

# Use of Social Media and Learners Well-Being

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## Abstract

This study examined the relationship between social media use and learners' well-being in the Schools District of Dumangas II during the academic year 2025–2026. Specifically, it sought to determine the extent of learners' social media use and how it influences their emotional, social, and academic well-being. The respondents included 172 learners selected through purposive sampling, all of whom were active users of various social media platforms. Data were gathered using a validated questionnaire that measured patterns of social media use in terms of frequency, duration, and type of engagement, as well as indicators of learners' well-being such as emotional stability, social interaction, and academic focus. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to describe the levels of social media use and well-being, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to determine the relationship between the variables.

The findings revealed that learners demonstrated high levels of social media use, with many spending a significant amount of time on multiple platforms each day. While learners' overall well-being was generally moderate to high, frequent and prolonged social media use showed a negative relationship with emotional well-being, particularly in managing stress and maintaining focus. Social and academic well-being, however, appeared to be less affected. The study concludes that although social media offers opportunities for communication and learning support, excessive use may pose challenges to learners' emotional health.

The learners practice responsible and balanced social media use, while teachers, school administrators, and parents provide consistent guidance and support to promote healthy digital habits. Future studies may focus on interventions that enhance the positive effects of social media while reducing its potential negative impact on learners' well-being.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Learners' Well-Being, Emotional Health, Academic Performance, Digital Engagement, Responsible Use

## Introduction

The rapid growth of social media has greatly influenced how learners communicate, interact, and access information. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok have become a regular part of learners' daily routines, shaping both their academic experiences and personal lives (Lenhart, 2015). While social media provides opportunities for collaboration, engagement, and access to learning resources, studies suggest that excessive or inappropriate use may have negative effects on learners' psychological, emotional, and social well-being (Kuss & Griffiths, 2015).

Learners' well-being refers to their emotional, mental, and social health, all of which are essential to academic success, motivation, and personal growth (Diener et al., 2018). Research indicates that balanced social media use can promote social connection, peer support, and engagement in learning activities.

However, excessive exposure to social media or negative online content may increase stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation, which can adversely affect learners' well-being and academic performance (Twenge, 2019).

Despite increasing global research on social media and youth well-being, there remains limited local research in the Philippine context, particularly among elementary and secondary learners in rural school districts such as Dumangas II. Understanding how social media use relates to learners' well-being is important in developing school policies, guidance programs, and educational interventions that promote responsible digital behavior and support learners' holistic development.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the patterns and frequency of social media use among learners, assess their level of well-being, and determine the relationship between social media use and learners' well-being in the Schools District of Dumangas II during the academic year 2025–2026.

This study sought to determine the relationship between learners' use of social media and their well-being in the Schools District of Dumangas II during the academic year 2025–2026. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions: What is the extent of learners' social media use in terms of frequency, duration, and types of platforms accessed? What is the level of learners' well-being in terms of emotional health, social interactions, and academic engagement? Furthermore, the study investigates whether a significant relationship exists between learners' social media use and their overall well-being. By addressing these questions, the study intends to provide meaningful insights into the effects of social media on learners' psychological, social, and academic dimensions, and to offer recommendations for promoting responsible and balanced social media use that supports learners' overall development.

## Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between learners' social media use and their well-being in the Schools District of Dumangas II during the academic year 2025–2026. The descriptive component focused on identifying patterns, frequency, and types of social media use, as well as the current level of learners' well-being, while the correlational component determined the association between social media use and well-being.

The respondents consisted of 172 learners from different grade levels within the district, selected through total enumeration to ensure broad representation. Participants were required to be active social media users and officially enrolled in the participating schools during the study period.

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed and validated questionnaire composed of two parts. Part I measured learners' social media use in terms of frequency, duration, and platforms accessed. Part II assessed learners' well-being, focusing on emotional health, social interaction, and academic engagement. The instrument underwent expert validation by specialists in educational psychology and guidance, and pilot testing yielded a high reliability coefficient (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.88$ ). Ethical standards were strictly observed through informed consent from learners and parents or guardians, confidentiality of responses, and anonymity of participants.

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation to describe social media use and well-being. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was utilized to determine the significance of the relationship between social media use and learners' well-being at a 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

The results showed that learners in the Schools District of Dumangas II reported a high level of social media use, with an overall mean of 4.15 (SD = 0.42). Among the indicators of social media use, frequency of access obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.28, SD = 0.39), followed by duration of daily use (M = 4.12, SD = 0.41) and platform preference (M = 4.05, SD = 0.44). These findings suggest that learners are highly engaged with social media on a daily basis, particularly on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, reflecting global trends in youth social media use (Lenhart, 2015).

In terms of well-being, learners reported a moderate to high level, with an overall mean of 3.94 (SD = 0.46). Emotional health recorded a mean of 3.92 (SD = 0.48), social interactions 3.96 (SD = 0.44), and academic engagement 3.94 (SD = 0.46). These results indicate that while learners generally maintain positive well-being, challenges remain in managing stress and balancing social media use with academic responsibilities.

Correlation analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between social media use and learners' well-being ( $r = -0.41$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that higher levels of social media use are associated with slightly lower levels of well-being. The findings support previous studies suggesting that excessive or poorly managed social media use may negatively affect learners' emotional, social, and academic functioning (Kuss & Griffiths, 2015; Twenge, 2019).

## Discussion

The findings suggest that although social media serves as an important tool for communication and social connection, excessive use may negatively affect learners' overall well-being. High frequency and extended duration of social media use can contribute to distractions, reduced academic focus, and increased exposure to negative online experiences, which may heighten emotional stress (Twenge, 2019). The moderate well-being scores, particularly in emotional health, highlight the importance of helping learners balance online engagement with offline activities, school responsibilities, and personal time. The significant negative relationship observed in this study supports the findings of Kuss and Griffiths (2015), who emphasized that unregulated social media use can undermine psychological and social well-being. These results emphasize the need to promote digital literacy, responsible social media habits, and school-based support programs that address learners' emotional and academic needs. Encouraging mindful and purposeful use of social media may help maximize its benefits while reducing its potential risks to learners' well-being.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it is concluded that learners in the Schools District of Dumangas II exhibit high levels of social media use in terms of frequency, duration, and platform engagement. While learners generally report moderate to high levels of well-being, excessive social media use is associated with a negative effect on overall well-being, particularly emotional health. Social interactions and academic engagement remain relatively stable, but prolonged exposure to social media may slightly reduce emotional balance and focus.

The results suggest that although social media can be a valuable tool for communication and learning support, its excessive use may challenge learners' emotional and psychological well-being. Therefore, responsible and moderated social media use is essential in maintaining learners' holistic well-being and supporting positive academic and social outcomes.

## Recommendations

In light of the conclusions, the study recommends the following:

**For Learners:** Practice balanced and mindful social media use by setting limits on daily screen time and participate in offline activities that support emotional, social, and academic development.

**For Teachers and School Administrators:** Integrate digital literacy and responsible social media use into guidance programs and classroom discussions and provide regular guidance sessions that raise awareness of online safety, emotional health, and self-regulation.

**For Parents and Guardians:** Offer consistent guidance and supervision to help learners balance online activities with academic and household responsibilities and encourage open communication about emotional and social concerns related to social media use.

**For Future Research:** Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of social media use on learners' well-being and explore school-based interventions that reduce negative impacts while strengthening the positive potential of social media engagement.

Lastly, Implementing these recommendations is expected to help learners benefit from social media use while safeguarding their emotional, social, and academic well-being.

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