

## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

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**Abstract.** This study explores how social media influences interpersonal communication among young adults. Through a survey of university students, it examines how frequent use of digital platforms affects face-to-face interaction and communication quality. The results suggest that excessive social media use may reduce satisfaction in real-life conversations and make it harder to interpret non-verbal cues. The research emphasizes the need to balance online engagement with in-person communication to support healthy social relationships.

**Keywords:** Social media, interpersonal communication, face-to-face interaction, communication quality, non-verbal cues, digital communication.

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu tadqiqotda ijtimoiy tarmoqlarning yoshlar o'rtasidagi shaxslararo muloqotga ta'siri o'rganiladi. Universitet talabalari o'rtasida o'tkazilgan so'rov orqali raqamli platformalardan tez-tez foydalanish yuzma-yuz muloqot va aloqa sifatiga qanday ta'sir ko'rsatishi tahlil qilinadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ijtimoiy tarmoqlardan haddan tashqari foydalanish real hayotdagi suhbatlardan rozi bo'lish darajasini pasaytiradi va noverbal ishoralarni tushunishni qiyinlashtiradi. Tadqiqot onlayn va oflayn muloqot o'rtasida muvozanatni saqlash sog'lom ijtimoiy munosabatlar uchun muhim ekanligini ta'kidlaydi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Ijtimoiy tarmoqlar, shaxslararo muloqot, yuzma-yuz muloqot, muloqot sifati, nolisoniy ishoralar, raqamli aloqa.

### **Introduction**

In the digital era, social media has become an integral part of daily life, transforming the way individuals connect, share, and communicate. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok have not only revolutionized the speed and convenience of communication but have also introduced new forms of interaction that transcend geographical boundaries. While these advancements have facilitated global connectivity, they have also raised critical questions about their influence on traditional forms of interpersonal communication. Face-to-face communication, which once served as the foundation of human interaction, is increasingly being replaced or supplemented by digital conversations. This shift has prompted concerns among educators, psychologists, and sociologists about the potential decline in communication quality, emotional expression, and social skills among frequent social media users (Gulomova, 2024). Despite the widespread use of these platforms, there remains a gap in understanding how they shape users' ability to engage in meaningful, in-person interactions. This study seeks to

explore the impact of social media usage on interpersonal communication, particularly among young adults who represent the most active demographic on these platforms. By examining patterns of behavior and self-reported experiences, the research aims to assess whether increased social media engagement enhances or hinders the depth and quality of real-life communication.

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the relationship between social media use and interpersonal communication among university students. Data were collected through an anonymous online survey consisting of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The survey was distributed via academic social platforms and university mailing lists to ensure a diverse sample of participants. Participants were selected using convenience sampling, focusing on students from various faculties and academic levels. The questionnaire included sections about social media habits, frequency of face-to-face conversations, and perceived changes in communication behavior. To maintain ethical standards, all respondents were informed about the voluntary nature of participation and the confidentiality of their responses. The collected data were organized and analyzed using descriptive analysis methods to identify common patterns and trends in social media usage and its perceived impact on interpersonal interactions. No identifying information was gathered, ensuring participant anonymity throughout the research process.

The findings of this study indicate a noticeable connection between frequent social media use and a decline in the quality of face-to-face communication among university students. Participants commonly reported that spending extended periods on digital platforms reduced their willingness and ability to engage in meaningful in-person conversations. Many described feeling distracted during real-life interactions, often checking their phones or thinking about online content. Additionally, respondents shared that interpreting emotional tone and non-verbal cues during conversations had become more difficult, especially when they were used to text-based communication. These observations support earlier research by Turkle (2015), who emphasized that constant digital connectivity can weaken the ability to build deep human connections. Moreover, the survey revealed that students who made efforts to limit their social media use experienced a stronger sense of presence during conversations and found it easier to express empathy and attention. These results suggest that managing digital habits can contribute positively to interpersonal relationships, aligning with conclusions drawn by Kuss and Griffiths (2015) regarding the psychological effects of social media on everyday communication.

The results of this study suggest that frequent engagement with social media can negatively affect the depth and quality of interpersonal communication. Participants' experiences indicate that digital habits, such as

constant phone use and online multitasking, often interfere with the ability to stay fully present during in-person conversations. These findings are consistent with Turkle's (2015) argument that digital connectivity may reduce people's capacity for empathy and meaningful dialogue. One of the most prominent issues identified was the growing difficulty in interpreting non-verbal cues, such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language. As social media platforms often rely on text-based communication, users may gradually lose sensitivity to such interpersonal signals, as highlighted by Subrahmanyam et al. (2008). This desensitization can lead to misunderstandings and emotional disconnects in real-life relationships. However, the findings also show that awareness and moderation in social media use can help restore communication quality. Students who consciously limited their online time reported improvements in attention, emotional presence, and comfort during face-to-face interactions. This supports earlier work by Kuss and Griffiths (2015), who noted that balanced digital behavior is key to maintaining psychological and social well-being. Overall, the discussion emphasizes the importance of digital self-awareness and communication training in educational settings. Encouraging students to reflect on their online behaviors and develop real-world interaction skills may foster healthier relationships in both personal and academic contexts.

### **Conclusion**

Social media has become an inseparable part of modern life, shaping how people interact, express emotions, and build relationships. This study demonstrates that while digital platforms offer convenience and connectivity, they may also reduce the depth of interpersonal communication if used excessively. Challenges such as weakened attention, limited emotional expression, and difficulty in interpreting non-verbal cues have emerged as common effects of constant online engagement.

At the same time, the findings suggest that the way individuals use social media plays a significant role in determining its impact. When used with intention and balance, social media can support relationships rather than harm them. Therefore, fostering digital awareness and encouraging real-world social interaction remain key to maintaining healthy communication in today's connected world.

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