

Influence of Social Media on Classroom Discipline

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Abstract

This study explores how social media influences the classroom discipline of middle school students. Using a mixed-methods approach, it analyzes student behavior patterns, attention spans, and teacher observations to evaluate the extent of digital distraction. Results reveal a significant correlation between excessive social media use and reduced academic focus, peer conflicts, and behavioral issues. The findings underscore the importance of digital awareness, structured media use policies, and teacher-parent collaboration in maintaining classroom discipline.

Keywords

Social Media, Classroom Discipline, Student Behavior, Digital Distraction, Educational Impact

Introduction

As we all know, the importance of discipline in classroom learning is evident. Classroom discipline has always been a discussion-provoking issue. Since it is considered that discipline is responsible for strong academic gains of a student, and also it enhances the efficiency of the education. It not only helps students in successful learning but also affects their life and helps them in staying active. Further, discipline encourages a positive academic performance and makes them more focused on their goals. It enhances self-control among them as they get hold of their stress and anxiety. They start learning how to control themselves from overthinking discipline and enhance students' concentration.

It is enough to understand that classroom discipline is the prerequisite for effective learning in a classroom but in the present scenario, it is observed that the classroom discipline is getting affected. One among the many reasons for the disturbed classroom discipline is the excessive use of social media among the students.

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Literature review

Different studies on social media and education reveal mixed outcomes regarding its impact on student behavior and classroom discipline. According to Smith & Anderson (2022), “Increased smartphone and social media usage correlates with decreased student attention spans and higher levels of classroom disruption”. Other studies (e.g., Johnson, 2020; Lee & Gupta, 2021) suggest that platforms like Instagram and Snapchat contribute to off-task behavior, leading to lower academic performance and frequent disciplinary interventions. Conversely, some researchers highlight potential benefits when social media is used constructively in the classroom, such as improved student collaboration and communication (Brown & Miller, 2019). However, the literature largely agrees that without proper guidelines, the negative effects of social media outweigh its advantages in traditional classroom settings.

According to the Stratford study, The revolution of ICT emphasised upon the methodology of teachers in imparting education to students as the central role of teachers’ role in delivering knowledge (Patel, 2020). The traditional methods of classroom teaching used by the teachers made the students passive listeners. Therefore, the upgraded practice of teaching was developed in most countries where the teaching materials were improvised, this made the teaching effective and improved the student retention in the classroom learning. Schgurenky (1997) reported that “Conventional teaching practices contribute to the unemployment rate and reduced economic growth due to the lack of sufficient skills among students in order to become more professional.”

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods strategy constituting quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of social media on classroom discipline. A total of 80 students from 6 standard to 9 standard and 25 teachers from an urban school were asked to participate in the survey using stratified random sampling. The student survey consisted of Likert-scale questions measuring frequency of social media use during class, perceived distractions, and experiences with cyber-related conflicts. Teacher interviews were semi-structured and focused on observed changes in student behavior, disciplinary challenges, and strategies implemented to manage technology-related disruptions. Descriptive statistics and thematic coding were applied to the data to examine key patterns.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between students' social media engagement and classroom discipline.
2. To identify the negative and positive aspects of social media on students' behavioral patterns and academic gains.
3. To assess how social media affects students' attention span, peer relationships, and learning preferences.
4. To evaluate teachers' observations regarding students' behavioral changes linked to social media use.
5. To suggest strategies for managing social media influence in educational settings to enhance classroom discipline.

Significance of the study

The rising use of social media among students has posed a significant challenge in maintaining classroom discipline. This unregulated screen time has affected the students' behaviour negatively. This has been argued that the increased concentration of students on social media platforms has led to the diminished interaction within the community, distraction from the academics, eventually affecting their academic growth (Margaret, 2021). Many observations have been made regarding the disturbed behavioural patterns of the students by the discipline incharges, teachers, and even the parents. Class attendance and the attention span of students are majorly affected as per the data received from the respondents which resulted in poor discipline among the students. This disturbing behavioural pattern of students has to be studied thoroughly.

Scholars like Schon (1983) highlighted how poor discipline in the classroom can obstruct both teaching and learning. According to Kohlberg (1981), the aim of education is discipline and students should be trained towards positive thought of actions. Dewey (1938), argued that to make education more valuable, students should be trained properly during the classroom learning process. Margaret (2021) claimed that "Social media has become an inevitable part of their daily life, and most of the students like it".

Impact of Social Media in Education

Positive impact

Social media impacts the students for everywhere the students can become more with computers and other electronic devices where the social media will help them learn the technology they can use other gadgets and they can be more AI friendly. This gives an opportunity to the students to improve their

skills in the digital world. Learning from a wide variety of educators will help in promoting the plurality among the ideas of the students.

Negative impact

Students due to their frequent checking on social media platforms lack concentration on learning activities. This also causes a bad attitude among the students. Students faced bullying in class inspired from the social media trends. Furthermore, the distraction caused by social media due to skewed sleeping patterns and late-night usage of social media affect the functioning of the brain adversely impacting their mental health.

Research Findings

All are students, and the questionnaire was filled by the students themselves only. Most students are between 11-16 years old. Mixed responses with both male and female participants.

6thGrade Class Analytics

- Average Age: 11.8 years
- Most Common Preferred Device: Android
- Percentage Using Social Media: 75.0%
- Most Common Learning Preference: YouTube
- Percentage Bullied by Friends: 33.3%
- Percentage Bullied via Social Media: 41.7%

7th Grade Class Analytics:

- Average Age: 12.7 years
- Most Common Preferred Device: Android
- Percentage Using Social Media: 66.7%
- Most Common Learning Preference: YouTube
- Percentage Bullied by Friends: 46.7%
- Percentage Bullied via Social Media: 40.0%

8th Grade Class Analytics:

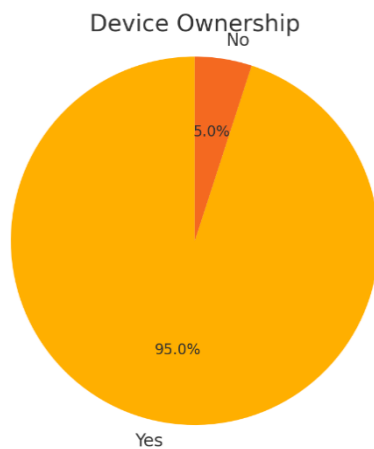
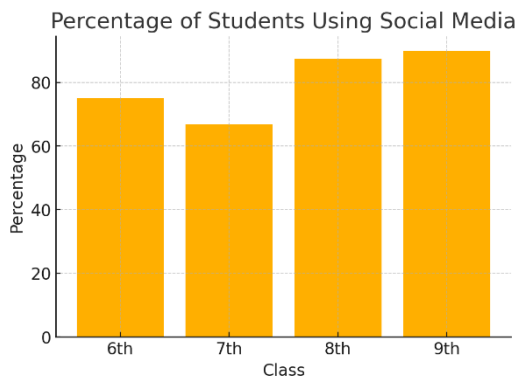
- Average Age: 13.6 year
- Most Common Preferred Device: Android
- Percentage Using Social Media: 87.5%
- Most Common Learning Preference: Classroom
- Percentage Bullied by Friends: 87.5%
- Percentage Bullied via Social Media: 62.5%

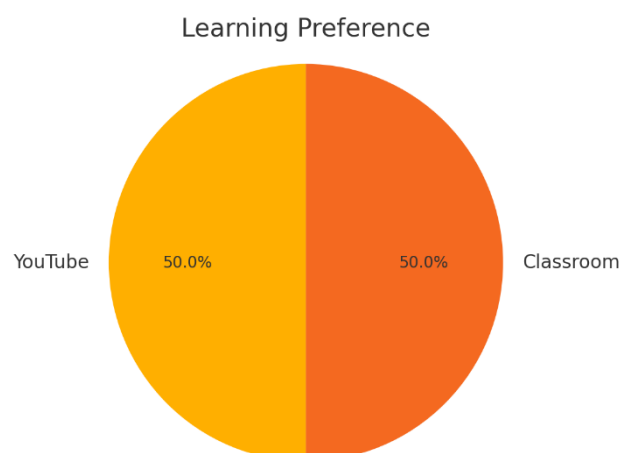
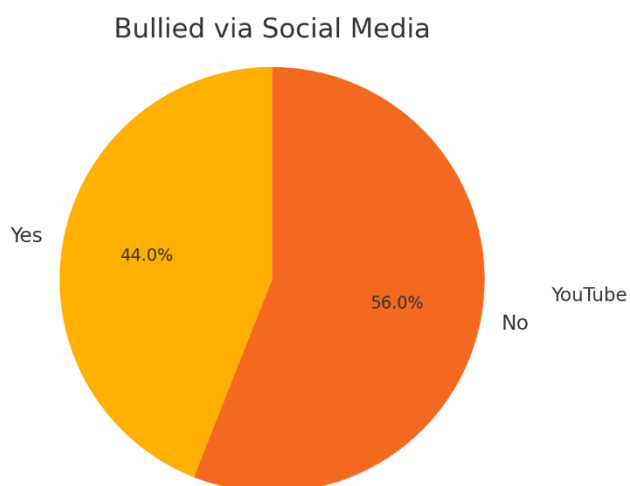
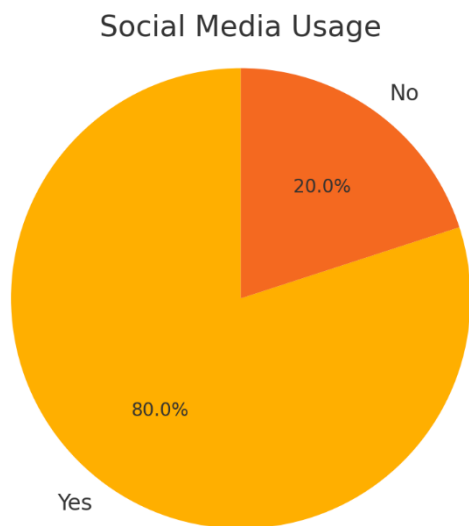
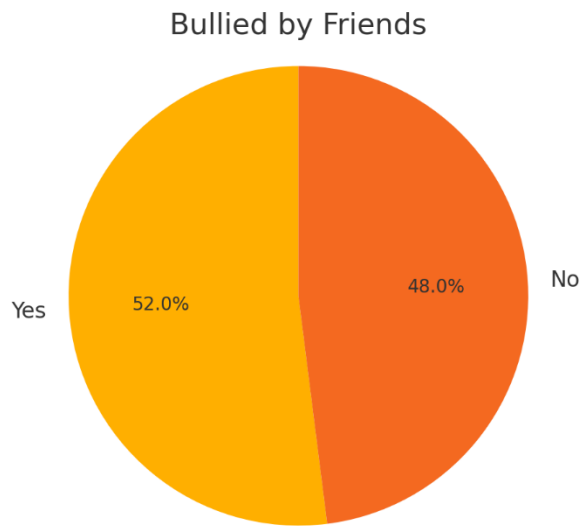
9th Grade Class Analytics:

- Average Age: 14.4 years
- Most Common Preferred Device: Android
- Percentage Using Social Media: 90.0%
- Most Common Learning Preference: Classroom
- Percentage Bullied by Friends: 40.0%
- Percentage Bullied via Social Media: 30.0%

Overall Student Data Analytics (Classes 6 to 9):

- Average Age: 13.1 years
- Most Common Preferred Device: Android
- Percentage Using Social Media: 79.8%
- Most Common Learning Preference: Classroom
- Percentage Bullied by Friends: 51.9%
- Percentage Bullied via Social Media: 43.5%





The study analyzed responses from students across Classes 6 to 9 regarding their digital learning habits, device usage, social media engagement, and experiences with online influence and bullying.

On average, the students surveyed were **13.1 years old**. A strong majority reported owning digital devices, with **Android phones being the most preferred device for learning** across all grade levels. This indicates a consistent reliance on mobile technology for educational purposes.

Social media usage was high, with **nearly 80% of students actively engaged on platforms** such as Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube. Despite the widespread use, the primary learning preference slightly shifted from **YouTube in lower classes to traditional classroom learning** in higher grades, suggesting a balancing act between digital and formal education methods.

However, the findings also raise concerns:

- About **52% of students reported being bullied by peers**, and
- **44% experienced bullying influenced by social media**.

These statistics emphasize the need for stronger digital citizenship education and monitoring of online interactions within the student community.

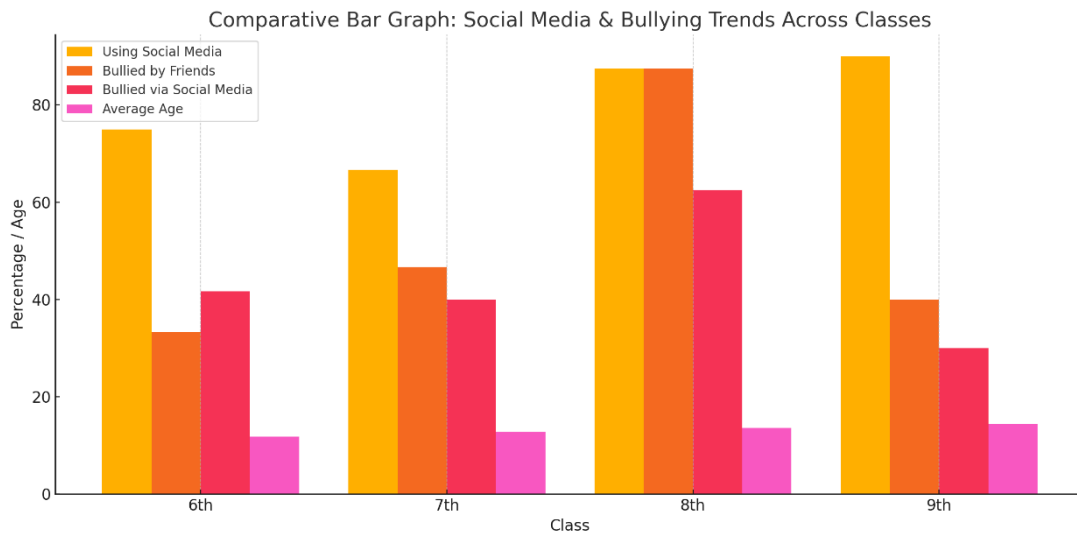
Overall, the data reflects a generation highly immersed in digital tools but also vulnerable to their adverse effects. The insights call for integrated teaching strategies that responsibly harness technology while safeguarding students' emotional and social well-being.

Comparative Analysis Report: Classes 6 to 9

Comparative Table

Class	Average Age	Most Common Preferred Device	Percentage Using Social Media	Most Common Learning Preference	Percentage Bullied by Friends	Percentage Bullied via Social Media
6th	11.8	Android	75.0	YouTube	33.3	41.7
7th	12.7	Android	66.7	YouTube	46.7	40.0
8th	13.6	Android	87.5	Classroom	87.5	62.5
9th	14.4	Android	90.0	Classroom	40.0	30.0

Trend Analysis



The trend graph highlights key behavioral and demographic shifts among students from **Class 6 to Class 9**:

- **Social media usage** shows a steady **increase with grade level**, peaking at **90% in Class 9**, indicating greater digital exposure as students grow older.
- **Average age** naturally increases from **11.8 to 14.4 years**, reflecting the expected academic progression.
- Interestingly, **bullying by friends** spikes sharply in **Class 8 (87.5%)**, before dropping again in Class 9. This suggests a possible **emotional or social volatility during early adolescence**.
- Similarly, **bullying via social media** is highest in Class 8 (**62.5%**) and lowest in Class 9 (**30%**), indicating a critical point where **intervention may be most needed**.

Overall, the graph reveals that **middle school years (especially Class 8)** are a sensitive period in terms of peer dynamics and online exposure. This calls for **targeted awareness, digital education, and emotional support strategies** in these classes.

Hypothesis Testing:

H1: Increased social media usage among students negatively affects classroom discipline.

This has been supported by the above research findings, as nearly 80% of the students actively engage in social media platforms. Teachers have observed that this use leads to students lacking attention in the classroom and imitation of online behaviour affecting the overall classroom discipline.

H2: Students who frequently use social media exhibit reduced academic attention and increased behavioral issues.

This hypothesis has been validated through the above data analysis that students who are having regular access to social media, find it difficult to focus in the classroom. Teachers have observed that students have demonstrated hyperactivity and have copied assignments from online sources due to lack of academic focus.

H3: There is a strong relation between social media trends and peer bullying behaviors in classrooms. The above statement has been validated through the above findings as a large number of students, specifically in class 8 reported bullying by their peers and experienced online trolling.

H4: Teachers perceive social media as a major contributor to declining student discipline and originality in assignments.

The above statement has been supported through the above findings as students copied assignments from the internet using AI with zero understanding of the concept, adding concerns of originality and killing class time.

The above insights affirm that social media has become a serious challenge influencing the classroom behaviour of the students.

Teachers' participation includes the questionnaire with questions on their observations and suggestions on improving students' behavior.

Many teachers mentioned reduced attention span and increased distraction due to social media. Some noted students imitating influencers, adopting inappropriate behavior, slang, or fashion. Teachers observed that students are becoming hyperactive or overly engaged when discussing trending topics.

A significant number of teachers reported that students copy homework directly from social media or AI tools, showing reduced originality and effort. Social media was seen as reducing study time, leading to a drop in academic performance.

A few responses highlighted concerns about students using platforms to complete homework or assignments without understanding the concepts. Teachers emphasized the lack of parental supervision and called for parents to guide students on media consumption. There were suggestions that schools should adopt rules or filters to control excessive. Strong support for teacher training programs on how to handle social media issues in class. Some teachers proposed counseling sessions, workshops, or awareness programs for students. One teacher called for strict actions or policies to limit the misuse of

social media in the school context.

Conclusion

The findings of this research confirm that social media has a substantial impact on classroom discipline. While it offers certain educational benefits when used appropriately, its unregulated use during school hours often leads to distractions, behavioral issues, and disciplinary concerns. Teachers report increasing difficulty maintaining student focus and note that online conflicts frequently spill into classroom dynamics. The study highlights the need for clear school policies, regular digital citizenship training, and strategies to integrate social media in ways that support rather than hinder learning. Further studies should explore the long-term consequences of these interventions and the role of parental involvement in managing students' digital behavior.

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