

Social Media and Academic Procrastination in College Students

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes the relationship between the use of social networks and academic procrastination in students of the Faculty of Education of a public university in Lima during 2024. A quantitative approach with a correlational and cross-sectional design was used, applying validated questionnaires to 100 students selected through non-probabilistic sampling. The results show that WhatsApp, used for academic purposes, is associated with lower levels of procrastination ($\tau = -0.323$, $p = 0.001$; $\rho = -0.339$), while Instagram ($\tau = -0.210$, $p = 0.027$; $\rho = -0.225$) and Facebook ($\tau = -0.450$, $p = 0.000$; $\rho = -0.479$) have a greater association with procrastinating behaviors due to their recreational use. It is concluded that the strategic use of WhatsApp could promote better time management and reduce procrastination, while it is necessary to promote a more conscious use of Instagram and Facebook.

Keywords: Social networks, academic procrastination, self-regulation, university students, academic performance.

INTRODUCTION

At the international level, social networks have transformed the dynamics of interaction and learning among university students, becoming essential tools for both communication and access to academic information. According to a report by the Pew Research Center (2023), about 33% of young people use platforms such as TikTok and YouTube almost constantly, which has raised concerns about their impact on academic productivity. Research in Europe and Asia highlights that excessive use of social media is associated with an increase in procrastination, reducing time spent on academic activities and encouraging avoidance behaviors (Astuti & Ariyane, 2023). These findings underscore the need for global strategies that balance the use of these platforms with the academic demands of students.

At the regional level, Latin America faces similar challenges due to the high penetration of social networks among young people. According to Taipei-Quispe et al. (2023), in countries such as Peru and Chile, 60% of university students report moderate to high levels of procrastination due to recreational use of networks such as Instagram and Facebook. The region, characterized by inequalities in access to educational resources, finds in these platforms a tool to democratize information, although at the risk of increasing distractions. Studies in Mexico and Colombia also show that the lack of self-regulation in the use of social networks aggravates academic performance problems (Arteaga et al., 2022).

In the Peruvian context, the use of social networks is especially significant, since 95.3% of young people between 19 and 24 years of age are active internet users (INEI, 2023). This high digital connectivity translates into a direct impact on study habits and academic productivity. Ramos et al. (2022) found that excessive use of platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook is related to high levels of procrastination, particularly in higher education students. In

addition, the lack of educational policies that promote a conscious use of social networks increases the risk of technological dependence and its negative effects on academic performance.

Looking to the future globally, it is clear that social media will continue to play a central role in higher education, whether as a support tool or as a source of distraction. The implementation of digital literacy programs will be crucial to mitigate the adverse effects associated with the excessive use of these platforms. Likewise, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence could be integrated to personalize the learning experience, helping students manage their time and optimize their academic performance. The key to a balanced future lies in fostering a conscious digital culture that harnesses the potential of social media without compromising students' academic and personal development.

METHODOLOGY

This study was developed under a quantitative approach, whose objective was to measure and analyze the relationship between the use of social networks and academic procrastination. A non-experimental, cross-sectional and correlational design was applied. This design made it possible to observe the variables in their natural environment without intervention, collecting data at a single time to establish associations between the study variables (Jilcha Sileyew, 2020). This approach facilitates objective results that can be generalized to broader populations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The population was composed of 600 students enrolled in the Faculty of Education during the 2024-2 semester, from which a sample of 100 participants was selected through non-probabilistic convenience sampling. This method, although limited in generalization, was efficient in obtaining data in a short period of time and with limited resources (Sánchez & Ruiz, 2020). The inclusion criteria considered students over 18 years of age who used social networks at least three hours a day for personal or academic purposes and agreed to voluntarily participate in the study.

Data collection was carried out through structured questionnaires. To measure the use of social networks, the instrument of Cupid and Suárez (2022) was used, with two main dimensions and 12 items, reaching a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.884, which guaranteed its reliability. Academic procrastination was assessed with a questionnaire adapted from Domínguez et al. (2019), originally designed by Busko (1998) and validated for the local context. Both instruments were subjected to expert judgment and internal consistency tests, obtaining coefficients greater than 0.7 that confirmed their reliability (Ahmed & Ishtiaq, 2021). In addition, Kendall's Tau-b coefficient was used to analyze the relationships between ordinal variables, considering their robustness under conditions of non-parametric data (Flores-Ruiz et al., 2017).

Ethical principles were strictly adhered to, ensuring the informed consent of the participants, the confidentiality of the data and the exclusive use of the information for research purposes. This commitment ensured respect for students' rights and the integrity of the study (Schöpfel et al., 2020).

RESULTS

Descriptive analysis

The results show that social media use varies significantly among students. WhatsApp is the most widely used platform for academic purposes, reporting 57% moderate usage and 40% high usage, while Instagram and Facebook have reduced academic usage by 66.3% and 65%, respectively. This reduced use is mainly related to recreational activities, suggesting a limited impact on the academic field.

Table 1. Frequency of WhatsApp use and academic procrastination

ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION	REDUCED ACADEMIC USE (%)	MODERATE ACADEMIC USE (%)	HIGH ACADEMIC USE (%)
LOUD	0.0	3.0	19.0
STOCKING	0.0	34.0	9.0
CASUALTY	3.0	20.0	12.0

As for academic procrastination, moderate academic use of WhatsApp is associated with medium (34%) and low (20%) levels of procrastination. On the other hand, the high academic use of WhatsApp (40%) reflects high levels (19%) of procrastination, which could be due to a lack of clear limits in its use.

Instagram and Facebook, being used mainly for recreational purposes, show a greater association with medium and high levels of procrastination, evidencing their distracting potential.

Inferential results: General hypothesis

The general hypothesis was that the use of social networks is related to academic procrastination. Kendall's Tau-b coefficients confirm this relationship:

Table 2. Correlations between social media use and academic procrastination

SOCIAL MEDIA	KENDALL'S TAU-B	P-VALUE
WHATSAPP	-0.323	0.001
INSTAGRAM	-0.210	0.027
FACEBOOK	-0.450	0.000

- **WhatsApp:** Correlation coefficient $\tau = -0.323$, $p = 0.001$. This result indicates a significant negative relationship, suggesting that higher academic use of WhatsApp is associated with lower levels of academic procrastination.
- **Instagram:** Correlation coefficient $\tau = -0.210$, $p = 0.027$. Although the correlation is weaker, it is also significant, reflecting that their academic use is linked to moderate levels of procrastination.
- **Facebook:** Correlation coefficient $\tau = -0.450$, $p = 0.000$. The strongest negative correlation is observed with Facebook, highlighting its recreational use as a contributing factor to higher levels of procrastination.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study confirm that social media use has a significant impact on college students' levels of academic procrastination. WhatsApp, when used for academic purposes, proves to be an effective tool to reduce procrastination, especially at moderate levels of use. This could be attributed to their ease of facilitating communication and collaboration in group activities. However, overuse can also lead to distractions, underscoring the importance of setting clear boundaries on their use.

In contrast, Instagram and Facebook have stronger associations with elevated levels of procrastination, reflecting their predominantly recreational nature. These results coincide with previous studies that indicate that social networks can become significant distractions when they are not used consciously (Arteaga et al., 2022). Although these platforms offer educational potentials, their positive impact depends on the user's ability to self-regulate their time and activities.

Overall, Kendall's Tau-b coefficients reveal negative correlations between academic social media use and procrastination, suggesting that strategic use can mitigate the associated negative effects. However, it is crucial that educational institutions develop digital literacy programs that promote a conscious and balanced use of these platforms, encouraging self-regulation and efficient time management.

In conclusion, this study reinforces the need to integrate strategies for the responsible use of social networks in the educational field, recognizing both their benefits and risks. By optimizing the academic use of these platforms, procrastination levels can be reduced and academic performance improved, thus contributing to a more enriching and balanced educational experience.

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