

## **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON FAMILY LIFE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Advancement in technology has made the life much easier than it was when technology was not so developed. The invention of internet and mobile phone technology has revolutionized the life of people and these two media are the main source of social networking today. The aim of this research is to study the impact of social media on family life. Data for the study was collected through the questionnaire, administered to a sample of 200 individuals from Islamabad for an in depth analysis and for drawing of conclusions. The study indicates that excessive use of social media, both at home, and workplace, has a negative effect on family relationship in terms of giving active time to family and promotes cultural adaptation and change in values. This is done by adapting new fashions, language, jargons and lesser attention towards respect of elders and healthy social attitude. Internet is the key vehicle of social media use and it is utilized mostly for face book, Whatsapp, and twitter etc. The results show that with one hour more use of social media at home reduces almost 30 minutes of the family time. Similarly the use of social media at workplace for one additional hour reduces the family time to the extent of almost 23 minutes. The same is the case with other factors affecting the family life adversely as a result of use of social media. The study highlights areas which need detailed research in future.

### **KEY WORDS**

Social media, Internet, family relationship, cultural adaptation, change in values.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Social media is a buzz word today. The phrase is used to refer to the website-based system of interacting and sharing information with each other. Social media or consumer generated media involves development of websites that are used for the purpose of interacting with people and to share information with each other. Social media includes Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp, LinkedIn, Chat Rooms, Emails, My Space and much more which helps people to connect with each other. This is the development in technology that people are connected with each other even when they are away for hundreds and thousands of miles. On the other side, organizations are using this medium as a tool to develop their business; People's attitude towards life has changed in that the perceptions about family culture and style are no more there. Social media got importance in the start of 21st century which brought revolution in life of every individual. People are able to make friends and be in touch with family members, relatives and old friends that are

living abroad or are unable to be accessed easily. Social media has shortened the distance among people and the world is now literally a global village. People have started making relationships on the internet and various stories have been reported regarding marriages taking place among persons living at different places. People have accepted such marriages as a part of their culture now. Changes in family system are more prominent with old and traditional values diminishing rapidly as a result of social media use. People are no more inclined to and interested in following the traditional family values which bound them culturally and religiously.

Social media has created a lot of awareness among people, especially among youth, regarding core issues around the world. People are found more interested in making friends online than making friends in person. Researchers have shown that the phenomenon has also affected the personalities of people while socializing. People like more curiosity and excitement while making friends online. Such changes in personalities have led to social and cultural change Pakistan is the 7th big country in terms of land and population. There are over 20 million internet users in Pakistan, 16 million users are on Face book, and over two million are LinkedIn users according to a report of a Singapore-based consulting firm. Twitter statistics by country are difficult to find, but it is a safe assumption that there are probably more Pakistanis on Twitter than on LinkedIn. These numbers indicate that while internet usage in Pakistan is far from universal, it is not confined to the economic elite of the country either. (The Express Tribune, Pakistan Jan 2015). An average Pakistani spends about an hour or two online every day, according to Ansrio, a mobile survey company, and a significant chunk of that time is spent on social media. The top three activities in Pakistan both on desktop and mobile internet are: social media, email and general search.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this research is to study the impact of social media on family life, that is, (i) how it has affected the family values, (ii) how it has promoted intercultural adaptation and (iii) how it has impacted the family time in Pakistan. The researcher has taken into consideration the use of social media, both at office and at home as a major contributory factor. This study specifically aims to list down the social media usage and its adverse impact on total family life.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on the objectives of the study, the following questions have been put in the research.

- How does social media usage at home affect family life?
- How does social media usage at work place affect family life?
- Is social media a source of cultural adaptation in family life?
- Is social media a source of change in family values?

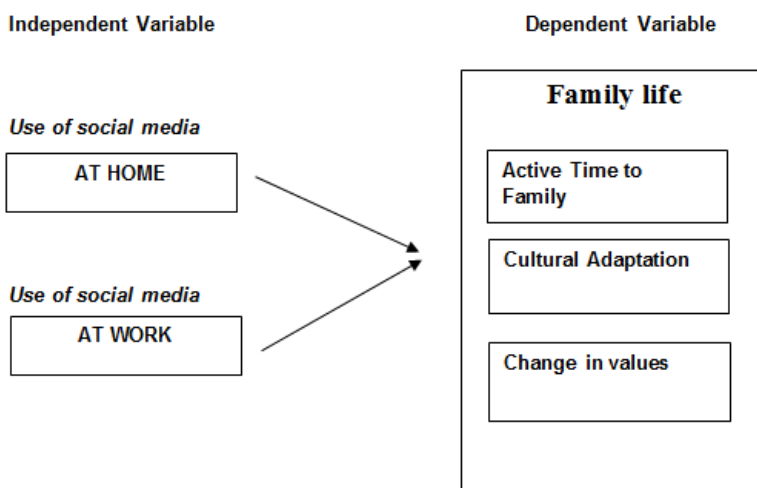
### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Almost every Pakistani has a cell phone today and majority of them have phones with various social media functions. This study is important in that it explores the behaviour pattern of an individual to understand his / her family life which may have been affected

by use of social media, either at home or at work place. People get hold of social media to deal with tensions or to spend their time when they have nothing to do. The present study addresses this issue in depth and analyses relevant data collected through a survey in Islamabad on family life of target population. This research highlights quantitatively the negative impact which the social media use exerts on family life. At international level, many researchers like Qualman (2009), Kaplan (2010), Sheldon (2008), Kietzmann (2011), Brown (2011) have done a tremendous work and covered other dimensions of social media impact. This research work highlights the impact of social media use on family life which includes changes in values, intercultural adaptation and reduction in family time. A limited work on issues of use of social media and its adverse effects on family life has been done in Pakistan and there is an urgent need of an in depth and evidence-based research, covering both rural and urban areas of the country.

### **THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK**

In the light of literature review and research gap, the following conceptual and theoretical framework is used for the study:



**Figure 1: Conceptual/Theoretical Framework-Impact of Social Media on Family Life**

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

Based on the above stated conceptual and theoretical frame work, the following hypothesis are tested in the study.

- H1: Use of social media at home and active time to family are negatively related.
- H2: Use of social media at home and cultural adaptation are positively related.
- H3: Use of social media at home and change in values are positively related.
- H4: Use of social media at work and active time to family are negatively related.
- H5: Use of social media at work and cultural adaptation are positively related.
- H6: Use of social media at work and change in values are positively related.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is quantitative in nature and is based on a representative sample data, collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts i.e. demographics and other questions related to the variables of the study. The population of the study are individuals residing in Islamabad who were above the age of 15 and below the age of 56 years. As the complete sample frame was not available, the convenience sampling technique was used to collect data for the study. Data was collected on a five point likert scale ranging from 1 completely disagree to 5 completely agree.

The original sample size was 300 respondents but questionnaires were received back from only 215 respondents out of which 15 were incomplete. The actual sample size was 200 respondents in which 139 male and 61 female took part.

### Respondents Profile

**Table 1**

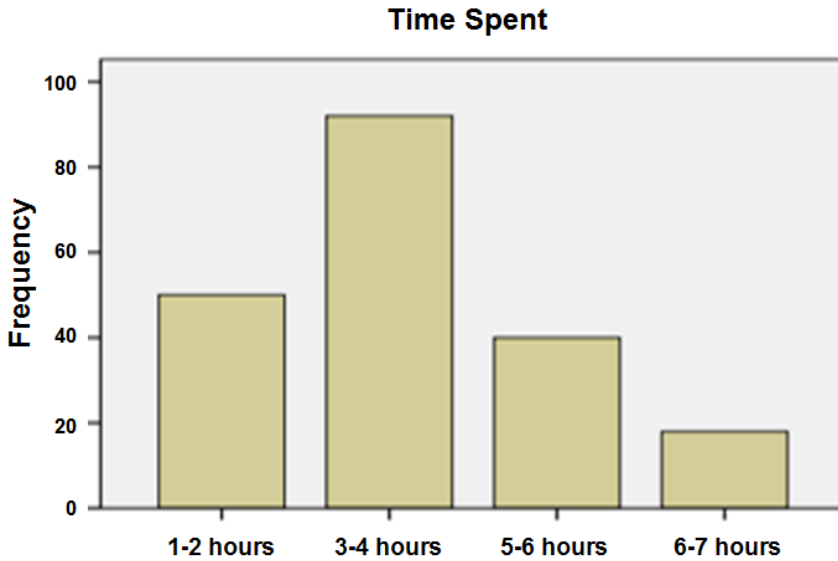
<b>Gender</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	Male	139	69.5	69.5	69.5
	Female	61	30.5	30.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Out of 200 respondents who participated in the survey, 139 were males and 61 females.

**Table 2**

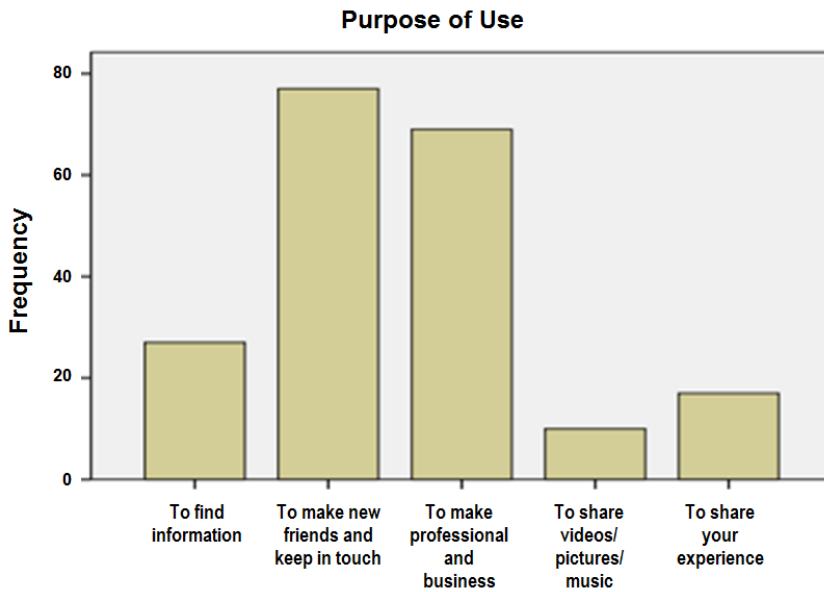
<b>Age</b>				
<b>Age Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
15-30	136	68	68	68
31-45	43	21.5	21.5	89.5
46-60	21	10.5	10.5	100
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

In a total of 200 respondents, who were using social media, 68% fall in the age group of 15 – 30 years against 21% and 10% of those falling in the age groups of 31 – 45 and 46 – 60 years respectively.



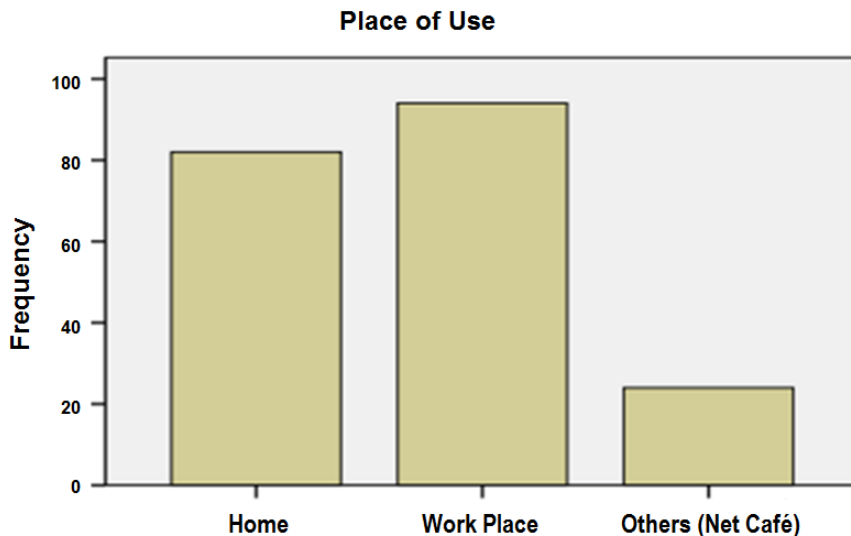
**Figure 1: Time spent**

Out of 200 respondents, 25 % used social media 1-2 hours, 46%, 3-4 hours, 20 %, 5-6 hours while only 9 % used social media 6-7 hours daily.



**Figure 2: Purpose of Use**

It was observed in the survey that 38.5% used social media for making new friends, followed by 34 % who used social media to make personal and business contacts. A very small percentage used social media for getting information and for sharing professional experience with each other.



**Figure 3: Place of Use**

As observed in the survey, 47 % of the respondents used social media at work, 41 % at home while 12 % used social media in net cafes or at other places.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

The study was carried out to know the adverse effects of social media usage on family life. The independent variables were use of social media at home and use of social media at work place, while dependent variable was family life which covered three aspects: active time to family, intercultural adaptation and change in values. Data was collected from individuals of ages 15-56 years, residing in Islamabad. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined through Cronbach alpha, which is more than .7 in each case. The content and face validity of the questionnaire were assessed by expert people working in the relevant area. The results are supportive of the fact that the usage of social media, whether at home or at work place, does have a negative impact on family life, especially on three of its aspects covered in the study.

Regression and correlation analyses were undertaken to check the impact of social media on family life. Regression test was applied because the researcher was interested in finding out the impact of two independent variables on three separate dependent variables, one by one. The aim was to check the impact and not the cause and the effect.

### CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Pearson Correlation is recognized as the quantified connection or the association between variables. The table below presents Pearson bivariate correlations among the variables under study.

**Table 3**  
**Correlation Matrix**

	<b>Use of Social Media at Home</b>	<b>Use of Social Media at Work</b>	<b>Active Time to Family</b>	<b>Intercultural Adaptation</b>	<b>Change in Values</b>
<b>Use of social media at Home</b>	1	.			
<b>Use of social Media at Work</b>	.493**	1	*		
<b>Active time to family</b>	-.477**	-.319**	1		
<b>Intercultural adaptation</b>	.389**	.284**	.215**	1	
<b>Change in values</b>	.125**	.103**	.218**	.231**	1

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

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix shows that use of social media, both at home and at work place, is positively related with intercultural adaptation and change in values. This means that the extensive use of social media, either at home or at work place, leads to more intercultural adaptation and rapid change in values. On the other hand, use of social media is negatively related with active time to family which implies that more the use of social media, lesser is the active time given to family. All the correlation coefficients are statistically significant.

## REGRESSION ANALYSIS

**Table 4**  
**Use of Social Media at Home and at Work Place**

D V (Family Life)	Active Time to Family			Intercultural Adaptation			Change in Values		
	$\beta$	$R^2$	*Sig.	$\beta$	$R^2$	*Sig.	$\beta$	$R^2$	*Sig.
<b>Constant</b>	1.438			1.011			1.22		
<b>Use of Social Media at Home</b>	-0.512	61.3	0.02*	0.631	54	0.00*	0.487	50	0.001*
<b>Constant</b>	0.76			1.5			0.91		
<b>Use of Social Media at Work Place</b>	-0.384	46.5	0.012*	0.134	28	0.011*	0.115	21	0.00*

$p < .0$

The above table shows that the use of social media at home affects significantly and negatively the active time to family and contributes positively and significantly to intercultural adaptation and change in family values. The results show that one unit increase in use of social media at home brings with it a reduction of .512 units in active time to family. Specifically, it means that every additional hour used on social media at home reduces family time by more than 30 minutes on the average. Similarly, each additional hour consumed on social media at home gives a considerable boost to intercultural adaptation and to change in family values. The results further show that 61 % of variation in active time to family is explained by use of social media at home. As for intercultural adaptation,  $R^2$  indicates that 54 % of the variation in this variable is explained by the use of social media at home. On the other hand, 50% of the variation in change in values is explained by the use of social media at home. Similar adverse effects of use of social media at work place have been noted on active time to family, intercultural adaptation, and change in family values. All impacts noted above are statistically significant. The results of this analysis confirm that the use of social media, both at home and at work place, is affecting adversely the active time to family in Pakistani society on the one hand and playing positive and significant role in promoting intercultural adaptation and change in family values on the other hand which is an alarming situation.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Social media has emerged as a very strong and effective tool not only organizations for their variety of operations but it has also brought radical changes in the lives of ordinary people. In fact, social media has become a strong component of an individuals' daily life today.

The present study focused on to find out the impact of social media on the family life of Pakistani people. The study shows that majority of the people use social media 2 to 3 hours daily and this practice is a regular part of their routine life. A big section of people



use social media as a tool for remaining connected with old friends and to interact with others and make new friends. It has been found that majority of the people use face book as a popular social media tool. The results also show that use of social media at home affects family life more seriously as compared to its use at work place.

It has also been noted that social media affects face to face interaction at home and thus it adversely affects the interpersonal relationship of family members within the family. It has been established in the study that social media also affects the local culture and intercultural adaptation is taking place at a fast speed which is potentially a great threat to the whole fabric of Pakistani traditional society.

People are adopting new fashions and trends which are popular on social media. Further, social media is also making people indulge in language jargons with many of them preferring to interact in languages other than native languages. It has been specially noted that dating and male-female relationship culture is getting common and now people do not show concern on these relationships. The increasing trend in such relationship has shown worrying signs among families with strong religious and cultural backgrounds. As per this study, social values are special target of social media and thus break down of families has started which is the matter of great concern for social scientists in Pakistan.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the results of this study, we recommend as follows:

- Parents need to be vigilant and keep a strict check on the use of internet by their children to save them from extremely harmful effects, force them to remain within the bindings of religion and graceful national traditions and not to get tempted to adopt foreign culture blindly. We understand that parents' role is crucial in this regard.
- Evolution of cultural and family values is not bad but a total surrender should not be acceptable.
- People need to aware of the difference between inter sex relationship and social networking.

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