the critical ratio of the difference in their use of social intelligence of secondary students owing to differences in region higher

Variable	N	Mean	SD	SE	t value	df	Level of significance
Region	Rural	137	317.15	93.461	7.985	3.325	298
	Urban	163	266.60	87.713	6.870		

The t value in the preceding table is 3.325, and the P value is .000, which is less than the p value of 0.01 at 99% confidence level. Therefore, it is not acknowledged that there is a major variation in upper secondary students' usage of social media based on where they live. Thus, we conclude that there are considerable variances in upper secondary students' usage of social media due to geographical differences.

**Table 7** showing the correlation between use of social media and social intelligence among higher secondary students.

Description	Sample size	r	Significant level
USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	300	.132	.023

The correlation coefficient between social media use and social intelligence in upper secondary school pupils is displayed in the following table. At the 5% level, the total social intelligence P value is more than .023, which is not significant. Null hypothesis is therefore accepted. As a result, there is no discernible correlation between the total social media use score and the total social intelligence score. There is a modest negative association between the overall score of social media usage and the overall score of social intelligence, as indicated by the coefficient of correlation for the latter, which is  $r = .132$ .

## 5 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ Because of disparities in gender and teaching medium, there is no discernible difference in how higher secondary pupils utilise social media.
- ❖ Because of regional variations, there are notable variances in how upper secondary school pupils utilise social media. The reason for this is that urban students utilise social media more due to factors including improved internet access, a larger percentage of smart phone ownership, and a stronger focus on digital connectedness.
- ❖ Higher secondary students' use of social intelligence is not significantly different due to differences in gender and mode of teaching.
- ❖ Because of regional disparities, there are notable variances in how higher secondary school pupils employ social intelligence.
- ❖ Higher secondary school pupils' use of social media and social intelligence are significantly correlated.

## 6 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Upon examination of the results concerning higher secondary school students, it becomes evident that both boys and girls, as well as students from Tamil and English medium schools, have been equally affected by the use of social media and its impact on social intelligence. Yet, depending on geographical variations, a notable distinction appears in the way upper secondary school pupils use social media and grow their social intelligence.

This discrepancy arises primarily due to the fact that urban students tend to engage more frequently with social media platforms, thereby staying more attuned to current trends and developments. This heightened exposure to social media in urban settings contrasts with the comparatively lower usage among rural students, leading to variations in their social media usage patterns and consequently, their social intelligence levels.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that significant disparities exist between the utilization of social media and the development of social intelligence among higher secondary school students. This suggests that while social media may have an impact on some facets of social intelligence, other factors are also at work that affect how well children acquire this skill set overall.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The current investigation holds significant importance in today's context, as there is a growing recognition of the need to focus attention on the development of social media usage and social intelligence among students. The findings from this study provide valuable insights for educators, parents, policymakers, and society as a whole. By understanding the relationship between social media usage and social intelligence, stakeholders can better tailor educational approaches and interventions to meet the needs of students.

Educators can use the findings to set appropriate goals for students, incorporating skills related to social media usage and social intelligence into curricula and teaching methods. By aligning educational objectives with these findings, educators can better prepare students for the digital age and equip them with the necessary skills to navigate social media platforms responsibly and effectively.

Parents can also benefit from this research by gaining a deeper understanding of the impact of social media on their children's development. Armed with this knowledge, they can implement strategies to promote healthy social media habits and foster the development of social intelligence skills in their children.

Policymakers can use the insights from this investigation to inform the development of policies and guidelines aimed at promoting responsible social media use among students. By addressing the findings of the study in policy initiatives, policymakers can contribute to creating a safer and more supportive environment for students to engage with social media.

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