

Exploring the Role of Social Media Educational Content in Enhancing Learning Quality

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Abstract

This study examines the role of social media education content in enhancing the learning quality among students, with a specific focus on user perception and engagement patterns. While existing literature acknowledges the potential of social media platforms to increase interaction and accessibility, there remains limited empirical clarity on whether such engagement translates into meaningful learning outcomes.

Using a primary data collection approach, this study gathers students' responses to understand how structured educational content on social media platforms influences their perceived learning quality. The study moves beyond surface-level engagement metrics and explores deeper dimensions such as understanding, retention, and critical thinking.

Findings suggest that while students actively engage with educational content on social media, the perceived improvement in learning quality is significantly influenced by the structure, relevance, and intentional use of such content. The research highlights that engagement alone does not ensure effective learning; rather, pedagogically aligned and thoughtfully curated content plays a crucial role.

This study contributes to ongoing academic discourse by bridging the gap between engagement and actual learning outcomes, emphasizing the need for structured integration of social media within educational frameworks.

Keywords: **Social Media, Educational Content, Learning Quality**

1. Introduction

The rapid integration of digital technologies into everyday life has transformed the educational landscape, with social media emerging as a significant informal learning space. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook are increasingly being used not only for communication and entertainment but also for accessing educational content. From short explanatory videos to topic-based discussions and peer-generated insights, social media has created new opportunities for students to engage with knowledge in flexible and accessible ways.

In contemporary academic settings, students frequently rely on social media as a supplementary learning resource. This shift reflects a movement toward more self-directed and participatory forms of learning, where individuals actively seek out content that supports their academic needs. Educational content on social media often simplifies complex concepts, provides visual and real-world context, and allows learners to revisit material at their own pace. As a result, social media has become an important extension of the learning environment beyond the classroom.

Theoretical perspectives such as Constructivism and Connectivism help explain this transformation. Learning is increasingly seen as an active and networked process, where students construct knowledge through interaction, experience, and digital connections. Social media platforms support this by enabling collaboration, discussion, and exposure to diverse viewpoints. However, the presence of such opportunities does not automatically ensure meaningful learning outcomes.

A key concern in this context is the distinction between engagement and learning quality. While students may actively interact with educational content through likes, shares, and comments, such engagement does not necessarily translate into deeper understanding, critical thinking, or long-term retention. Much of the content on social media is designed for quick consumption, prioritizing brevity and visual appeal, which may limit opportunities for sustained cognitive engagement.

Existing research reflects this complexity. Studies suggest that social media can enhance communication and participation, but its impact on academic performance and learning quality remains conditional. Importantly, a large portion of this research focuses on measurable engagement rather than examining how students themselves perceive the role of social media in their learning processes. This creates a gap in understanding whether engagement with educational content is experienced as meaningful learning by students.

The present study addresses this gap by focusing on students' perceptions of social media educational content and its role in enhancing learning quality. Using primary data collected from students, the research explores how engagement with structured educational content influences perceived learning outcomes. The emphasis on structured content is crucial, as it recognizes that the effectiveness of social media depends not only on usage but also on how content is organized, presented, and aligned with learning needs.

By examining students' experiences and interpretations, the study moves beyond surface-level indicators of engagement to explore deeper dimensions of learning such as understanding, retention, and critical engagement. It argues that while social media offers significant potential as a learning tool, its contribution to learning quality is shaped by the nature of the content and the intentionality of its use.

In doing so, the study provides a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between social media engagement and learning outcomes, highlighting that meaningful learning is not a direct result of platform use but a product of structured, relevant, and thoughtfully consumed educational content.

2. Review of Literature

Scholarly discussions on social media in higher education present mixed findings regarding its influence on learning quality. While several studies acknowledge its potential to enhance engagement and collaboration, evidence regarding direct improvement in academic performance remains limited and conditional.

Tess (2013), in a comprehensive review of empirical research, found that platforms such as Facebook and blogs improve communication, student participation, and peer interaction in higher education settings. However, the review concludes that social media does not automatically lead to improved academic outcomes. Its effectiveness depends largely on structured pedagogical integration and alignment with course objectives. Unstructured or informal use shows little connection to measurable academic improvement.

Similarly, Junco (2015) examined the relationship between Facebook use and academic performance and reported that overall time spent on the platform was negatively associated with GPA. However, when Facebook was used for academic purposes—such as collaboration and assignment-related discussions—it showed positive associations with engagement. This study emphasizes that the educational impact of social media depends on the nature and intention of its use rather than the platform itself.

From a collaborative learning perspective, Al-Rahmi, Othman, and Musa (2018) demonstrated that social media can positively influence academic performance when it facilitates knowledge sharing and peer interaction. Their findings suggest that structured online discussions and instructor-supported collaboration contributes to improved learning satisfaction and outcomes. These results reinforce the importance of guided implementation.

Moving beyond performance indicators, Greenhow and Lewin (2016) argue that social media reshapes the boundaries between formal and informal learning environments. They propose that learning increasingly occurs through participatory digital practices, where students construct

knowledge beyond institutional settings. This perspective suggests that learning quality should also be understood in terms of participation, identity development, and networked knowledge creation.

Recent research has also questioned whether engagement necessarily reflects deep learning. Manca (2020) notes that studies on emerging platforms such as Instagram and Twitter often focus on engagement metrics rather than cognitive outcomes such as critical thinking or knowledge retention. The author calls for stronger theoretical grounding and longitudinal research to assess sustained educational impact.

Tang and Hew (2017), in their review of Twitter's educational use, found that the platform can enhance reflection, communication, and discussion when used in a structured and purposeful way. However, without clear guidelines and assessment integration, social media use may lead to distraction and superficial interaction.

Further extending the discussion, Pangrazio and Selwyn (2021) highlight the influence of data-driven algorithms in shaping knowledge exposure on social media platforms. They argue that educational approaches must include critical data literacy to help learners understand how platform infrastructures affect information visibility and learning processes.

Finally, Khalil and Ebner (2017) analyzed engagement patterns in online courses and found that high engagement levels do not necessarily correlate with course completion or mastery. While micro-content formats increase accessibility and participation, deeper learning requires structured feedback and learner self-regulation.

Overall, existing literature suggests that social media educational content has the potential to enhance learning quality through collaboration, interaction, and participatory engagement. However, its effectiveness is contingent upon purposeful instructional design, alignment with academic objectives, instructor facilitation, and critical digital awareness. Engagement alone is insufficient; meaningful enhancement of learning quality requires structured and pedagogically grounded integration.

2.1 Research Gap

Previous studies show that social media increases student engagement and communication. However, there is limited clear evidence that it directly improves learning quality or academic performance. Many studies focus only on engagement (likes, comments, participation) and not on deeper learning outcomes such as understanding, critical thinking, or knowledge retention.

There is also a lack of research that studies students' own perceptions of how educational content on social media affects their learning. Therefore, more focused research is needed to understand whether structured educational content on social media actually enhances learning quality.

2.2 Research Objectives

1. To examine students' perceptions of social media educational content and its role in enhancing learning quality.
2. To analyze the relationship between engagement with structured social media educational content and perceived improvement in learning outcomes.

2.3 Research Questions

1. How do students perceive the impact of social media educational content on their overall learning quality?
2. Is there a significant relationship between students' engagement with structured social media educational content and their perceived improvement in learning outcomes?

2.4 Hypothesis

1) H₀: There is no significant positive perception among students regarding the role of social media educational content in enhancing learning quality.

H₁: There is a significant positive perception among students regarding the role of social media educational content in enhancing learning quality.

2) H₀: There is no significant relationship between students' engagement with social media educational content and perceived improvement in learning outcomes.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between students' engagement with social media educational content and perceived improvement in learning outcomes.

3. Research Methodology

The study consists of a mixed-method approach where a qualitative outcome is focused upon. The primary data was collected from students using a structured questionnaire. Data was collected from 90 students.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Number of students

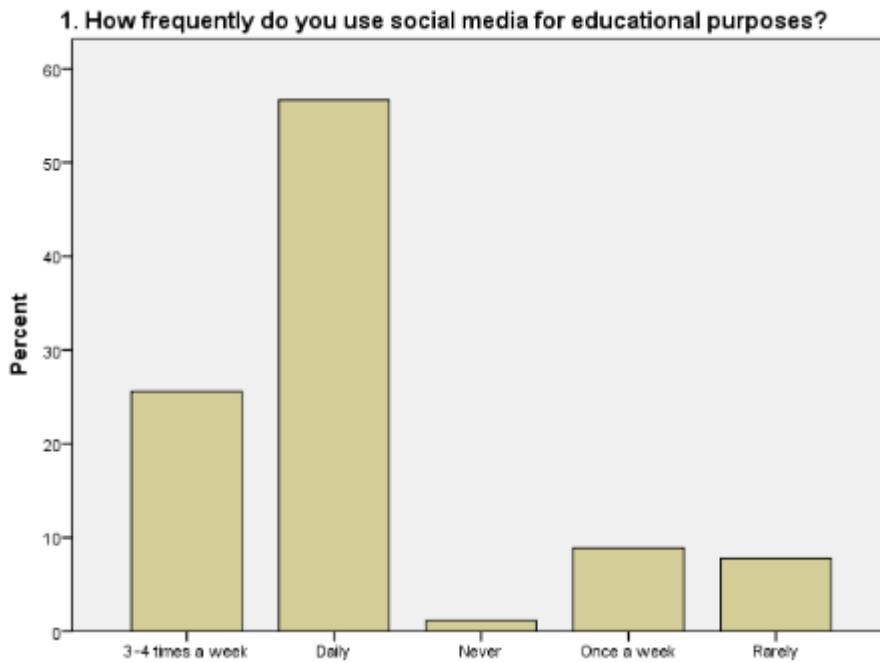
Class	Frequency	Percent
High School Student	4	4
Junior College	7	8
Degree College	69	77
Postgraduate Student	7	8
Pursuing Professional Course	3	3
Total	90	100

Table 2: City

City	Frequency	Percent
Metro Cities	43	48
Suburbs	47	52
Total	90	100

Table 3: Use social media for educational purposes

	Frequency	Percent
3–4 times a week	23	25.6
Daily	51	56.7
Never	1	1.1
Once a week	8	8.9
Rarely	7	7.8
Total	90	100

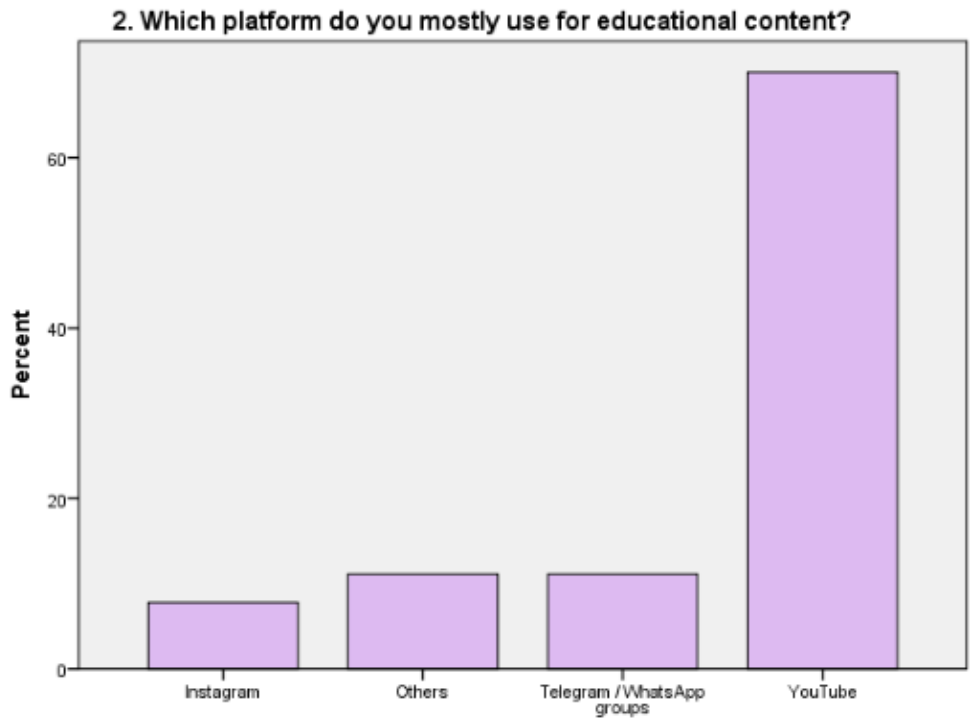


The data indicates a high level of engagement with social media for educational purposes among the respondents. A significant majority, **56.7%**, reported using these platforms daily, while an additional **25.6%** use them 3–4 times a week. Conversely, only a negligible **1.1%** of the sample stated they never use social media for learning.

The vast majority of students are frequent users of social media for education, with over **80%** engaging with content at least several times a week.

Table 4: Social Media Platform mostly used for educational content

	Frequency	Percent
Instagram	7	7.8
Others	10	11.1
Telegram / WhatsApp groups	10	11.1
YouTube	63	70
Total	90	100

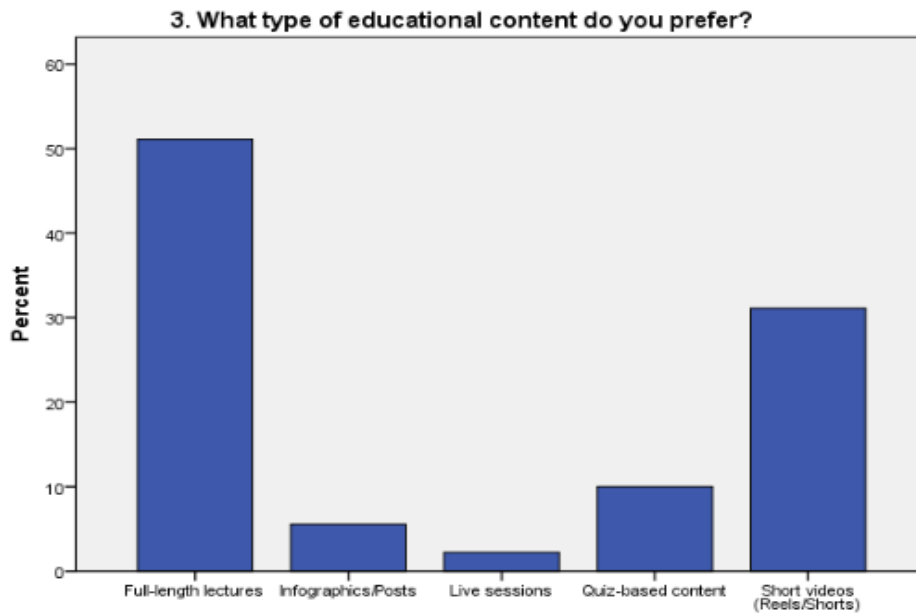


When identifying specific platforms, YouTube emerges as the dominant leader, with 70% of participants selecting it as their primary source for educational content. Other platforms such as Telegram/WhatsApp groups (11.1%), Instagram (7.8%), and various other sources (11.1%) account for the remaining usage. This distribution highlights a clear preference for video-centric learning environments.

YouTube is the most widely utilized social media platform for educational content, dwarfing the combined usage of all other platforms.

Table 5: Preferred educational content

	Frequency	Percent
Full-length lectures	46	51.1
Infographics/Posts	5	5.6
Live sessions	2	2.2
Quiz-based content	9	10
Short videos (Reels/Shorts)	28	31.1
Total	90	100



The preference for content format shows a strong leaning toward comprehensive video material, with 51.1% of respondents favoring full-length lectures. Short videos, such as Reels or Shorts, are the second most popular choice at 31.1%, while more interactive or static formats like quiz-based content (10%) and infographics (5.6%) see much lower preference. Notably, live sessions are the least preferred format at only 2.2%.

Students predominantly prefer video-based learning, specifically favoring in-depth, full-length lectures over short-form or static content.

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Social media educational content improves my conceptual clarity	Strongly Agree	22	24.4
	Agree	50	55.6
	Neutral	17	18.9
	Disagree	1	1.1
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100

I understand topics faster through social media content compared to traditional lectures.	Strongly Agree	24	26.7
	Agree	43	47.8
	Neutral	20	22.2
	Disagree	2	2.2
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.1
	Total	90	100
Social media content helps me revise topics effectively	Strongly Agree	21	23.3
	Agree	47	52.2
	Neutral	20	22.2
	Disagree	2	2.2
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
I am able to retain information better after watching educational videos online	Strongly Agree	24	26.7
	Agree	44	48.9
	Neutral	20	22.2
	Disagree	1	1.1
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.1

	Total	90	100
Educational content on social media improves my answer-writing ability	Strongly Agree	12	13.3
	Agree	40	44.4
	Neutral	27	30
	Disagree	11	12.2
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
Social media learning makes the subject more interesting	Strongly Agree	24	26.7
	Agree	48	53.3
	Neutral	15	16.7
	Disagree	2	2.2
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.1
	Total	90	100
I feel more motivated to study after engaging with educational content online	Strongly Agree	19	21.1
	Agree	42	46.7
	Neutral	24	26.7
	Disagree	5	5.6

	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
I participate more actively in class discussions after learning through social media	Strongly Agree	14	15.6
	Agree	40	44.4
	Neutral	31	34.4
	Disagree	5	5.6
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
Social media educational content encourages critical thinking	Strongly Agree	18	20
	Agree	47	52.2
	Neutral	23	25.6
	Disagree	1	1.1
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.1
	Total	90	100
I verify the authenticity of educational content before trusting it	Strongly Agree	18	20
	Agree	45	50
	Neutral	21	23.3

	Disagree	6	6.7
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
Social media sometimes distracts me from focused learning	Strongly Agree	22	24.4
	Agree	45	50
	Neutral	20	22.2
	Disagree	3	3.3
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100
Overall, social media educational content positively affects the quality of my learning	Strongly Agree	21	23.2
	Agree	46	51.1
	Neutral	19	21.1
	Disagree	4	4.4
	Strongly Disagree	-	-
	Total	90	100

Reliability Statistics

Reliability Test			
		N	%

Cases	Valid	90	100
	Excluded a	0	0
	Total	90	100
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items		
0.831	11		

Testing of Hypothesis

1) H₀: There is no significant positive perception among students regarding the role of social media educational content in enhancing learning quality.

H₁: There is a significant positive perception among students regarding the role of social media educational content in enhancing learning quality.

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perception_of_Learning_Quality	90	3.8926	0.48547	0.05117

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of	

					the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Perception _of_Learni ng_Outco me	17.443	89	0.00	0.89259	0.7909	0.9943

Result
The mean is greater than 3; it shows positive perception The P-value is less than 0.05

2) H₀: There is no significant relationship between students’ engagement with social media educational content and perceived improvement in learning outcomes.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between students’ engagement with social media educational content and perceived improvement in learning outcomes.

Correlations			
		1. How frequently do you use social media for educational purposes?	Perception_of _Learning_ Outcome
1. How frequently do you use social media for educational purposes?	Pearson Correlation	1	.214*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.043
	N	90	90
Perception_of_Learning_ Outcome	Pearson Correlation	.214*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	
	N	90	90

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Result
Positive but weak relationship

5. Conclusion:

Social media has emerged as a dynamic supplementary learning space where students actively engage with content to simplify complex concepts, revisit topics, and make learning more accessible and engaging. It reflects a clear shift towards flexible and self-directed learning, where students take greater control of how and when they learn. The interactive and visual nature of platforms further supports quicker understanding and repeated exposure to content.

However, increased engagement does not necessarily translate into deep or sustained learning. The findings suggest that while students experience improved interest, motivation, and conceptual clarity, these benefits often remain limited when content lacks academic depth, coherence, or alignment with learning objectives. In many cases, learning becomes fragmented, driven by convenience rather than continuity.

Social media also presents a dual impact. It aids revision and accessibility, yet simultaneously introduces distractions that can disrupt focus and reduce the quality of learning. This highlights that social media is not inherently educational in itself.

Overall, social media can enhance learning quality when used with intention and direction. Meaningful learning depends on structured content, critical evaluation, and active engagement, where students move beyond passive consumption to thoughtful interaction and deeper cognitive involvement.

5.1 Recommendations:

- a. Encourage students to follow credible and subject-specific educational content instead of random posts.
- b. Integrate social media into teaching as a planned tool rather than informal support.
- c. Promote critical thinking and verification skills while consuming online content.

- d. Combine short engaging formats with detailed explanations for better understanding.
- e. Develop focused and disciplined usage habits to reduce distraction.

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