

Social Media in Lives of Parents and Children: Exploring Effects on Parents-Children Relationships

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Abstract

Social media and its usage are one of the essential activities of this century. Many social media sites are there in the world, and they have millions of users. This research aims to explore the effects of social media usage on parents and children interpersonal relationships. Relationships among parents and children are an essential factor in having excellent bonding of family. The total numbers of respondents were 384, who were selected according to Morgan and Krejcie's formula. Islamabad was the city where the survey was conducted. Probability sampling was used for this study. The study was based on the theory of Time displacement by Robert Putnam (1970). He argued that when we give more time to our virtual world, our time to our real-world will be less. Two hundred children and 184 parents were the respondents of this study. Results showed that most of the users are heavy users; they use social media more than 4 hours on a daily basis. The outcome revealed that Facebook is much admired social media site among users. According to results, 65% of respondents elaborated that social media unite families, and the rest of 35% said that they are against this statement. Furthermore, 73% of the total population responded that social media decreased face-to-face interaction between parents and children. On the other hand, 14% were neutral, and 11% were against this statement. According to results of hypothesis it has been found that both parents and children support positive aspects of social media usage. This study also finds out that heavy social media usage causes many troubles like sleeplessness, interest in the virtual world, and face-to-face interaction between children and parents. This study recommends the less usage of the virtual world and social sites to make strong relations in real life.

Keywords: , Usage of Social Media, Parents, Children, Interpersonal Relations

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INTRODUCTION:

Information and Communication technology (ICT) has rapidly changed over the past 20 years. Hootsuite, (2020) compiled a report, that there are 3.028 billion active users are consuming social media worldwide. This report was also published by a forum named - We Are Social. It concluded that users spend an average of two hours every day in liking, sharing, updating, and tweeting on social networking sites.

Having interaction among members of the family or with friends across very long distances has always been the priority of humans for the beginning of the world. Humans are social animals. They always relied on the tools for communication to make their relation strong. When humans felt that face-to-face communication is painful or inconvenient, they plan to make plenty of creative solutions.

Pew Research Center (2018) states that, younger are more social media users than older. Almost 89 per. of total people between the ages of 18 up to 29 used any of the forms of social media, which may be Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. Some social media users are educated and wealthy or earning more than 75,000 dollars yearly. Social media is not only an issue for youth or youngsters. It also has long-lasting effects on the lives of parents and elders. That makes a distance between children and parents.

According to Ekern, J. (2019), "Libby Lyons, a Clinical Social Worker, argued that during his research, he found that about 70% of women who use computers, mobile phones, or watch television is facing problems in their family relationships. They cannot give time to their children and cannot plan any family trip on the weekend. On the other hand, 40% of these women also said that their partners get distracted due to watching television, and their partners also check mobile phones several times during lunch or mealtime".

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In this era of communication and technological advancement, we are heavily occupied with different media types, ranging from social and conventional media. The arrival of social media has affected different facets of our lives. Social media has occupied a greater space in our daily lives. Most of the time, we are busy with social media usage while ignoring the daily routines of our lives. Likewise, our relationships with society are being defined by media, especially social media. In the context of the above situation, it is important to explore the effects of social media on society overall and particularly on interpersonal relationships.

This work is designed to attain the following objectives

- To know about extent of social media use among Pakistani parents and children.
- To explore the forms of social media being mostly used by Pakistani parents and children.
- To make a comparison of social media usage among respondents having different demographic characteristics.

- To examine how social media is affecting interpersonal relationships.
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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How much time is consumed by parents and children during usage of social media?
- Which social media platform is mostly used among parents and children in Pakistan?
- What is the difference in duration in usage of social media between males and females?
- What is the difference in time spending of social media between parents and children?
- To what extent do parents prefer usage of social media for their children?

How do social media influence interpersonal relationships between parents and

LITERATURE REVIEW

When a social media user creates a profile on Social Networking Sites (SNS) like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, that user invites other users to his network. It means to give everyone access to their profile information or other different options for communication. According to Facebook, these connections of friends are also known as Friending (to add somebody to Friend's list) (Boyd, 2006).

Facebook supports a spectrum which is in a very wide form that is possible in connections to those users who share connections which are offline with unknown people, those who can find one another through different features like fan pages, Facebook groups, social games, social network or applications. Photographs, status updates, interest-based profile, or other Friending networks also plays a vital role in finding a stranger and to make him, friend.

Social Sites are used by close friends to stay in touch with each other. Friends who seem to be closed are connected through WhatsApp Facebook, or LinkedIn is more likely to find it easy and efficient to stay in touch with each other. It also enabled lightweight interactions, which are likely to give benefit to these developed relationships by these social sites.

Subrahmanyam et al. (2008) argue that 20 percent of friends are being closed to each other through social media usage. Facebook has the intensity to bond social capital that can be associated through strong ties; likely close friends are (Ellison et al. 2007).

Haythornthwaite (2005) argues that Facebook not a critical channel for the use of communication for families and close friends because such types of strong ties mostly use different unessential channels to communicate with each other as recommended by media multiplicity.

Donath (2007) said that Social media Sites could support a larger number of social networks, which allows users to follow and track with many people after that they normally could. So an individual can collect large numbers of friends through these technological tools.

Williams (2006) insisted that the associations or business groups constructed by social media can build different classifications of social capital.

But some authors argue that by using social media, a user can lose his social capital of the real world. The user only makes and enjoys the relations of the virtual world. It is so harmful that he may lose the bonding of his family and friends of the real world.

Attewell, Suazo-Garcia, & Battle (2003) argue that there are more chances for excessive social media use to get away from physical and social ties. The use of social media can also reduce social family and activities, which is outdoor-related and also isolate people.

Resnick (2001) told that might be communication dependent on computers will be used to bond relationships virtually, yet it may develop weak face-to-face and interpersonal communication.

The excessive use of social media displaces and diminishes social activities. Users spend much time online on these social media sites, and then they cannot be able to participate in social activities (Moody, 2001).

Kraut et al. (1998) argue that those people who are indulged and busy in virtual contacts, their ability of stronger face-to-face communication reduced.

Sajid (2013) highlighted that usage of digital media has quickly spread all over Pakistan, especially in built-up areas, almost in social classes. Usage of this new media in 2013 and 2014 reached about 60 percent of the total in Pakistan. On the other hand, users of the internet are about 13% to 18% of the total population in Pakistan.

About one hundred and twenty million mobile phone users have changed the media scenario in Pakistan significantly (Sajid 2013). Pakistan stands at number 5th among the largest mobile phone users in Asia (Kemp 2013).

Time displacement hypothesis specified that Internet users and heavy TV viewers have lesser confronted interactions (Putnam, 2000). Different researchers highlighted that online communication helps in a positive way to an individual in constructing his or her social trust and motivate him to be the part in the development of social (Kobayashi, Ikeda, & Miyata, 2006 and Best & Dautrich 2003).

Williams (2006) strongly argued that the time displacement hypothesis has nothing to do with social or new media. It can only implement while watching television. People watching television may not talk with others but sending or receiving messages or email during chatting and use these Social Sites, people are engaged in

communication interpersonally (Raacke& Bonds Raacke 2008).

Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe (2007) included those college students with less pleasure to use social media to feel personal happiness and comfort.

People can move toward social and online life more than to exercise their social skills in this real-world (Ahsan, 2009). People try and take more interest in creating contacts in the virtual world rather than making contacts in the real world.

Hypotheses

H1: It is more likely that parents do not prefer the usage of social media for their children in Pakistan.

H2: It is more likely that the use of social media will affect interpersonal relationships among family members in Pakistani society more negatively than positively.

Significance of Research

Social media is used in Pakistani society by almost everyone who has its knowhow. So the importance of this study will be for every social media user. Children, parents, heavy and light users of social media, students, and research scholars can get the idea of the impact of social media on the relationships of its user.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of time displacement by Robert Putnam (2000) will be used as theoretical framework for this study. He argues that some time we spent our more time on using one thing by which we forget to give time to other or to spend our time on other things.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher finds out that four major apparatus are used as a research methodology for the study.

1. The relationship between the researcher and the respondents in the research.
2. The selection of respondents, time, and places for data collection.
3. Those methods are used in the collection of data.
4. Many procedures that are used for analyzing results which is collected by the researcher.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Researcher work on a quantitative research design for this study by surveying the residents of the city if Islamabad. A questionnaire that is closed-ended having five Likert scales was constructed to analyze the findings of different research related to the effects of usage of social media sites.

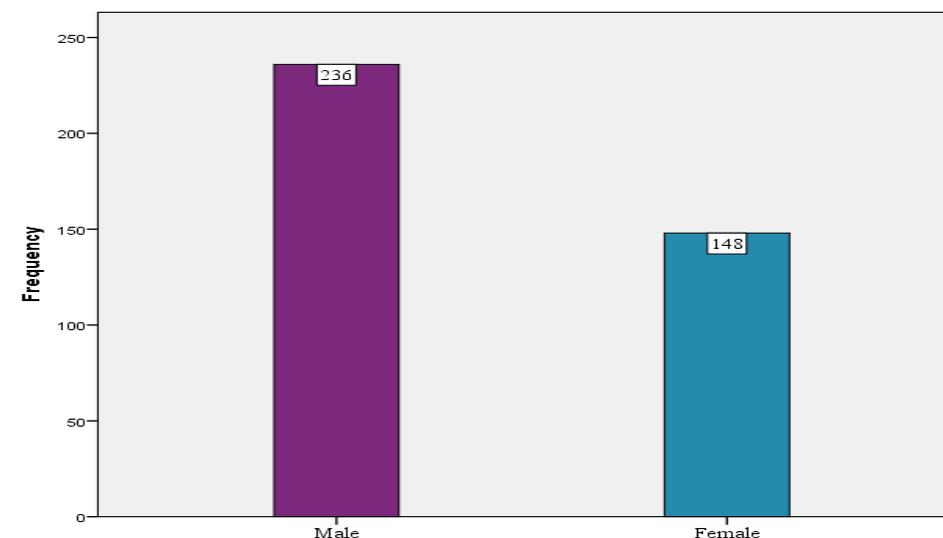
TECHNIQUE FOR SAMPLING

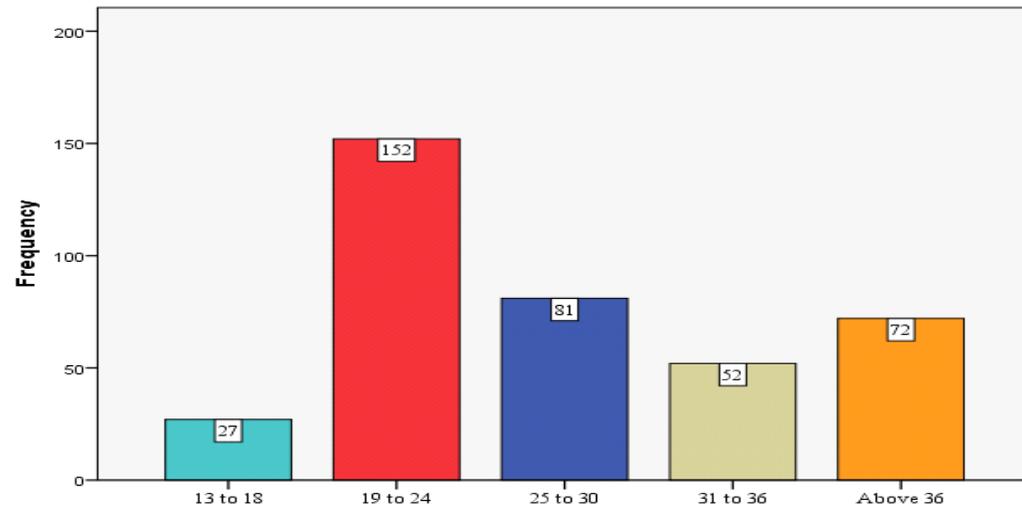
All the sectors of Islamabad city, which is urban and having more than 1 million populations, were taken for study. Random sampling was used to take the sub-sector of each sector. After the procedure, a simple random sampling method was used in this research to select streets, and one house skip method was used to select the houses for the survey. E.g., house num 221, 223, 225 of block A Street 21 sub-sector G-11/4 were selected and distributed the questionnaires to the residents of these houses. This technique is used in all sectors of Islamabad.

DATA ANALYSIS

The demographic data shown below in figures, which elaborate that the total numbers of respondents, are 384. Among them 236 are male (61.5%) and 148 females, (38.5%) of total numbers. Ages of respondents shows that the highest age frequency of respondents is 19 to 24 years, which is 39.6%. In spite of, 81 respondents are among 25 to 30 years, which are 21.1% according to their percentage. Qualification shows that as well as the respondent is educated, the chance of error in results will be less. The most frequent qualification among respondents is Post Graduate with 38.0 percentage and having 146 total numbers. The second highest education frequency is Graduation having 129 respondents. Least respondents regarding their qualifications are those who are below Matric, and their total number is 14, with only 3.6%.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENTS





RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RQ1. How much time is consumed by parents and children during usage of social media?

Table 1
Time of Usage of Social Media Sites

Time (in hours)	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour	66	17.2
1 hours up to 2 hours	68	17.7
More than 2 hours up to 3 hours	83	21.6
More than 3 hours up to 4 hours	79	20.6
More than 4 hours	88	22.9
Total	384	100.0

This table 4.1 given above defines the duration of use of social sites by the users. Eighty-eight respondents use social networking sites for more than 4 hours, which is shown heavy use by them.

RQ2. Which social media platform is mostly used among parents and children in Pakistan?

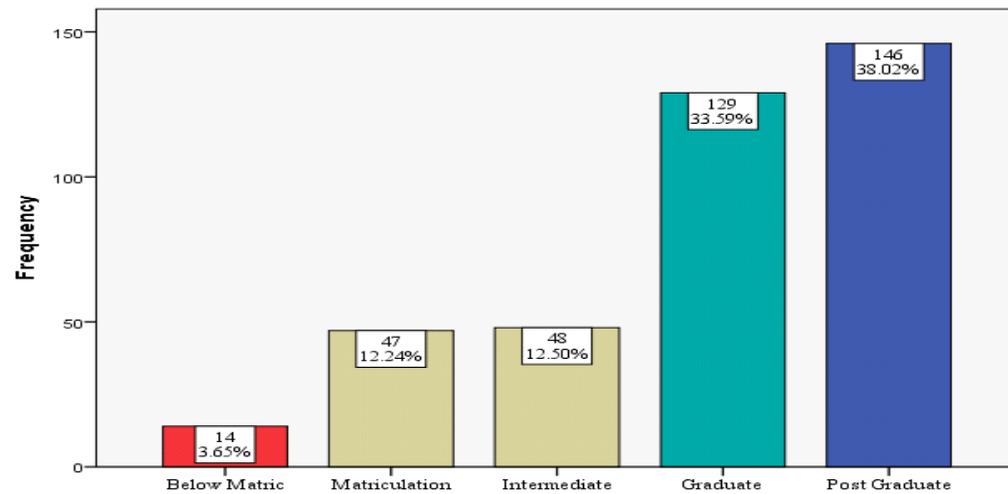


Table 2

Mostly Used Social Media Platform

Social Media Sites	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	204	53.1
Twitter	7	1.8
WhatsApp	91	23.7
Instagram	8	2.1
Youtube	28	7.3
LinkedIn	9	2.3
Imo	11	2.9
Tik Tok	26	6.8
Total	384	100.0

The most admired and used social media site among Pakistani users is Facebook. According to the table 4.2 given above, Facebook has 204 users, with 53.1% among total respondents. WhatsApp is also very popular among users with 23.7%, and the total number of users is 91.

RQ3. What is the difference in duration in usage of social media between males and females?

Table 3
Respondents' Time of Usage of Social MediaZ

Less than 1 hour		Respondents' time of Usage of Social Media					Total
		1 hours up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours up to 4 hours	More than 4 hours		
Respondents' Gender	Male	51 (21.6)	46 (19.7)	44 (18.5)	40 (16.4)	55 (23.6)	236
	Female	15 (10.1)	22 (14.8)	39 (26.3)	39 (26.3)	33 (22.2)	148
Total		66	68	83	79	88	384

According to this survey, 26.3% percent of female respondents use social sites more than 3 hours up to 4 hours in the same category; only 16.4% of males are its part. On the other hand, 21.6% of males use social media sites for less than 1 hour, but only 10.1% of females use social sites less than 1 hour.

RQ4. What is the difference in duration of social media usage between parents and children?

Table 4
Respondents' Time of Usage of Social Media

Less than 1 hour		Respondents' time of Usage of Social Media					Total
		1 hours up to 2 hours	More than 2 hours up to 3 hours	More than 3 hours up to 4 hours	More than 4 hours		
Respondent's Marital Status	Married	50 (27.1%)	41 (22.2%)	33 (17.9%)	32 (17.3%)	28 (15.2%)	184
	Unmarried	16 (8.0%)	27 (13.5%)	50 (25.0%)	47 (23.5%)	60 (30.0%)	200
Total		66	68	83	79	88	384

RQ5: To what extent do parents prefer usage of social media for their children?

Table 5
Preference of Parents for Usage of Social Media by Their Children

	Frequency	Percent
Not Preferably	39	10.2
Least Preferably	58	15.1
Neutral	24	6.3
Preferably	28	7.3
Most Preferably	23	6.0
Total	172	44.8

The question was asked by parent respondents how much they prefer the usage of social media for their children. Among them, 39 respondents were not preferring, 58 were least preferring, 28 parents were Preferring, and 23 were most preferring usage of social media sites for their children.
PROS of Social Media for Users

Table 4.9. Social Media Services unite families

Table 6

Social Media Services Unite Families

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	32	8.3
Disagree	35	9.1
Neutral	67	17.4
Agree	118	30.7
Strongly Agree	132	34.4
Total	384	100.0

According to table 250, 65.1% of respondents are agreeing with this statement that yes, social media sites unite families with its services. The services are in the type of messages, video calls, voice calls, etc. and only 67 respondents are against this statement, and their percentage is only 17.4%.

Table 7
Social Media Helps to Contact many Family Members in Case of Emergency

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	15	3.9
Disagree	16	4.2
Neutral	46	12.0
Agree	135	35.2
Strongly Agree	172	44.8
Total	384	100.0

This question also shows the worth of usage of social media among users. Three hundred seven respondents with a percentage of 80% average agreeing with this statement that social media sites are very helpful to contact family members in case of emergency. Only 31 respondents, with 8.1% of respondents, disagree with this statement.

Cons of Social Media for User

Some tables which are given below deals with the cons of usage of social sites. Given below table show of the negative impacts of social sites on interpersonal relationships.

Table 8

Use of Social Media is Wastage of Time

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	25	6.5
Disagree	33	8.6
Neutral	69	18.0
Agree	137	35.7
Strongly Agree	120	31.3
Total	384	100.0

137 respondents are agreeing with this statement and 120 respondents are strongly agreed with it. If we combine the average percentage of agreeing respondents, it will be 67% of the total percentage. And the total disagreeing respondents are 15.1%. It means that this statement is highly supported.

Table 9
Use of Social Media Decrease Face-to-Face Interaction

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	22	5.7
Disagree	22	5.7
Neutral	54	14.1
Agree	149	38.8
Strongly Agree	137	35.7
Total	384	100.0

286 respondents, with 74.5%, respond to it as agree with the statement. Only 44 respondents do not agree with this statement, and their total percentage is 11.4%.

54 respondents are also on the neutral stance, and their percentage is 14.1%, which is even more than the respondents who are disagreeing. This table shows that a large number of social media users think that social sites also affect the chit chat amid parents and children by sitting in front of each other or talking face to face.

Table 10

Uses of Social Media Create Distance among Family Members

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	22	5.7
Disagree	22	5.7
Neutral	54	14.1
Agree	149	38.8
Strongly Agree	137	35.7
Total	384	100.0

The table 10 shows given that the heavy usages of social media sites create gap between family members. A large number of respondents agree with this statement, and they are 66%. On the other hand, those who are disagreeing are only 19% percent on average.

Hypotheses:-

It is more likely that parents do not prefer the usage of social media for their children in Pakistan.

Table 11

Parents' Preference about the Usage of Social Media

	Observed N	Chi-Square Asymp. Sig.
Not Preferably	39	

Least Preferably	58	
Neutral	24	p-value
Preferably	28	.000
Most Preferably	23	
Total	172	

The table 4.23 which is given above is based on the hypothesis statement that parents do not prefer the usage of social sites in Pakistan. And chi-square is used on it to find the significance of this of values. The p-value is .000, which is highly significant.

It is more likely that use of social media will affect interpersonal relationships among family members in Pakistani society more negatively than positively.

One Sample T-Test

	N	Mean	Std. Devia- tion	Std. Error Mean
Pros-computed	384	4.0729	.77816	.03971
Cons-computed	384	3.8385	.88775	.04530

Table 12

One Sample Statistics

The table 4.24 shows the mean value of one sample t-test, which elaborates the mean value of the pros and cons. The pros and cons were in compute form.

Table 13

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif- ference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper

Pros-com-puted	102.566	383	.000	4.07292	3.9948	4.1510
Cons-com-puted	84.731	383	.000	3.83854	3.7495	3.9276

The above-given tables 4.24 and 4.25 show the T-Test and its descriptive statistics of between the pros and cons of social sites on interpersonal relationships. The mean of these two groups are different, and pros have 4.072 mean value and cons have 3.838 value. No doubt there is the only difference between their mean values is 0.234 and the same in the case of the standard error of mean and standard deviations, there is a trivial variation.

CONCLUSION

The study, which was based on the topic Effects of usage of social Media on Parents-Children Interpersonal Relationships, revealed interesting facts. As related to the usage of social networking sites according to age, it is revealed that youth age 19 up to 24 uses more social sites as compared to other age categories. It means that this college-going youth has more access to mobile phones and 4G technology provides them more opportunity to use these sites on the tips of fingers within cheap internet rates. The respondents who gave their responses to the questionnaire showed that large digits of users use social media sites more than 3 to 4 hours daily, and their numbers were 167 among 384 of total numbers. It clearly shows that people are a heavy user of social media sites in Pakistan. Undoubtedly, the use of social networking sites is very important in this and upcoming centuries. And the respondents of this study also respond that they get many positive effects of social media by using it. But at the same time where these sites give a chance to have contact with friends; they are also putting a gap among parents and children, which is lethal for their interpersonal relationship.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH IN FUTURE

This research study was limited to Islamabad (capital of Pakistan) due to limitations of finance, and time as well. But there are many dimensions in the future in the area related to social media usage to explore them and to make meaning fill studies. The future explorers may research on in following fields:

- In future researchers may conduct research on many other popular social media sites. Because with time, the priority of social media sites will change.
- Researchers may also select any city in Pakistan for more accuracy of results.
- For the sake of research, researchers may also dig out the impacts of social networking sites on the relations of other family members or friends

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