

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE PATTERNS AND ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS IN SWAT

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Abstract

Background: Social media has become an integral part of students' daily lives, providing opportunities for communication, entertainment, and information sharing. Excessive or poorly regulated social media use may interfere with academic responsibilities and contribute to academic procrastination. Nursing students face demanding theoretical and clinical requirements, making effective management of digital activities particularly important.

Aim: To assess the level of social media use and academic procrastination and determine the relationship between social media use and academic procrastination among nursing students.

Methods: A quantitative, cross-sectional study design was used among 318 nursing students enrolled in selected nursing institutions. Data were collected using structured questionnaires measuring social media use and academic procrastination. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize participant characteristics and study variables. Spearman's rho correlation was applied to determine the relationship between social media use and academic procrastination.

Results: Most participants were aged 20–25 years (95.9%), male (78.3%), and single (83.0%). The mean social media use score was 22.02 ± 4.06 , indicating a moderate level. The mean academic procrastination score was 21.83 ± 4.47 , also indicating a moderate level. A strong, positive, statistically significant correlation was found between social media use and academic procrastination ($r_s = .617$, $p < .001$, $n = 317$).

Conclusion: Higher social media use was significantly associated with greater academic procrastination among nursing students. Educational strategies focusing on responsible social media use, time management, and self-regulation are recommended.

Introduction

Social media are internet-based services that allow individuals to interact, communicate, share information, be entertained, and learn. Academic procrastination is a situation where a student deliberately puts off work or study and other academic obligations despite knowing that this is having a detrimental effect on his academic performance and learning experience. In today's world, the use of social media has become more relevant in nursing education due to the three aspects that nursing students have to deal with while on campus: theoretical learning, practical skills, and clinical duties. A recent study found that social media addiction was among the key factors linked to nursing students' academic procrastination. Zubair et al. (2026) stated that nursing students' academic procrastination was significantly related to social media addiction. Rajae et al. (2024) also observed that there is a correlation between Instagram addiction and academic procrastination among nursing students. The results show that the problematic social media usage can affect students in their ability to organize and do their academic work well.

The excessive use of social media and procrastination in studying are emerging issues across the globe among university students. Social networking sites are often used by university students to communicate, play, seek information and interact academically. While there are educational benefits to social media, the use of the media can lead to negative academic outcomes when it is used excessively or without adequate oversight. Aljarrah et al. (2025) concluded that there is a correlation between academic procrastination with the use of Social Network Sites among university students. A similar finding was reported by Ezeonwumelu et al. (2025) who reported a relationship between the frequency of social media use and academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State. Devadharshini et al., (2026) also studied the effect of social media addiction on academic procrastination in the college students of India. These results show that the correlation between digital engagement and late academic activities extends beyond an educational field and a location.

The life of students at university has become intertwined with social media. These platforms are useful for students of nursing who are looking for education, discussion with fellow students, medical information and discussions with professionals. With a considered use, social media can, therefore, be used as a tool to aid learning. Too much involvement can be a distraction from studying and decrease focus on schoolwork. A correlation was found between social media addiction, academic procrastination, academic performance, and insomnia among medical students by Kaleem et al (2023). El-Sayed et al., (2024) also pointed out that there are relationships between smartphone addiction and procrastination behavior among nurses, which further indicated the wider applicability of problematic digital behaviors across healthcare-affiliated populations. Nursing students are especially vulnerable to the need for digital self-regulation due to the dual nature of their academic studies and preparation for their profession.

Nursing students' academic procrastination can have implications other than late assignments or exam preparation. Nursing education is a process in which students acquire theoretical knowledge, psychomotor skills, clinical judgment, communication skills and professional attitudes within a formalized educational period. Zhou et al. (2024) found that academic procrastination could not be the same phenomenon for all nursing students in higher vocational education, as they identified the patterns of academic procrastination to be different across the students. This study revealed that there was a relationship between social adaptability and academic procrastination among the students of the undergraduate nursing program, and that the variable of resilience was found to be a mediator. (Guo et al., 2024) The results indicate that there are several personal and educational factors that can affect the academic procrastination of the nursing students. One of the factors that could be specifically explored in nursing education is the use of social media.

The issue also has relevance in Pakistan, where the penetration of smart phones, internet and social networking has altered the mode of communication, information acquisition and

leisure time of students. The social use of social media among the students of Pakistan is growing for social interaction, entertainment and study. According to Khan et al. (2025), there was a significant correlation between problematic social media use and academic procrastination among adolescents in Pakistan. Similarly, Mahmood et al. (2026) studied the relationship between social media addiction, academic procrastination and sleep quality of university students in Pakistan with two psychological constructs of immediate gratification and mindfulness. Results from the studies conducted in Pakistan indicate that problematic social media use and academic procrastination are worthy of attention as educational issues when seen from the local perspective. There is sparse evidence that is specifically aimed at undergraduate nursing students that needs further investigation.

The condition may be especially significant for nursing students of Swat, KP, where undergraduate nursing students have to face the challenge of balancing classroom, lab, field, assignment, exam and professional development. Social media offers students opportunities to communicate and share educational resources, but also can be frequent and unmanaged, thereby competing with time for academic and clinical preparation. Current findings reveal that nursing and medical students' social media addiction is related to academic procrastination (Kaleem et al., 2023; Rajaei et al., 2024; Zubair et al., 2026). Local information on the status of undergraduate nurses students in Swat is still limited. Investigating this population is thus important to learn if there are any similarities or differences of the patterns found in other nursing and university populations in the case of nursing students in KP.

The connection between social media usage and academic procrastination among the undergraduate nursing students should be systematically evaluated to see how much they are intertwined in nursing education. This current study has been concentrated on the undergraduate students of nursing at Swat and will aim to find the relation among the use of social media and academic procrastination amongst nursing students of undergraduate

level at Swat. Findings could offer relevant information for nursing educators, academic administrators and student-support services when considering strategies to address responsible social media use, time management, self-regulation, and academic planning. Evidence obtained from the local nursing student population can be used to design interventions that are contextually relevant to enhance academic engagement, reduce procrastination, and promote effective learning among future nurses.

Methodology

A correlational cross-sectional study design was used to examine the impact of social media use patterns on academic procrastination in undergraduate nursing students. This study was conducted at KMU Institute of Health Sciences (IHS) Swat and was completed in three months. The study sample consisted of undergraduate nursing students at KMU IHS Swat. The sample size was calculated using Raosoft sample size calculation software. A total sample of 318 nursing students was selected from a population of 1812 nursing students, considering a 95% confidence level. Cluster random sampling was used to ensure that students from different clusters of academic were represented. Undergraduate nursing students who satisfied the inclusion criteria were asked to participate in the study. Data were collected after informed consent and assurance that participants data would be kept confidential. This study was interested in determining social media use patterns as the independent variable and academic procrastination as the dependent variable.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was done after approval was received from the appropriate authority of the institution and ethical concerns were noted. Once approval was received, the researcher found the selected clusters of undergraduate nursing students at KMU IHS Swat. The researcher discussed the aims of the study and its importance with the nursing students. Participants were made to understand that participation in the study was voluntary, and they could leave the study at any moment.

Researcher also noted that participant's decision not to continue would not place any negative implications on them. Consent for the study was signed by all participants. A structured survey was used to capture participants' demographic data, social media use data, and academic procrastination data. The survey was administered to a sample of the nursing students. Time was given to the students to complete the survey. Once surveys were collected, completeness was checked, and participants were coded to protect their identity. Data was prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

Analyzed usage data with appropriate statistical software. Using demographic data and study variables, summary statistics were determined using formulae for mean, frequency, percentage, and standard deviation. Using statistical inferential techniques, the relationship between social media usage and procrastination was analyzed for undergraduate nursing students. Based on the data distribution and characteristics, the correlation of Pearson was utilized. A p value less than 0.05

was considered significant. The results of the analysis were presented in the form of tables and discussed based on the study objectives. The relationship between social media usage and academic procrastination of nursing students was determined in terms of the strength of the relationship and its direction.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS:

Demographic Characteristics of participants

Table 1 List the sociodemographic data of nursing students. Of the total respondents, 305 (95.9%) were between the ages of 20 and 25. Fewer of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 30, with only 11 (3.5%) of the total. The majority of the respondents were males, with 249 (78.3%) of the total. There were fewer females, with a total of 69 (21.7%) of the respondents. For semester, the majority of respondents were either in the 4th (154 (48.4%)) or in the 6th semester (164 (51.6%)). For Marital Status, majority of the respondents were single (264 (83.0%)). The remaining respondents were married (54 (17.0%)). Overall, respondents were young males who were single.

Table 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Nursing Students (N = 318)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	20–25 years	305	95.9
	25–30 years	11	3.5
Gender	Male	249	78.3
	Female	69	21.7
Semester of study	4th semester	154	48.4
	6th semester	164	51.6
Marital status	Single	264	83.0
	Married	54	17.0

Figure 1 Display the distribution of nursing students by their respective colleges. The Tasleem College of Nursing had the highest percentage of respondents, with (74 (23.3%)). Following was KMU IHS Swat, with (67 (21.1%)), and Hasan College of Nursing with

(64 (20.1%)). Ismail College of Nursing had (59 (18.6%)) respondents. The lowest, by far, was represented by Malakand College of Nursing, with (54 (17.0)). Overall, recruitment of respondents was done from all five colleges of nursing.

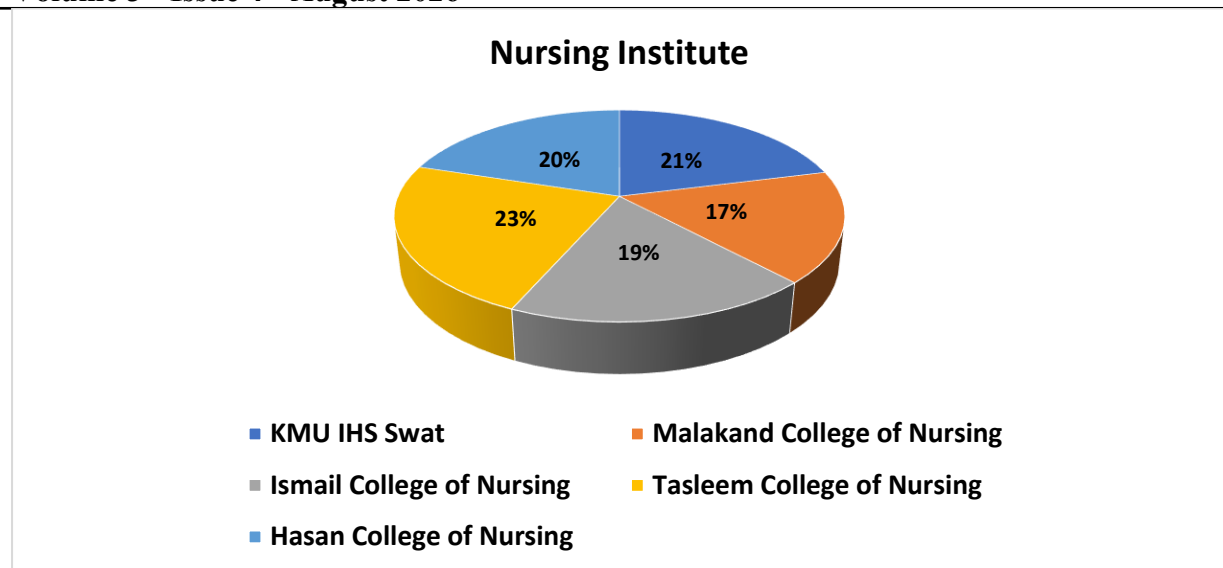


Figure 1: Distribution of Participants According to Nursing Institute

Table 2 contains the social media use and academic procrastination behaviors of nursing students. Of notes for social media use is a mean score of 22.02 with a standard deviation score at 4.06, demonstrating moderate use of social media. Similar for academic procrastination is a mean score of 21.83 and a

standard deviation at 4.47. Both reflective of moderate academic procrastination scores. The standard deviation scores represent how individuals vary when engaged in social media use and academic procrastination, and both are reflective of a moderate use score.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Social Media Use and Academic Procrastination

Variable	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Social media use	318	22.02	4.06	Moderate
Academic procrastination	317	21.83	4.47	Moderate
Overall	—	—	—	—

From the Spearman's Rho correlation analysis in Table 3, social media use and academic procrastination were found to have a strong, positive correlation. The correlation was with a r score at 0.617 and p at less than 0.001 with a total sample size of 317. This means a higher

level of social media use correlated to a higher level of academic procrastination. The correlation demonstrates a relationship, but social media use cannot be the reason for academic procrastination.

Table 3: Correlation Between Social Media Use and Academic Procrastination

Variables	Spearman's rho (r_s)	p-value	N	Interpretation
Social media use ↔ Academic procrastination	0.617	<0.001	317	Strong positive correlation

Discussion

This study explored the relationship between social media usage and academic

procrastination among 318 selected nursing students in the selected nursing institutions. The age group distribution was mainly young

people with the highest percentage being between 20-25 years (95.9%), male (78.3%) and single (83.0%). There were nearly equal numbers in the fourth and sixth semesters. The preponderance of younger students makes sense in the context of an undergraduate nursing population as most enter nursing school during early adulthood. The ratio of male to female participants is high, which may be due to the enrollment situation of the selected nursing institutions and the participants' demographic characteristics in their area of study. Recent studies have shown that academic procrastination is an applicable problem among the students of health sciences. In the study conducted by Kaleem et al., 2023, medical students were the population sample and they found that there was an association between social media addiction, academic procrastination, academic performance and insomnia. In addition to that, Ghattas and El-Ashry (2024) found a relationship between academic procrastination and the students in the emergency nursing field, and how cognitive emotion regulation is a key psychological factor. The demographic profile of the present study gives an idea about these behaviors of undergraduate nursing students in Swat.

The mean social media use score of the present study was obtained as 22.02 ± 4.06 , which is considered as moderate. The finding indicates that social media was a part of students' lives for some time and yet there was no indication that this average use was necessarily heavy or problematic. The result is commensurate with the rest of the literature that shows that there is a considerable level of social media use among university students. Avci et al. (2024) examined undergraduate students' social media addiction and its relationship to academic achievement and academic procrastination. Their findings revealed that problematic use of social media was related to students' academic behavior. Khan et al. (2025) found adolescents in Pakistan to have a strong relationship between problematic social media use and academic procrastination. Devadharshini et al. (2026) also studied social media addiction among college students in India with an updated analysis that found a problem with digital engagement to be an academic issue for various

types of college students. Unlike addiction-focused studies, the present study examined social media use instead of social media addiction, which could account for the variation in the amount of social media-related problems found in studies.

In the current study, mean score for academic procrastination was found to be 21.83 ± 4.47 which is at a moderate level among nursing students. The result shows that a delay of academic activities was relatively prevalent in the study population. Some students felt more heavily into procrastination than others, and this difference between individual scores was reflected in the standard deviation. The finding is supported by the literature in the nursing and health-science field. Ghattas and El-Ashry (2024) found that emergency nursing students engage in academic procrastination and how this behavior is related to cognitive emotion regulation. Using latent profile analysis, Zhou et al., (2024) found different profiles of nursing students' academic procrastination, suggesting that nursing students do not procrastinate uniformly. Guo et al. (2024) indicated that social adaptability had a connection with academic procrastination in undergraduate nursing students with the mediation of resilience. The results of the present study are consistent with this, as it has shown that there is moderate overall level of academic procrastination among nursing students in Swat. Additionally, the differences in the levels of procrastination scores adds to the idea that the subject's psychological, social, and educational differences may play a role in his or her tendency to procrastinate on academic tasks.

The most important result of the present study was the significant positive correlation between the level of using social media and student academic procrastination ($r_s = .617, p < .001, n = 317$). The results suggest that students who used more social media reported higher levels of academic procrastination, thus showing a positive correlation. Its coefficient value indicates a high relationship between the two variables. This is in line with Khan et al. (2025) who found that problematic social media use and academic procrastination was significantly related among adolescents in Pakistan. A

correlation between social media addiction and academic procrastination was also found among medical students in Pakistan by Kaleem et al. (2023). Avci et al. (2024) have found evidence that is associated with social media addiction and academic achievement and academic procrastination among undergraduate students. The current finding corroborates these observations in undergraduate nursing students and showed that the link is present in the presence of high levels of theoretical and clinical academic load. The correlation can only be interpreted as an association, and not as a direct link between social media use and procrastination.

The present findings are supported by evidence from the nursing population. Most studies have focused on smartphone addiction and cyberloafing behaviors and their relationship with academic procrastination among nursing students by Mohamed Shawky Elbus et al. (2026). The emphasis on smartphone related behaviours is especially significant as the majority of the students in the present day are accessing social media through their smartphones. El-Sayed et al. (2024) aimed to explore smartphone addiction and procrastination among nurses, and they found that problematic digital behaviour can have consequences for productivity in the healthcare setting. This is also in line with Mahmood et al. (2026) which looked into social media addiction, academic procrastination and quality of sleep among university students, and viewed immediate gratification and mindfulness as causal factors. In this study, Zhang and Zhang (2024) further explored the association between technology related behaviors and student wellbeing by investigating technology use, procrastination, health habits, and wellbeing among Chinese students. The present research brings nursing specific evidence from Swat where students are required to partition their time between classroom learning, skills lab, task, examination and field practice.

The present study confirms the importance of interventions to control non-academic digital activities and ensure that technology is used in an appropriate manner during the learning process. Because of its cross-sectional design,

the findings cannot be interpreted as showing that social media use leads to academic procrastination. Longitudinal and intervention studies with future nursing students from other institutions and regions of Pakistan might provide evidence on whether there is a measurable change in academic procrastination and academic and clinical performance after the reduction in problematic social media usage and enhancement of self-regulation skills.

Conclusion

This study found moderate levels of social media use and academic procrastination among nursing students. Participants were young, male, singles, and represented five nursing colleges. The mean score for social media use was 22.02 ± 4.06 , and the mean score for academic procrastination was 21.83 ± 4.47 , indicating moderate levels of both variables. A strong, positive correlation was found between social media use and academic procrastination ($r_s = .617$, $p < .001$). The findings reflect nursing students that reported greater use of social media exhibited greater academic procrastination. This study suggests that nursing students should be guided toward responsible social media use, self-regulation, and time management while also providing the students with academic planning. It is also important to include digital-wellbeing along with study-management into nursing curricula so that students are more academically productive.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Promote responsible social media use:** Nursing institutions should educate students about responsible and purposeful use of social media and its potential impact on academic activities.
2. **Conduct time-management programs:** Workshops on time management, study planning, prioritization, and goal setting should be organized to help students manage academic responsibilities effectively.
3. **Develop self-regulation skills:** Students should be encouraged to develop self-control and self-regulation strategies to

minimize unnecessary social media use during study hours.

4. **Provide academic counseling:** Faculty members and academic advisors should identify students experiencing frequent academic procrastination and provide appropriate guidance and counseling.

5. **Encourage digital-wellbeing education:** Nursing curricula may include brief sessions on digital wellbeing, healthy technology habits, concentration, and maintaining a balance between academic and recreational social media use.

6. **Establish focused study practices:** Students should be encouraged to use practical strategies such as setting specific study periods, disabling unnecessary notifications, and limiting social media access while completing academic tasks.

7. **Strengthen faculty support:** Nursing faculty should monitor students' academic engagement and provide early support to students demonstrating persistent delays in completing assignments or other academic responsibilities.

8. **Conduct further research:** Future studies should use larger and more diverse samples from different regions of Pakistan. Longitudinal and intervention-based studies are recommended to determine whether reducing problematic social media use can effectively decrease academic procrastination.

9. **Explore contributing factors:** Future researchers should investigate additional factors such as self-control, sleep quality, stress, fear of missing out, academic motivation, and psychological wellbeing to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of academic procrastination among nursing students.

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