
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Influence of Social Media on Students' Written Discourse: Phenomenological Analysis

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| ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study is about the lived experiences of senior high school students and teachers on the influence of social media on students' written discourse. The data were collected from fifteen (15) participants through personal interviews using open-ended questions. All responses were recorded for transcription using a cellular phone. Colaizzi's method was used for data analysis. After a thorough analysis of the transcripts, the following six (6) themes arose to capture the students and teachers' lived experiences: Facebook and Messenger as the Most Widely Used, Teachers' Permission of Social Media in the Classroom, Adapting Social Media Trends and Their Informality, Reduces the Formality of Written Communication, Social Media as a Distraction, Dual Impact of Social Media on Students' Performance. The study concluded that senior high school students and teachers have faced challenges with written communication due to the influences of social media on students. Despite all these challenges, the teachers remained hopeful that the students could learn and use their critical thinking skills without the reliance on social media, especially in terms of writing style and language use. Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that students use social media for academic reasons with greater awareness. In addition to encouraging reading and writing at home, parents must watch and assist their children. Teachers should also interact with parents to explain their children's performance and enforce highly regulated classroom social media use. Introduce targeted writing assignments, grammar lessons, and critical thinking challenges. Guidelines addressing the influence of social media on written discourse are to be implemented by the school administration. Future Researchers will conduct additional studies on the long-term impacts of social media use on students' academic writing, comparing studies across many geographic locations and educational levels to find more general trends and solutions.

| KEYWORDS

Lived experiences, influence of social media, written discourse, qualitative method, phenomenological analysis

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 January 2026

PUBLISHED: 29 January 2026

DOI: 10.32996/jhsss.2026.8.2.4

1. Introduction

Social media has a big impact on students' writing styles because of its informal language and shorter material. Communication often becomes more casual and efficient as a result. Regular exposure to a range of viewpoints on social media

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platforms may help students develop their critical thinking abilities, which will ultimately enhance their written communication. Teens commonly employ social media lingo in their written communication, such as "OMG" (Oh my God), "BTW" (By the way), "RN" (Right now), and many more. These acronyms are now a major part of their communication. Although jargon can be useful and necessary, it can also negatively affect students' academic performance by producing poorly written, informal, and imprecise language. Due to the number of misleading materials on these platforms, students may find it more difficult to understand and evaluate subjects, which may affect the quality and accuracy of their written discourse. Conversely, social media's interactive elements promote group learning and enable students to participate fully in conversations and debates, which can enhance their ability to argue and analyze in written language.

Nonetheless, there is no denying that the rise of social media has changed how students write. That phenomenon has been explored by various scholars. Research by Oprea (2019) indicated the importance of considering texts, language, and communication in their social context, which in the digital age includes social media platforms. These platforms may expose students to a variety of casual writing styles and acronyms that depart from recognized academic writing conventions, in addition to offering an engaging and dynamic learning environment. Thus, social media can have beneficial as well as adverse impacts on written discourse, depending on how students use it to further their education.

Given the widespread use of social media, the students' writing abilities have significantly weakened. Instead, they have adopted a new style of writing that incorporates linguistic patterns that are more informal and reflect the social media environment rather than strictly adhering to English language conventions. They have become so inaccurate at differentiating between formal and informal contexts that some parts of language have been hard to understand (Ghouali & Benmoussat, 2019). However, social media is primarily contributing to the development of modern human society, not only in communication but also in conducting numerous scientific endeavors (Sankar, 2020).

Social networking, one of the most recent technological innovations, has also raised suspicions among many over the low academic achievement of secondary school students. Observing or hearing senior school students in the middle of a lesson making calls, checking messages, and conversing with friends or associates is not unusual. Expecting them to be sleeping or reading their books, but instead, they are up late on social media, chattering away (Mbativga, 2020). As per Johnraj David and Muthupandi (2021), currently, students are deeply engaged in social media in all its forms. Utilizing social media has a profound effect on life. Social media is a helpful tool for us in the twenty-first century since it aids in enhancing our standard of living. When students make wise use of social media, it will be beneficial to their academic and professional goals.

The gap of knowledge for this research was that previous researchers had focused more on the general impact of social media on academic achievement and lifestyle rather than its specific linguistic effects on formal written discourse. Many studies have focused more on social media's technological advantages in social and scientific contexts than on how it may affect classroom English language norms. Additionally, while existing literature highlights the engagement and group-learning features of digital platforms, it does not particularly address how senior high school students find it difficult to distinguish between formal and informal contexts in their academic writing. By focusing on the direct influence of social media on the formality and accuracy of written communication, this research would contribute to the body of knowledge by providing guidelines for teachers to help bridge the gap in students' use of social media platforms.

Hence, this research found out what influence social media can have on students' written communication and answered the research questions. This research can provide insights for school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and future researchers who seek answers on social media's influence on students' written discourse.

Theoretical Background

This research assumed that social media has an influence on the written discourse of the senior high school students at the University of Cebu, Pardo and Talisay.

This study was supported by Albert Bandura's Media Effect Theory and Michel Foucault's Discourse Theory.

Media Effect Theory. This theory highlights the potential for social media to influence students' written communication. Bandura emphasized that the media's influence offers valuable insights into how social media shapes students' written communication: modeling, social comparison, informal language, and shorthand. It does, however, recognize the vital role that personal decisions, critical thinking abilities, and instructional intervention play in influencing how students use internet resources to improve their communication skills. There are rules and regulations for social media use, including cell phones, for example, to ensure that it is suitable (Saputra, A.2022).

Furthermore, Bandura said it helps audiences pick up new behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions. Every individual was followed by a direct learning process, and they recreated or copied what they saw or heard on social media. He also believes that there are two types of learning: through direct experience and modeling. Moreover, Bandura has pointed out four interrelated sub-processes of learning through modeling: 1) the attentional process, 2) the retention process, 3) the motoric reproduction process, and 4) the reinforcement and motivational process.

In the first process, it offers valuable insights into how social media shapes our communication. We can handle online relationships more skillfully and create real friendships if we recognize their influence. In the second process, the attention process is a selective one, and by comprehending the social media attention-influencing aspects, we may develop communication tactics that engage with our audience and foster deep relationships. The third step, compared to attention, has a more indirect effect on social media. Even though we aren't literally copying everything we see online, social media can nevertheless have an impact on our behavior because of social learning and vicarious reinforcement. Finally, the last step gives us useful information about how social media changes the way people talk to each other. We can make virtual conversations more authentic and satisfying by knowing how these things work.

Discourse Theory. This theory places a strong emphasis on the intricate relationship between power and knowledge, with the assertion that power dynamics influence the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Foucault argues that power doesn't just control knowledge but actively shapes and produces it. Foucault's discourse theory says that language does not just convey information; it also strengthens the power structures in society. He does not agree with the idea that speaking is only a tool to find the truth. Instead, he thinks that it has a big effect on how we see reality in a specific social situation.

Foucault's methodology also stands out for the critique of broad, deterministic categories and totalizing narratives. Instead, he advocates for a more nuanced analysis that considers the specific contexts and power relations at play. This approach rejects the notion of a single, universal truth, encouraging the exploration of a multitude of discourses and power dynamics within society.

Discourse theory recognizes that some people or groups have more power over how information is created and shared in society. People who are thought to have power usually have more control over what is thought to be "true." It's crucial to remember that the idea of power can be different in different cultures, which is why the phrase "perceived power" exists. Socioeconomic status, occupation, education level, gender, ethnicity, technology, and race can all contribute to an individual's perceived power and capacity to influence societal beliefs and truths.

Foucault's discourse theory criticizes those in positions of power, suggesting that they often manipulate discourse to serve their interests while concealing their true intentions. These powerful factors can shape and control the narratives circulated within society, influencing what is considered true or acceptable knowledge. This manipulation of discourse allows them to maintain and perpetuate their power while obscuring the mechanisms by which they exert control.

Learners tend to imitate what they see or hear, just as Bandura emphasized about modeling. Social media's prevalence serves as the learners' medium for modeling why it influences their written discourse. On the other side, there is the discourse theory that argues that language and communication create and reinforce power structures. Distorting language, in other words, using jargon and/or abbreviations, and utilizing communication creates power.

Foucault said that "truth" is not something that exists on its own; instead, it is made and controlled by powerful people when they talk and write about certain topics. In short, Foucault's theory looks at how language and communication establish, maintain, and enforce differences in power, and how "truth" can be a powerful tool. The study investigates the elements that shape learners' written discourse. To this end, it draws on the Media Effect Theory and Discourse Theory, which demonstrate that social media, language, and communication have an impact on learners' academic writing.

Finally, these two theories relate to the research variables by illustrating how social media influences students. Specifically, this relationship suggests that writing styles are not inherent but instead "learned behaviors" acquired through observation, with social media platforms serving as the model. As students constantly see shorthand, acronyms, and casual language on their feeds, they are first engaged in the Attentional and Retention processes. Next, students incorporate the observed digital habits into their actual writing through the Motoric Reproduction and Reinforcement procedures. For instance, receiving social validation (likes/comments) for using jargon motivates students to maintain that style, which ultimately seeps into their academic written discourse.

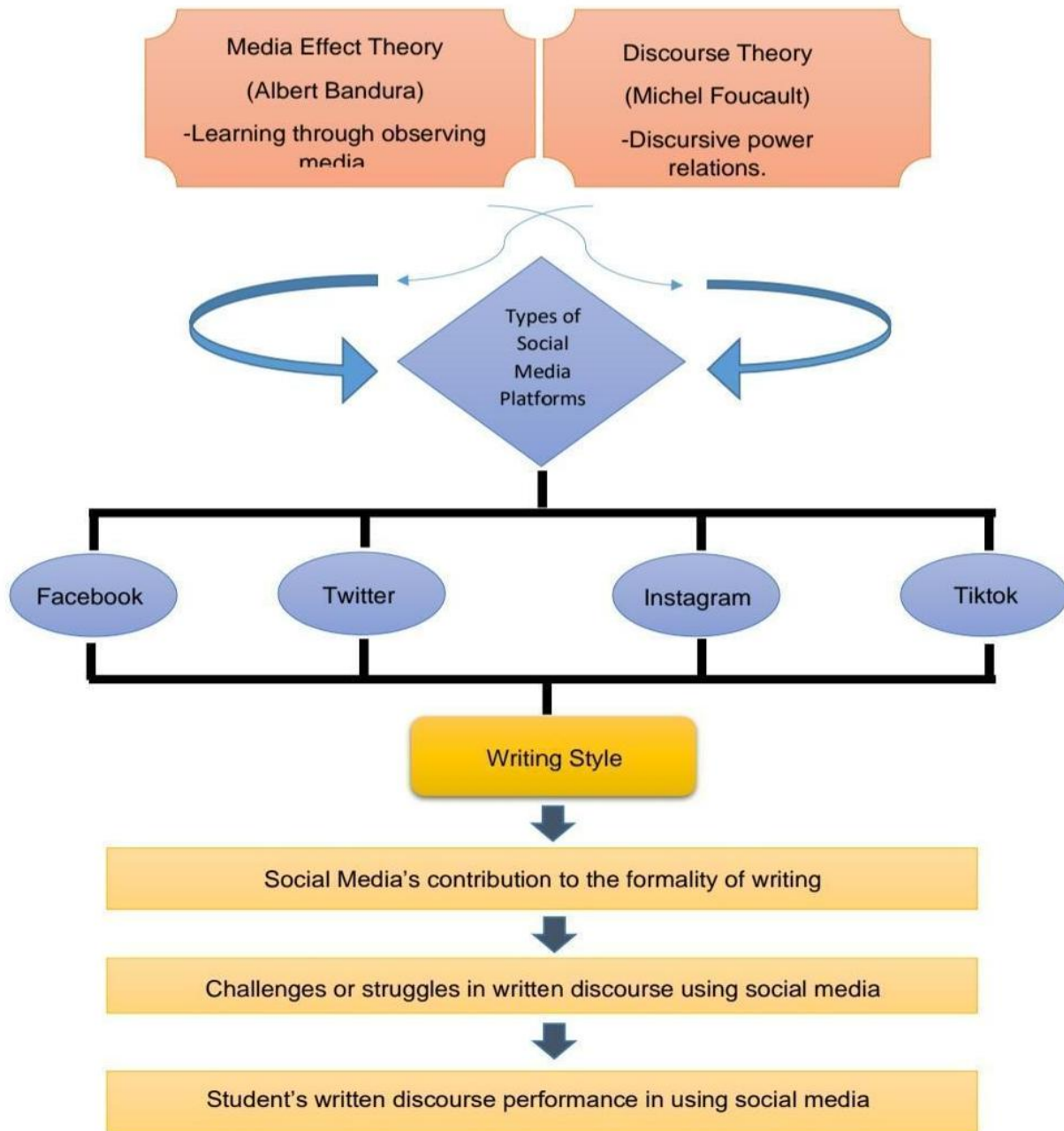


Figure 1

Theoretical-Conceptual Framework of the

Statement of the Problem

This research aimed to find out the influence of using social media on students' written discourse of senior high school students at the University of Cebu- Pardo and Talisay Campus during the school year 2024-2025, as the basis for guidelines for teachers about the use of social media by students in classes.

Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What social media platforms are used for school academic writing?
2. When using different social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok), what are the challenges noticed in writing style or language use?

3. How does social media contribute to the formality of written communication?
4. What are the challenges or struggles of using social media in the student's written discourse, as perceived by:
 - 4.1. students, and
 - 4.2. teachers?
5. How does social media affect the performance of the student's written discourse?
6. Based on the findings, what guidelines for teachers on the students' utilization of social media platforms can be proposed?

2. Literature Review

The following literature presented is theoretical, conceptual, or non-empirical discussions. This appears to be more theoretical and conceptual in nature rather than a research-based study. To strengthen the current investigation overall for the influence of social media on students' written discourse, this chapter offers related literature.

Hashim et al. (2018) clearly stated that social media has a big impact on students' academic writing skills, with both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, social media allows students to learn new words and phrases from comments and posts, making them "trendsetters" over time. By this, they can learn new languages that help them improve their communication skills. Other video-sharing platforms, such as YouTube, can assist a student through self-learning. In addition, social media can help students overcome their anxiety, generate ideas for their essays, and correct their mispronunciation. Social media also has negative aspects, especially when students do not use it responsibly, thus affecting their writing skills. This can lead to informal writing, plagiarism, and negligence of grammar and vocabulary. Social media is a big part of students' lives, and it influences their writing skills. This study is correlated to the current researchers since it talks about how social media influences the academic writing of students.

Omoera et al. (2018) highlighted that Nigerian youths were greatly affected by the dynamics of social media culture. It showed that most of the Nigerian youths adopted expressions such as 'u' for 'you,' 'gr8t' for 'great,' 'y' for 'why,' 'lol' for 'laugh out loud,' and many more in some of their formal writings in which they were being trained. Thus, they want to standardize everyone to have uniformity in usage and to keep the pace of being trendy in the twenty-first century. This study is interrelated to the current researchers, for it proves how youths adapt and are affected by the social media trends and culture when it comes to formal writing.

Munang (2022) revealed that an unfavorable relationship exists between frequent users of social media and their performance in the classroom. One of the elements that was taken into account was the students' motivations for using social media. A large number of students abuse smartphones. Some students do poorly because they base their answers on their own views about social media. This makes it hard to use social media with self-control. Social media isn't bad in and of itself, but using it the wrong way has hurt students' grades a lot. If any, the amount of time students spend on social media won't be the same to maximize the output equally. Visible friends are no longer as vital as invisible friends, and studies and other significant endeavors are impacted. This study is interconnected to the current researchers as it delves into how social media affects the students, although it talks about the grades and performance inside the classroom, and not the written discourse itself.

Furthermore, a main point from Abrha (2019), female students from Raya University indicated that those who access social media for academic issues tend to have higher grades compared to those who use social media but not for academic issues. Despite the benefits that female students can harness from social media, it could also cause addiction and distract the students' attention, which can have more serious consequences on the female students' academic life. This study is interrelated to the current researchers since it emphasizes how social media may affect the students' academic life.

Moreover, Nisa et al. (2023) also revealed that social media writing had a detrimental effect on students' writing since it had altered their formal writing. Facebook promoted students' informal writing over formal essays by encouraging the usage of emoticons, short forms, abbreviations, and weak sentences. Students don't demonstrate creativity because they don't know when and where to use formal and informal writing. It is strictly forbidden to write in-class assignments. Although it wasn't in a formal English setting, Facebook helped them communicate better in written English. This study is relevant to current researchers as it emphasizes the negative effects of social media on students' academic writing.

However, Anku et al. (2023) also revealed that social media discourse and most computer-mediated communication are characterized by three text modes: written, spoken (audio), and visual. The written mode is the most prevalent in the available data. Additionally, the typology of online interactions among Ghanaian university students includes multiple subcategories spanning four linguistic levels: syntax, lexis, spelling, and mechanics. This study is correlated to the current researchers because of how online interactions through computers and social media affect university students.

Ugsad, R. M. (2017) disclosed that while the students' post-writing performance in the weblog group outperformed that of the paper-and-pen group, their initial writing performance was roughly on par. Although their writing instruments helped students in both groups tremendously, weblogs are a more motivating tool for students to improve their writing skills than paper and pen. To enhance their writing skills, students require a writing tool. However, using a weblog rather than paper and pen yields greater results. This study is interconnected to the current researchers because of weblogs, an online writing tool for students, and how it enhances their writing skills.

Noviany et al. (2023) asserted that students use social media as a medium for communication, information exchange, and discussion of subjects they are studying, as seen by their involvement in forums and foreign language groups. The fact that up to 100% of respondents had taken part in these forums shows how interested students were in working together through social media. Thirty-six out of the forty respondents said they thought social media had affected their professional writing style. Formal writing style can vary depending on these influences, which include word choice, sentence structure, and adaptations. This study is interconnected to the current researchers as it highlights the positive effects of social media, including the students' motivation for their academic formal writing.

Furthermore, Facebook (closed group) made it difficult for students to engage meaningfully in a casual setting. When Facebook is improperly used, it can have no positive educational impact. When used appropriately, Facebook can be a useful tool for sharing knowledge with students. Students' opinions demonstrated that Facebook was not a good learning resource because it negatively affected their writing. This study is correlated to the current researchers because of how it explicitly talks about the effect of Facebook, one of the social media platforms, on the students' education.

Handayani and Aminatun (2020) also found that incorporating the WhatsApp group into writing instruction can have a beneficial impact on students' learning and teaching experiences. In addition, it can help kids' writing skills grow, and Yundayani et al. (2019) indicate that Canva is also useful; the caliber of students' writing increases with presentation. This study is interrelated to the current researchers since it positively talks about the benefits of WhatsApp and Canva, some of the social media platforms that may be useful for academic learning.

The following presented study is empirical or case-based research. To strengthen the current investigation into the influence of social media on students' written discourse, this chapter offers converging related studies.

Nutakor and Israel (2023) discovered that social media sites hinder students' ability to participate fully in their academic work, which has a detrimental influence on their academic achievement. Also, to make it easier for people to talk with their friends, the majority of new spellings on social media platforms are taken from the trend. Due to the current writing trends that have an impact on students' spelling in academic writing, students are performing poorly academically and have little time for study and homework.

Moreover, Alharbi (2018) looked into how Saudi students thought that utilizing SMS language in texting and social media affected their academic writing. The findings revealed that the heavy reliance on SMS language could potentially harm students' mastery of written academic English. At least some students can recall having made spelling or sentence construction errors in formal academic writing.

However, the study of Almushwat and Sabkha (2023) argued that Libyan EFL university students believe that language has improved due to social media. Additionally, it was discovered that while using social media to study English, writing is the skill that is most affected and improved. Social media practice and vocabulary expansion aid students in reducing spelling errors.

The first two studies emphasized how social media, despite its convenience in terms of communication, detrimentally affects the academic writing of the students, resulting in poor written English performance. On the other hand, the third study mentioned above clearly stated that social media positively affects students' academic writing. It helped the learners practice and improved their English academic writing. These studies are relevant to the current researchers since they delve into how social media influences, whether positive or negative, the formal academic writing of the students.

Anwas et al. (2020) believed that social media is essential as a place to practice and habituate in learning the English language. English-language social media content is significant to students' writing, reading, listening, and communication. In addition, Ariantini et al. (2021) argued that social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube are the most frequently applied English learning media through various activities. Each of these platforms helped the students

improve their language skills, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and motivation, as well as their creativity and critical thinking.

On the contrary, Assefa and Kumar (2023) argued that academic attainment is significantly impacted directly by both social media use and student participation. If social media use is not appropriately regulated, students might easily become addicted. Then, several health disorders that significantly impair students' capacity to learn and do well academically could arise, including insomnia, eye fatigue, depression, anxiety, negative body image, and other conditions.

Similarly, the studies of Anwas et al. (2020) and Ariantini et al. (2021) believed that social media platforms are good for practicing and improving the students' language, written, auditory, and reading skills, as well as their academic writing. But Assefa and Kumar (2023) found out that social media and the learners' participation have a significant impact on students' academic attainment. If social media usage gets out of hand, it may lead to severe health disorders such as insomnia, anxiety, depression, etc. These studies are a contributing factor to how social media deeply affects the students' academic writing performance.

A study from the Philippines, conducted by Barredo and Cadapan (2022) at Western Mindanao State University, found that freshman college students were prone to the usage of social media. It turned out that Messenger was their most used application in the university, as it was very convenient for them to communicate. Facebook was the second most used application. Messenger and Facebook were their highest utilization; however, the study disclosed that social media did not highly affect the freshmen college students' Filipino writing skills. However, social media has also helped them improve their English language, as it served as their training ground for English communication and expression.

However, Bouchikhi and Bouanani Dounyazed (2017) widely acknowledged that social media plays a significant role in students' daily lives. From an interpersonal perspective, since they facilitate human interaction from the global community or the educational sector, they offer beneficial data. There is another side in which social media can negatively affect the students' educational careers. The students utilize a variety of reasons while composing their academic essays in a text-based manner. Among the causes are acquiring time, employing the words without realizing their form, or because these formats are simpler to use (acronyms, punctuation without capitalization, errors in syntax and spelling, etc.) rather than utilizing the appropriate forms and observing the regulations.

In addition, Esman et al. (2021) discovered that grade eleven students from a Philippine public high school were also involved in using social media, especially in accessible internet cafes nearby. Social media is now globally used, and its medium for instruction is the English language. It influences the learners' English communication and writing skills. Thus, their study found that the learners' exposure to social media turned out to have a slight and positive impact on learners' English writing proficiency.

Both studies from the Philippines by Barredo and Cadapan (2022) and Esman et al. (2021) discovered that social media exposure has a slight positive impact on students' writing and communication skills. They believed that social media platforms serve as a training ground for the learners, especially since internet cafes are accessible and convenient. Yet, Bouchikhi and Bouanani Dounyazed (2017) explicitly stated that social media plays a significant role in the global community, and although it is beneficial, it also affects the students' careers by using inappropriate forms in an essay, such as acronyms, improper usage of punctuation, and capitalizations, etc. These studies are correlated to the current researchers as to how social media impacts the academic writing and communication skills of the students.

The majority of participants in the study of Laylo and Velasco (2023) concurred that the interactions on social media platforms enhanced general English language proficiency. It also demonstrated tact in utilizing the appropriate use of informal language in various contexts. Numerous processes in the morphosyntactic and code-mixing aspects were identified by thematic analysis of the gathered samples. Run-on sentences and capitalization mistakes were noted. The study of code-mixing revealed five processes, one of which was code-mixing. Verbs, prepositions, adjectives, nouns, and adverbs.

The study "Facebook Social Media: How Does It Affect First-Year Students' Description Writing Skills?" by Paidia et al. (2022) is another thing to think about. Facebook, a well-known website or app, was claimed to have a big effect on how well first-year college students write. The data from this study were looked at and put into tables. As a result, their findings were positive. Social media impacts the learners' academic writing; Facebook is an ideal and comfortable site that serves as a learning tool that can help students develop and improve their descriptive writing skills for better and higher education. Additionally, social media is becoming a more popular teaching and learning tool in the field of education (Putri and Education, 2022). The use of social media is much needed in learning English.

The three studies highlighted that social media has a positive impact on students' academic writing. The thing is, Laylo and Velasco (2023) focused on how social media improved the general English language proficiency. On the other hand, Paidá et al. (2022) talked about how a specific social media platform, which is Facebook, helps students develop their descriptive writing skills that are essential for their higher education. In the same way, Putri and Education (2022) emphasized that social media is a great tool in the teaching-learning field of English learning. These studies make a contribution to the current researchers' study since they talk about how social media positively helps the students when it comes to English academic writing skills.

As part of the twenty-first century learning context, a positive reflection was shown towards social media and its impact on learners' written discourse. Putri and Aminatun (2021) mentioned that utilizing Facebook enhances students' composition skills. Reading and composing captions in English. Students can train and practice their writing on Facebook status updates, and they can receive feedback from readers in the form of corrections or comments, which can help them write better in the future.

Songxaba and Sincuba (2019) explicitly mentioned that social media strongly affects students' academic written performance. Students often use unnecessarily shortened words, jargon, abbreviations, and numbers instead of word forms. Both suggested that teachers and the educational institution should strengthen their support and help students avoid the erroneous use of such informality in their academic writing.

The studies of Putri and Aminatun (2021) and Songxaba and Sincuba (2019) have a similar concept regarding the recommendations, which is for students to do better in academic writing by gaining suggestions and support from people with other perspectives. Though the gist of the study of Putri and Aminatun (2021) is highly focused on that particular social media platform, which is Facebook, and how it can be utilized for the students' composition skills enhancement, while Songxaba and Sincuba (2019) talked about how social media has a negative influence on the students' academic written performance. Moreover, students use unnecessary and inappropriate words in formal writing. These studies are interconnected with the current researchers due to their similar concept, which is the impact of social media on students' academic writing and performance. They just differ on what kind of social media, because the other one specifically stated what it is, while the other stated it generally.

Talaue et al. (2018) divulged that social media takes up most students' leisure time and becomes an essential part of their daily lives. There are resources on social networks that are beneficial to students' growth. Furthermore, interacting with peers via social media platforms can facilitate socialization, friend-finding, and study-related discussions. As a result, it can be said that social media has a twofold effect on students' academic performance and that teens' use of social media should be handled responsibly.

In the study of Tuquib and Bacus (2024) entitled *Netspeak in Students' Academic Writing: A Case in the Philippines*, they found that students' written communication responses contained forms of Netspeak, which can be classified as orthographic deviations, neosemanticism, neologism, and social media expressions. The researchers argued that the presence of Netspeak could be attributed to the increased language creativity and freedom students have on the Internet, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Given the number of variables involved in the study's execution, future research should look into how students can reduce their use of Netspeak, particularly in academic writing.

Talaue et al. (2018) dug deeper into how social media takes up too much of the students' leisure time and how it becomes essential to their daily living. It is beneficial to students because of its time-efficient socialization and schoolwork discussion. However, its time usage should be handled responsibly. As per Tuquib and Bacus (2024), the increase of Netspeak affects the students' academic writing due to the freedom of using the internet, especially during the pandemic, when everyone was on lockdown. One thing these studies have in common is that the irresponsible time use of social media can affect students' written discourse. These studies are correlated to the current research because they focused on the effect of prolonged and irresponsible usage of social media on academic writing.

In conclusion, research indicates that students' writing and social media interact in intricate ways. Social media is viewed by many scholars as a "21st-century classroom" that fosters vocabulary growth, lessens writing anxiety, and encourages group learning. Nonetheless, "Netspeak" may make it difficult to distinguish between official and informal writing, according to some research. The majority concur that social networking in and of itself is safe. Its effect, whether it results in improved grammar or increased creativity, depends on learners' level of self-control and the help they receive from their schools. These results highlight the importance of studying how local students manage the challenges of integrating popular social media language with maintaining the standards required in academic writing.

3. Methodology

This section presents the research design, flow of the study, environment, respondents, instrument, data-gathering procedures, and data analysis.

Design

This study used a qualitative method of research using a phenomenological approach, focusing on the effect of using social media on students' written discourse in senior high school students. The interview was used to determine the extent of use perceived by the student respondents.

Flow of the Study

Figure 2 presents the flow of the study, which covers the research activities. The input considered the social media platforms that are used, changes noticed in writing style, social media's contribution to the formality of written communication, challenges or struggles of using social media, and the social media effect on performance in written discourse. Included in the process is an interview. The output presented the descriptive themes of the participants' lived experiences. The findings of the study are the basis for descriptive themes.

Environment

This study was conducted at the University of Cebu, Pardo and Talisay, one of the private schools of Cebu City, Philippines. A university that democratizes quality education and is responsive to the demands of local and international communities. UCPT is located in Bulacao, Cebu City. The school offers a K-12 basic education program for junior and senior high school students. The senior high school department offers academic tracks such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM). Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) General Academic Strand (GAS) Technical Vocational Livelihood Course (TVL: Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Cookery). The University of Cebu Pardo and Talisay also offer bachelor's degrees such as BSSED, BEED, BSN, BSIT, and more.

Respondents

To gain rich insights into students' experiences, the researchers used a purposive sampling method, which selected ten (10) senior high school students who have actively used social media and five (5) senior high school teachers. Specifically, these students are enrolled, and the teachers are currently teaching at the University of Cebu, Pardo and Talisay. Participants should be able to articulate their experiences using different social media platforms during individual interview sessions. By carefully considering each inclusion criterion, researchers can establish a well-structured and transparent process that enhances the quality and impact of the study.

Instrument

The primary data-gathering tool for the phenomenological investigation was the interview. Researchers also conducted a focus group discussion with participants and sought expert review to improve the instruments. Guided questions in English, designed to be open-ended, were used to elicit important statements about the participants' lived experiences.

Ethical considerations. Throughout the investigation, the researchers adhered to all applicable ethical standards. Confidentiality of information was maintained because the participants in the study were selected to ensure their privacy.

The researchers followed the university's ethical protocols by submitting the manuscript and ethical documents to the UC System Research Ethics Committee at the Banilad Campus. To ensure that the research title, *The Influence of Social Media on Students' Written Discourse*, was significant and ethically correct, extensive consultation was conducted. The researchers maintained a non-judgmental attitude throughout the interview process to avoid censure. Moreover, the participants had signed the informed consent form, with a full understanding of the risks and benefits of the study.

Table 1. Distribution of Student Respondents

School	Strands	Number of Students	Percentage
University of Cebu Pardo and Talisay, Inc.	STEM	2	20 %
	ABM	2	20 %
	HUMSS	2	20 %
	GAS	2	20 %
	TVL	2	20 %
Total:			100%

This table presents the number and percentage distribution of student respondents from the University of Cebu Pardo and Talisay, Inc. across various academic strands, namely STEM, ABM, HUMSS, GAS, and TVL. Each strand has 2 student respondents, accounting for a total of 10 students and representing 100% of the student sample.

Table 2. Distribution of Teacher Respondents

School	Occupation	Number of Teachers	Percentage
University of Cebu Pardo and Talisay, Inc.	Senior High School Teacher	5	100%

This table shows the number and percentage of teacher respondents from the University of Cebu Pardo and Talisay, Inc. All five respondents are Senior High School teachers, comprising 100% of the teacher sample.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter of request was given to the campus academic director asking permission to use UCPT Senior High School students, respectively, as the locale of the study. After the campus academic director granted permission, a letter of request was sent to the senior high school principal and teachers of the student respondents, asking them to let their students participate. In addition, the researchers provided an affidavit of consent for teacher respondents and for student respondents, especially those under 18 years old.

Data Analysis

To determine content based on recurring themes, qualitative data were methodically examined. As it is deemed appropriate for content analysis, Colaizzi's method is used in this investigation.

The Colaizzi's method involves the following steps:

First, the researchers used a cell phone to record every interview, which they transcribed verbatim and read and re-read the transcriptions.

Second, important phrases that are directly related to the research phenomenon are taken out of the transcripts provided by the participants. The transcripts are carefully examined to pinpoint the significant statements made by the participants.

Third, from the important statements, a formulated meaning is created. Comparing the initial transcripts, the important statements, and the developed interpretations from each participant is necessary for this. To prevent participants from being misunderstood, the third step, known as bracketing, identifies any presuppositions.

The fourth step is to group the constructed explanations into emergent themes, which subsequently became emergent themes. To ensure that these themes accurately capture the essence of the experiences, these were continuously reviewed and improved upon in comparison to the original transcripts. Multiple cross-checks were necessary for this.

Fifth, the findings were used to make a full and detailed statement or description of the lived experience.

The sixth and most important step is to go over the full description again with the people who took part in the study. To make sure the detailed account accurately reflects the experiences, the participants were contacted again for confirmation and more interviews.

Finally, to achieve congruence with the participants' lived experiences, the researchers considered any fresh or relevant information they had gleaned from the participants' validation. The researchers diligently adhered to these seven steps, reviewing, verifying, and bracketing regularly.

Data Saturation

Data saturation was achieved when additional interviews no longer yielded new themes or significant insights relevant to the study. In this research, saturation became evident after conducting and analyzing interviews with senior high school students and teachers. When the focus group discussion happened, the participants' answers were all the same, repeating the same patterns of experiences and perspectives without adding any new ideas. This repetition showed that the participants' real-life experiences had been fully examined and that the topic being studied had been adequately explained. Using Colaizzi's method, this point of saturation showed that the thematic findings were strong, well-supported by participant narratives, and complete in showing how social media affects how students write.

4. Results and Discussions

This chapter presents the data gathered and analyzed using Colaizzi's method. The analysis was based on the transcripts of the 15 participants who were interviewed using open-ended questions.

After a thorough analysis of the transcripts and coding, the following six themes emerged to capture the lived experiences of senior high school students and teachers regarding the influence of social media on the students' written discourse in interviews.

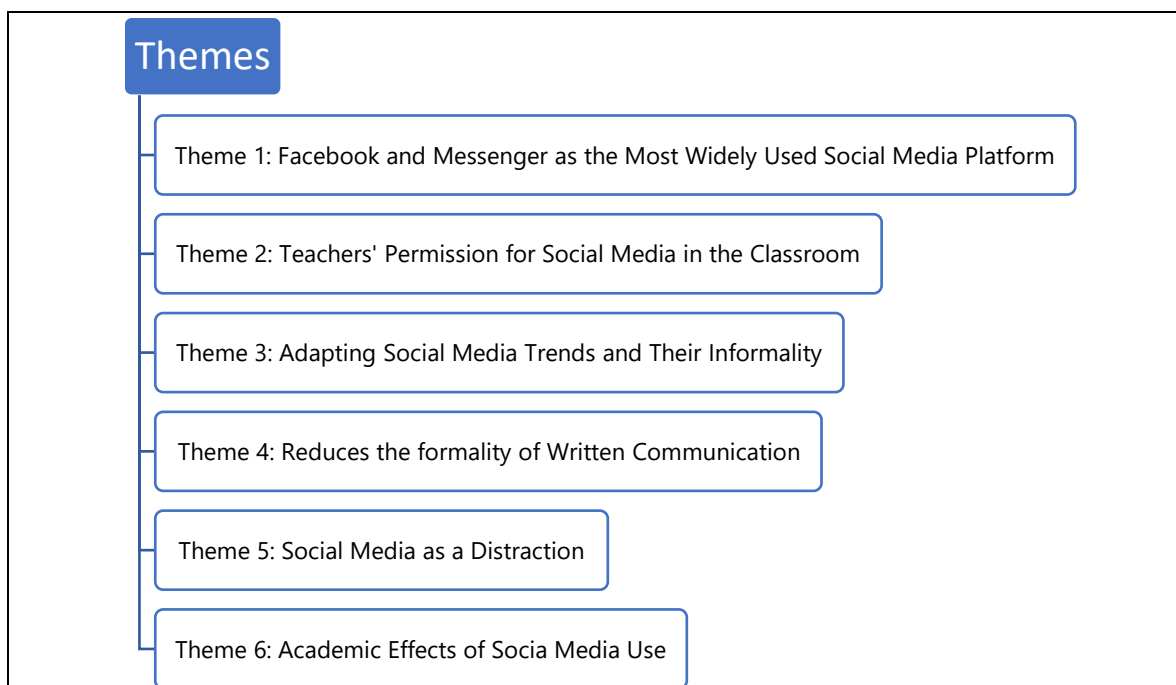


Figure 2. Themes of the Lived Experiences

The following are the themes that have emerged from the data gathered according to each question from the instrument. The first theme answered the question: *What social media platforms are used for school academic writing?*

4.1. Facebook & Messenger as the Most Widely Used Social Media Platforms

The first theme explores the social media platforms commonly used in written discourse. These widely used top two platforms are Facebook and Messenger; the rest are Google, TikTok, and Instagram. This theme emphasized students' most common social media use in terms of academic writing.

Indeed, Participants 1 and 2 stated:

"I used Facebook."

"So in school academic writing, um, I used Facebook and Messenger."

Similarly, Participants 3 and 4 shared:

"Um (thinks), Messenger, Google, Facebook, etc."

"I used TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook."

Participants 5 and 6 had the same experience and stated:

"Hmm (thinks), probably the messenger and Facebook."

"I used Facebook, Instagram, Tittok, etc."

As well as Participant 7, 8, and 9,10 claimed:

"So, I used Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok (pauses), and also Instagram."

"Um (pauses and tries to think), the social media platforms that I used (were) usually Messenger, only Messenger."

"School academic writing (pauses), ah (thinks), messenger, and YouTube."

"I used Facebook, IG (Instagram), Messenger, Google, and TikTok."

The majority of the statements revealed that the commonly used social media platforms are Facebook and Messenger. Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Google (search engine) are also mentioned. These platforms are utilized for academic writing.

These platforms are a tool for social interaction and play a growing role in students' academic lives, as emphasized in the study of Malik and Tofail (2025), who claimed that Facebook has valuable academic resources for pupils. However, it also makes people worry about how reliable sources are and how easy it is to get distracted. This shows that people need help learning how to utilize social media for school smartly and critically.

This theme is supported by the study of Tunmise (2024), which finds that the widespread use of social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter has changed how Nigerian students communicate in recent years. Tunmise's research findings showed that, among students, social media language elements significantly intersect with academic writing. Students and social media users alike incorporate colloquial terminology (informal expressions known to a particular group, idioms, and word contractions), emoticons (commonly known as emojis, which are visual representations or textual portraits and icons of human emotions and objects), and shorter forms that depart from conventional academic writing conventions, which is a common trend.

These changes might make students more likely to participate and communicate better. However, they also raise concerns about losing formal language and expression, which is important in academic writing. Students are using social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These sites can be helpful, but they can also be unreliable and distracting. The slang, emojis, and abbreviations used on these sites have changed how students write in school. This has improved communication, but it may have hurt the formality and correctness that are important in academic work.

The second theme answered the question: *Do teachers allow students to use social media for academic writing in school?*

4.2. Teacher's Permission for Social Media in the Classroom

The second theme discusses why teachers permit the use of social media in classroom settings. Four out of five teachers agreed to allow social media use in their classes to supplement their students' learning experiences.

These are stated by participants 11,12,13, and 15:

"Yes, I allow my students to use social media in terms of academic writing, especially in their assignments, for the preparation for the next discussion, so they can go to class with their prior knowledge for the discussion."

"Yes, I did let them use (the social media platforms) (f)or research..."

"...in my practical research 1 (subject), yeah, I allow my students to sometimes using social media, because they can gather the information for their particular subjects especially when they are trying to study about (like a) narrative analysis yeah which they can focus on social media post text and messages of using the platform."

"Actually, I allow my students to use social media in their school academics in terms of writing, because it's useful, especially nowadays it is very useful for them to navigate things that are helpful for them, especially in the use of social media..."

Hence, the study by Darmayanti (2018) backed up this topic by showing that teachers let students utilize social media as a valuable tool in the classroom. Teachers use social media to make it easy for their pupils and themselves to talk to each other. Also, social media gives students access to a broader choice of instructional resources, such as videos, articles, and conversations, which makes learning more fun and motivating. The study highlights that teachers view social media as a tool to increase student engagement and interest in their education.

This refers to how teachers let students use social media as a useful learning tool. Social media makes it easier for students and teachers to talk to each other and gives them access to many learning materials, such as videos, articles, and debates. This integration makes learning more exciting and interesting for students.

The third theme answered the question: *when using different social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok), what are the challenges noticed in writing style or language use?*

4.3. Adapting Social Media Trends and Their Informality

The third theme discusses how students have adapted informality from social media and how it affects their written discourse. Most students have less practice in critical thinking skills due to artificial intelligence (AI) in social media platforms such as Messenger. Teachers have also observed that students depend on the auto-correction for typewritten tasks, abbreviating words, and mixing languages, and that they have less comprehension, just as participants 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 said:

"Um (thinking shortly), sometimes I get influenced by, um, shortening words of a certain, you know, words, so that's it..."

"Ah, the conyo (refers to a linguistic style characterized by blending languages, often English and Filipino, known as code-switching) and the grammar..."

"In terms of challenges, there are some issues that are very difficult, like (my) being able to adapt informal words."

"So, the challenges I encountered using different social media platforms (are things) like the shortcut of words, like the vocabulary words, and then the (pauses), and also adopting wrong grammar by some on FB (Facebook)."

"What I noticed is um (pauses), the wrong spelling, the shortcuts like BTW (by the way) and LMAO (laughing my ass off)."

With the same phenomenon, participants 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 answered the question: What challenges have the teacher encountered in guiding the students' writing style and language use?

"The students are no longer sure (of) their language, or they mix up the languages. Even when they are taught in Filipino, they use the language in Filipino, English, and Bisaya. They no longer determine if the language they are using is the language they should be using."

"...many challenges that I encountered in guiding my students, especially their writing style and language use, and also some language, spellings, because they tend to use words or new words that (aren't) really part of the dictionary, such as favor they put fav on it..."

"...For the writing style, sometimes the students understand how to write specifically, like, for example, putting the I, they try to make it like a small letter instead of it always (being) a big letter..."

"...So, (the) challenges for it (are that) they depend (on) the AI and by that the grammar (conventions) they don't know, the capitalization of the proper pronoun, where to put a punctuation which is very basic when it comes into writing..."

"...based on what I have observed, most or some of my students have difficulties in terms of using the correct format of formal writing..."

Students have changed their writing and speaking styles to fit with social media trends. Teachers also think that students rely too much on social media, which makes their academic writing less formal since they mix up words, shorten them, capitalize subjects, and utilize punctuation. This means that teachers should help their students become better at writing formally while acknowledging their digital literacy. Students can tell the difference between circumstances and use the proper words if they combine structured teaching with digital writing.

The study by Fatimayin (2018), which examined how social media language affected Nigerian secondary school students' written English, supports this trend. Researchers observed that students regularly use informal language from sites like Facebook in their academic writing. This includes things like slang, acronyms, and syntax that are not conventional. This use of casual

language might cause spelling, grammar, and sentence structure mistakes, making their official writing worse. The study shows how important it is for teachers to understand these factors and assist students in telling the difference between casual Internet conversation and the rules for formal academic writing.

The study looked at how the language used on social media impacts students' written English. It was found that informal things like slang and abbreviations often appear in academic writing. This can cause mistakes and lower the quality of formal writing, which shows how important it is for teachers to assist students in understanding the difference between casual online communication and academic standards.

The fourth theme answered the question: *How does social media contribute to the formality of written communication?*

4.4. Reduces the Formality of Written Communication

The fourth theme delves into how social media reduces the formality of the students' written communication, affecting their knowledge of basic grammatical rules and structures in academic writing. Students tend to use abbreviations in formal writing, grammatical errors, punctuation marks, incorrect spellings, limited vocabulary, no comprehension, mixing of language, how to write proper capitalization for subjects, structure in writing, and many more. Participants 5, 6, and 8 stated that:

"Um (thinking shortly), sometimes I get influenced by, um, shortening words of a certain, you know, words, so that's it. "Hmm (thinks), struggles probably (with) the grammar and the bad influence (negative post), miss."

"I adapted both (the) informal and (the) formal."

"Social media contribute(s) (pauses), it's the negative way; it is informal."

With the same phenomenon, participants 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 answered the question: *Does social media affect the student's formality of written communication both inside and outside the classroom? why?*

"...Even the simple part of the language is (that) they don't know or recognize the examples of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. You gave them examples (of) words they don't know where (those) words belong...."

"...Their colloquial words or slang words they used (in) informal writing that they get (on) Facebook, that is one challenge to correct, especially if the teacher will make a mistake too, like using words that (are) not for formal writing, so the students tend to follow it..."

"...Um, I believed that social media could affect students' formality of written communication both within and outside the classroom, because nowadays a lot of students are quite rampant using social media..."

"I believe it affects just what I mentioned, right? It affects their, ah, um, what (do) you call that, their structure of ideas, so yes, it affects the formality..."

"Yes, I believed that social media affected my students' formality of written communication both inside and outside the classroom...."

Teachers have also observed that students' prominent use of social media has affected the learners' written communication inside and outside the classroom. It reduced the students' formality in writing, such as recognizing the parts of speech and using colloquial words. All in all, social media played a part in reducing the formality of the students' written communication. This suggests educators need to emphasize teaching context-appropriate language use, digital literacy, and code-switching skills, helping students distinguish between casual online communication and formal writing.

Riparip (2024) found that code-switching had a negligible effect on pupils' language skills. So, language teachers are reminded of the importance of using language correctly and for the right reasons in school and work writing. He suggested that vocabulary should be a primary concern in teaching academic writing in order to maximize the use of text reading and professional writing. He also added that teaching strategies should be retooled in grammar lessons and should be a focus of the curriculum because students still make a lot of grammatical mistakes in their formal writing.

Moreover, Wong (2020) emphasized that most participants, who were UTAR undergraduates, perceived social media and Internet slang as detrimental to grammar competence and English proficiency. It reveals that the internet and social media vernacular affect students' academic work.

The study showed that code-switching affected students' vocabulary skills. It also showed how important it was to teach students better vocabulary and grammar in academic writing. Furthermore, it showed how language and social media affected children's grammar and English skills.

The fifth theme answered the questions: (1) *What are the challenges or struggles of using social media in the student's written discourse?* and (2) *What challenges or struggles have the teacher observed in a student's academic writing performance?*

4.5. Social Media as a Distraction

The fifth theme highlights how social media can distract students from focusing on their academic performance. Students get easily distracted by social media, so their homework is affected, especially their academic writing. Participants 2 and 11 shared the same experience:

"Um, sometimes it distracts me from what I need to do."

"...even when a simple sentence or question is being asked, they are looking for a source; they are just searching to get an answer..."

Videos from TikTok, reels on Facebook, and YouTube are very entertaining. Online communication on Messenger is also distracting and very tempting to open when doing something. As for this, social media is very entertaining as to why learners get distracted easily, affecting their academic performance and lessening their critical thinking skills and attention span. This development has significant effects: teachers may need to develop ways to help students learn to be more disciplined and manage their time better when using technology. Schools should also consider adding media literacy programs that teach students how digital information can affect their focus and mental development. This would encourage them to use technology more mindfully and purposefully.

A study by Kolan and Dzandza (2018) found that several students are addicted to social media, and it was determined to be bad for their academic life, even though it was important for students' academic lives in many ways, like sharing knowledge, having group debates, and making friends. They recommended that faculties or schools in various universities hold public lectures on this topic to help students understand the possible effects of these sites when they are not used wisely. Lecturers should also use these sites to assign work and encourage their use for academic purposes. Finally, the school should limit access to specific networking sites that could distract students while learning.

In addition, Collates (2023) claimed that there was a negative relationship between the levels of addiction to social networks and their dimensions, such as occupation, mood change, relapse, and conflict, and the levels of self-esteem in university students. The researchers stated that addiction to social media had the same symptoms as addiction to any substance, such as mood change, relapse, and conflict. Social networks influenced the way individuals presented themselves to others as well as their levels of self-esteem.

The study found that excessive social media use can hurt students' grades, even though it has benefits. It suggested that universities should encourage the use of social media for academic purposes and limit access to distracting sites. Also, social media addiction causes mood changes, conflict, and low self-esteem. These effects are similar to those seen with substance addiction. The sixth theme answered the questions: (1) *How does social media affect the performance of the student's written discourse?* (2) *How does social media affect the students' overall performance in written communication skills, particularly in terms of their adaptability to write effectively in various contexts?*

4.6. Academic Effects of Social Media Use

The sixth theme explores social media's positive and negative sides in terms of written discourse. Social media integration in school can help students with their academic writing, especially when searching for information. This can help the students to search for something in a time-efficient way. In some cases, this can also harm their written communication. The advantage of social media over written discourse is shared by these five participants, who are participants 5, 6, 9, 11, and 15. They said that

"I have a better performance with my social media, I get a lot of example words and meanings (pauses) and deep vocabulary."

"Positive because it is helpful, and there's no negative yet."

"I also improved a bit, like when I'm studying, I easily remember the other words and forget."

"...I can say that technology is helpful, but there are some limitations because it has advantages and disadvantages..."

The negative side was also shared with the same phenomenon of participants 1, 2, 3, 7, and 10, stating that:

"I'm now used to short-cutting the words."

"... it distracts me from what I need to do."

"Sometimes social media can distract me."

"...I get distracted, scrolling through videos or posts, and I don't usually do my assignment(s) because I (am) automatically distracted."

"It affects me as a student because sometimes I am not studying. I always keep on using social media..."

Participants 12 and 14 also shared that.

"I would say there is a huge effect or impact on overall performance..."

"...So, I believe it affects their (pauses) um, it does not boost their confidence anymore since they (are) afraid to talk since they don't have the basic knowledge from them because they are dependent on social media."

Social media has a positive impact, but based on the responses above, most of them stated that it harms their academic performance. Social media helps them explore new vocabulary, but for others, it diverts their attention from studying and doing their homework. Social media has also caused them to use shortened words and to lack self-confidence because they are too dependent on it.

These data showed that social media can be a helpful learning tool when used correctly, but excessive or uncontrolled use can make it harder to learn new languages and focus on schoolwork. Teachers and parents must help learners develop better digital habits and create spaces encouraging independence, self-confidence, and purposeful learning.

The researchers supported this theme through the study of Wil, Yunus, and Suliman (2019), stating that while students recognized the benefits of using social media to assist in writing, they did not spend much time on writing activities. This illustrates that social media might help students write, but if they use it too much, they might lose how to do it right.

The study showed that students did not write as much as they could. They knew that social media could help them. This suggested that excessive use of social media led them to neglect formal writing.

Proposed Guidelines for Teachers on Student Utilization of Social Media Platforms

Researchers suggest the following guidelines to help teachers manage and improve students' usage of social media for academic and writing growth, making sure that these sites are used as learning aids instead of sources of distraction.

GUIDELINES	BASIS IN FINDINGS	IMPLEMENTATIONS
1. Promote Digital Literacy and Academic Integrity	Ensure students use social media responsibly in terms of academic writing.	To explore social media algorithms, use the SIFT approach (Stop, Investigate, Find, Trace). Teach students to use lateral reading after leaving the original post to confirm the author's credentials using Google Scholar or university directories, rather than only flagging "fake news."
2. Establish Boundaries for Social Media Use to Support Academic Focus and Well-being	Minimize distractions and support focus learning.	Establish a "Tech-Intentional" Classroom Contract, co-created with students, that defines "Red Zones" (no-phone focus time) and "Green Zones" (research/collaboration time). Encourage students to participate in creating and upholding these agreements.
3. Develop Critical Thinking and Academic Engagement through Social Media	Analyze social media content regarding bias, tone, structure, and communicative effectiveness.	Design activities where students evaluate real social media posts for bias, tone, structure, and Communicative effectiveness. (Media Deconstruction)
4. Enhance Academic Writing through Social Media-Based Formats	Help students improve clarity, grammar, and structure. Encourage students to think about how using social media changes the way they write and how well they do in school overall.	Assign tasks that require students to write Academic tweets, Blog entries, and Informative captions for images related to lessons or projects. Connects classroom work to real-world skills.

These suggested guidelines are meant to help teachers turn social media into a useful learning tool by encouraging responsible use, critical thinking, and precise language. Students are taught how to use social media in ways that improve their writing and help them do well in school by making their expectations clear, working with parents, and using digital writing formats in class.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results, this study concludes that students regularly use social media sites like Facebook to do their schoolwork, which makes them dependent on information and prone to distractions. Teachers have noticed that students' performance in written communication differs from online activities, and they lack critical thinking skills. Teachers also found that

students struggle with basic grammatical rules in writing, often using code-switching and incorrect grammar. They also struggle to recognize language parts and adapt to colloquial words from Facebook or unfamiliar terminology.

Despite the negative consequences, social media integration in the classroom can benefit students' academic writing by helping them find information quickly, as claimed by some student participants. However, teachers believe that students are negatively influenced by social media use and their attitude towards academic performance. Overall, social media has advantages; however, it has more disadvantages in written discourse, especially in academics.

6. Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, it is advised that students be encouraged to pay more attention to how they utilize social media for schoolwork. To improve their writing skills, they should try to limit distractions, pay attention to how they use language, and use trustworthy academic sources. Students can utilize social media to help them with their schoolwork as long as they focus on schoolwork and write well, even in casual online settings.

Parents are very important in helping their kids behave online. They should keep an eye on their kids' social media use and encourage them to find a healthy balance between schoolwork and free time. Parents should also create a home environment that helps their children learn language by promoting reading, writing, and talking openly about schoolwork. This extra help at home can really improve students' language and writing skills outside of school.

On the other hand, teachers should keep in touch with parents and let them know how their child's social media use is affecting their schoolwork. Teachers can help students improve their writing by giving them specific writing assignments, teaching them grammar, and giving them projects that require them to think critically. By integrating a deliberate and regulated use of social media into classroom activities, students can also learn how to interact constructively with digital platforms.

School administrators are encouraged to implement guidelines for teachers on student use of social media platforms that address the influence of social media on student written discourse. To make sure that they help learning while lowering the risk of detrimental effects on schoolwork. Also, administrators should pay attention to what senior high school teachers say about how students perform in writing and how they feel about it and use this feedback to help make decisions about policies and programs.

Lastly, future researchers should look into the long-term impact of using social media on kids' writing for school. Researchers can detect bigger patterns and come up with better ways to help pupils read and write in the digital age by looking at results from diverse places and levels of schooling.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

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