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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Social-Media, Reading Skills, Writing Skills, English Language Learning, ESL Learners, Digital Learning, Educational Technology	This research examines the value and worth of social media in improving the reading and writing skills of undergraduate English language learners in Sialkot, Pakistan. With enhanced use of digital technologies in teaching, social media websites like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, and TED Talks have come up as new learning tools for the languages outside conventional classrooms. Through qualitative study design, female ESL instructors were interviewed using the semi-structured interviews to understand how social media impacts the learners' literacy competence. By conducting thematic analysis with help of NVivo software, it was understood that social media has positive impact on reading fluency and understanding by introducing students to varying texts, multimedia, and interactive forums. The results indicate that although social media can be an effective additional tool to complement reading & writing development, its learning potential is mostly determined by the extent of guided and meaningful use. The suggestions are given to incorporate social media in curriculum planning, offer teacher education about digital pedagogies, as well as inspire balanced language exposure. This study adds to the existing literature on digital learning and highlights social media's role in reshaping English language teaching in domestic settings.
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INTRODUCTION

In the era of digital communication, social media has become a revolutionary force in most aspects of life, including education. In English language learning (ELL), social media sites like Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and blogs provide interactive spaces that facilitate informal learning outside conventional classroom environment. With its real-time communication,

content-sharing, and cooperative potential, social media offers learners with enough opportunities to cultivate essential language skills like reading and writing (Mistar & Embi, 2020; Zhang & Zou, 2022). Within English language teaching in Pakistan, particularly in urban centers such as Sialkot, social media is becoming an exciting prospect as a channel to facilitate undergraduate learners to work with the English language in more active, user-friendly, and interactive terms. The growing integration of social media in the instructional practices comes parallel with a movement toward learner-oriented methods, where learners are no longer passive acceptors of information but active co-constructors of meaning. Social media platforms encourage naturalistic language use. They offer environments for collaborative learning, peer correction, and exposure to varied contexts (Alharbi & Alzuoud, 2023).

This is particularly useful in developing reading and writing skills two important aspects of English academic achievement. For example, reading social media articles, captions, and blog posts may enhance the comprehension and vocabulary development of learners. Similarly, the composition of statuses, comments, tweets, blogs promote expression, idea organization, and grammar use (Khan, Bashir & Hussain, 2021). In Pakistan, English is the second language and is linked with scholarship and professional success. Nonetheless, proficiency in English among university students, especially in reading and writing, is still an issue because of limited opportunity for practice and prevailing tradition of the grammar-translation approach (Iqbal, Javed & Rehman, 2021). Undergraduate students in urban areas such as Sialkot tend to struggle to use English beyond the classroom setting, leading to low confidence and fluency. Social media, in this respect, can be supportive complement to official instruction, easing independent learning and regular exposure to language (Ali, Ahmed & Mahmood, 2022). Recent research has started to highlight pedagogical value of social media for language learning.

As Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2021) state, students who regularly engage with English material on social media websites improve writing fluency and comprehension skills. This is because these sites offer instant feedback, peer-based motivation, and relevance via real-world material. Also, writing to audience, even on personal sites, inspires care in clarity, organization, and tone integral aspects of academic writing (Rahman, Islam & Afrin, 2022). In same way, reading varied content on social media exposes students to actual language use, idiomatic phrases, and different writing styles, that might not be available with traditional textbooks. Its potential notwithstanding, social media's ability to improve language skills also relies on its mode of usage. Reclining, scrolling, or viewing content for mere consumption does not necessarily have impact on language development. Active engagement commenting, blogging, creating posts, participating in discussions promotes cognitive and linguistic processing, which is necessary to advance reading and writing skills (Lin, Zhang & Zheng, 2021). Besides, students' attitudes, digital literacy, and type of content being consumed all have effects on the degree to social media contributes to language learning achievements (Kabilan, Rajab & Abidin, 2020).

Sialkot is the developing urban hub containing various public and private universities. The use of social media by undergraduate students is prevalent. Still, there is scarce research into the nature of use of social media for educational purposes, especially in terms of reading & writing development

in English. This creates a gap that demands a research probe into the nature of this potential support or obstruction of English language learning from social media. The findings can inform language teachers, curriculum developers how best to integrate technology in meaningful pedagogy. Thus, present research endeavors to examine efficacy of social media in enhancing reading and writing skills among undergraduate English language students at Sialkot. Based on learners' perceptions, use habits, and reported self-improvements in language skills, study tries to shed light on potential of digital spaces to be used strategically to augment English language teaching in Pakistan's higher education sector.

Research Objectives

1. To explore perceptions of female and male ESL teachers about positive role of social media in improving students' reading and writing skills.
2. To identify gender-based similarities & differences in teachers' perspectives on social media impact on reading and writing development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The incorporation of social media within education has made considerable ground over the last ten years. It is particularly so within sphere of English language instruction. For undergraduate students in non-English speaking areas such as Sialkot, Pakistan, social media websites present an accessible and interactive platform to improve critical linguistic competence. The distinct digital ecosystem created by platforms offers students round-the-clock access to real reading and writing content. Researchers have highlighted role of social media as an additional learning tool that can enhance vocabulary development, reading proficiency, and writing proficiency (Ahmed & Hussain, 2022). Social media provides the learner with opportunity to be exposed to informal, authentic language situations outside classroom. This exposure is especially beneficial for developing reading fluency, since the students are frequently subjected to multimedia materials, subtitles, online news, blogs, and infographics, which demand processing of various genres and registers of English. As Karim and Hasan (2021) report, normal interaction with English-language messages on social media websites like Instagram and Twitter reinforce learners' skill in decoding idiomatic expressions and enhances lexical retrieval.

For the undergraduate English language learners, who tend to be getting ready for academic and professional communication, this exposure encourages interpretive ability in everyday situations. Moreover, the writing skills of learners may gain a lot from online interaction. Commenting on posts, caption writing, tweeting, blogging, and online discussion are common opportunities for written language production. A study by Wang and Chen (2023) shows that students who engage actively in posting English content on social media exhibit greater writing fluency, syntactic complexity, and idea organization in their writing than students who only learn in class. Social media's informal settings can minimize the stress that is usually entailed in writing, allowing students to experiment freely with language and think in the English more spontaneously. The social media platforms with embedded AI features like Grammarly, QuillBot, or ChatGPT, assist learners in real-time by giving comments and corrections that enhance grammatical and syntactical understanding (Iqbal, Javed & Rehman, 2021). Younas and Ali (2023), social media-enabled personalized learning promotes

cognitive engagement, enables students to learn new words and phrases within contexts that hold personal significance.

This not only enhances retention but also makes it more likely that the passive knowledge will be transferred to active use in writing. Despite these advantages, researchers have identified several disadvantages of using social media to learn languages. Perhaps the most important one is erosion of formal writing norms. The exposure to everyday abbreviations, emojis and phonetic spelling, widely used in the WhatsApp messages or TikTok captions, can blur the distinction between scholarly and colloquial English (Malik & Riaz, 2021). Undergraduate students who are mostly dependent on social media might unconsciously carry these practices over to their scholarly/academic writing, which can adversely impact clarity and formality of their work. In addition, learners can cultivate excessive dependence on the autocorrect and paraphrasing software, which can interfere with the internalization of grammar and vocabulary use (Zhang, 2022). In developing nations like Pakistan, access to digital media has exponentially improved with the spread of smartphones and low-cost internet. The democratization of access permits learners in urban areas like Sialkot to access English language content at any time. However, research has also reported discrepancies in the quality and purpose of interaction.

According to Farooq and Tariq (2021), not all students use social media for study purposes; others simply use it for enjoyment, and such unmonitored use might decrease the effectiveness of social media as a teaching aid. Time management and digital literacy become a major factor in deciding whether social media use leads to, discourages language development. The learner autonomy and motivation are also key factors deciding how effective social media can be in improving reading and writing skills. If learners are motivated internally to learn English, they tend to use language-rich material on the internet more effectively. Social media sites promote independent learning, as students can subscribe to pages, become members of the forums, or view English language content depending on interests. Such pros and cons related to social media role in ELT must be brought to surface for both the teachers and the taught so that informed decisions could be made and effective strategies could be framed. Teachers in the modern world have begun to integrate social media into classroom language instruction. Sites such as Edmodo, Facebook Groups, or even WhatsApp class-specific chat rooms have been used to continue the class discussion along with the writing practice outside of classroom.

Studies by Khan and Fatima (2022) illustrate that when teachers implement structured activities via social media e.g., journaling, reading quizzes, or vocabulary exercises, the students' reading and writing skills advance more than with unstructured use alone. In this linking, this indicates that guided incorporation of the social media in the curriculum has a multiplier effect while reducing distraction and off-tasking. In addition, the social media promotes cooperative learning. By way of comments, likes, and shares, students can provide peer feedback, a process that promotes critical thinking and metalinguistic awareness. Writing in such semi-public, public spaces makes learners more aware of their grammar, coherence, and audience. As per Nasir and Jamil (2021), students who are provided feedback on their social media postings by peers adjust language more proactively, thus enhancing writing accuracy in long run. Such interactions also increase learners' confidence

and communication skills, both of which are critical for academic excellence in English-medium higher education systems. Nevertheless, the concerns about digital distractions and misinformation need to be addressed.

The high volume of uncensored content on platforms like YouTube or TikTok can expose learners to incorrect grammar, profanity, or culturally insensitive content. The research indicates that learners tend to lack the critical digital literacy skills to differentiate between credible and non-credible sources (Shah & Mehmood, 2020). The exiting literature revealed that social media use without appropriate instruction can lead to confusion or solidify improper language habits. Therefore, the work of teachers in scaffolding students' online experiences becomes essential. Briefly, although social media is full of potential for supporting reading and writing abilities among undergraduate English language students, its efficiency relies on a number of contextual factors. These are learners' motivation, computer literacy, instructors' guidance, and content type consumed. In this connection, for students in Sialkot, where access to social media is pervasive and competition at school is on the rise, organized and intended use of online media can be an effective addition to classroom learning. Further research should keep investigating how best these sites can be utilized to foster language skills to ensure that their instructional value is optimized while any potential negative aspects are therefore minimized.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of social media in enhancing the reading and writing abilities of undergraduate English language learners in Sialkot. A qualitative research approach was adopted, which enabled the researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of English language teachers regarding students' use of social media in academic literacy practices. The interpretivist paradigm guided this study as it supports subjective meaning-making & exploration of complex social phenomena within natural contexts. A phenomenological research design was employed to understand lived experiences and viewpoints of English language instructors teaching at undergraduate level. Phenomenology is particularly suitable for this study as it allows the researcher to investigate how individuals perceive and interpret shared experience, in this case, impact of social media platforms on reading and writing development. The population for study included all English language teachers working in various public and private colleges and universities in Sialkot. The purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who had direct experience of teaching English to students and were aware of their engagement with social media tools.

A total of 18 participants (nine male & nine female teachers) were selected from different institutions to ensure gender-based representation and variation in perspectives. Participants held MPhil/PhD degrees in English, Education had at least three years of teaching experience at the undergraduate level. Data were collected using structured interviews, allowing participants to express their views openly while the researcher-maintained consistency in the thematic focus. The interview protocol was developed based on previous literature and expert feedback. Questions were designed to elicit teachers' insights into ways in which students use social media for academic reading and writing, the perceived benefits and drawbacks, and suggestions for effective integration in the classroom.

All interviews were conducted in person and audio-recorded with participants' informed consent. Each interview lasted about 30–40 minutes and was later transcribed verbatim for the analysis. Thematic analysis was employed as method of data analysis, following model proposed by [Braun and Clarke \(2006\)](#). This approach allowed the researcher to identify, analyze, and report patterns and themes within the qualitative data. The process involved six phases: familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing final report.

NVivo software was used to support the coding process and to manage large amounts of qualitative data systematically and efficiently. Both, the semantic and latent codes were generated to capture explicit statements and underlying meanings. Throughout the analysis, the researcher remained mindful of biases and engaged in reflexivity to ensure that interpretations reflected participants' actual views rather than personal assumptions. Two major themes emerged: the optimization of the reading and writing through social media, and the adverse effects of excessive or inappropriate use. Subthemes included improved vocabulary, exposure to authentic materials, AI-assisted writing, motivational factors, and issues like the informal language, time wastage, and diminished attention spans. Ethical considerations were strictly followed. Prior to data collection, approval was sought from the relevant institutional ethics committee. All participants were informed about the purpose of the research, their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. They were assured that their names and affiliations would not be disclosed in the final report. Written consent was obtained from each participant. In this drive, data were stored securely & were only accessible to the researcher.

The trustworthiness of the study was established using criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement with participants, member checking of transcriptions & interpretations. Dependability was maintained through an audit trail documenting all methodological decisions. Confirmability was achieved by maintaining neutrality and using direct quotations from participants to support interpretations. The qualitative design of this study is appropriate considering the aim was to explore rich, detailed perspectives on a complex issue within a specific context. Unlike quantitative designs that focus on numerical generalizability, this study sought to offer depth and contextual relevance. Nonetheless, findings may not be generalized beyond the local context of Sialkot but may offer valuable insights for similar educational settings. In short, this methodology allowed for a nuanced understanding of how social media influences the academic literacy practices of English language learners from the perspective of experienced instructors. The systematic approach to data collection and analysis, combined with strong ethical rigor and a well-defined sampling frame, contributes to study overall validity and relevance.

RESULTS OF STUDY

This section presents a thematic analysis of undergraduate English teachers' perspectives on the role of social media in enhancing students' reading and writing skills. The qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using NVivo, enabled systematic coding and theme generation. The themes reflect the nuanced experiences of teachers regarding how platforms

like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram & TED Talks contribute to reading comprehension, writing fluency, and informal digital learning among English language learners. Two major themes emerged from the analysis: enhancement of reading skills, and improvement in writing abilities. The teachers shared supportive critical insights; how social media can balance traditional instruction when used mindfully.

Table 1 Female Teachers' Perspectives

SN	Themes	Coding	Original Responses
1	Optimization of reading writing skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive effects on reading skill and writing skill • Learning new things • Positively affect the pronunciation 	<p>FT1: Traditional methods like GMT are ineffective. Social media in classroom, like audio-lingual or communicative teaching approach, will help EL learning.</p> <p>FT2: it is most efficient, it is a time saver, it has so many positive like the site, and you can surely use it to improve your English language skills</p> <p>FT3: It maintains your pronunciation and influences your pronunciation in speaking skills</p> <p>FT4: subtitles videos and TV shows can improve listening and reading skills</p> <p>FT5: watching programs that help students improve their English language</p> <p>FT8: Using vlogs, reading out blogs, watching TED talks, and reading newspapers enhance our reading writing.</p>
2	Adverse effects on communicative language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate utilization of social media and language, words and abbreviations. • Negative effects of social media on reading and writing • Less important and ineffective stuff • Reliability is doubtful 	<p>FT1: Students are more switching or mixing language; they write half of words, and they write English in Roman style, for instance, writing full words and abbreviations.</p> <p>FT2: People use short phrases, and things need to be clarified.</p> <p>FT3: The biggest problem in social media is one juice of slime. I feel youngsters speak inappropriate language and use them in their formal writing.</p> <p>FT4: Students who watch dramas and videos use short forms and new words, such as Genesis language, in their written language.</p> <p>FT5: There are challenges like accuracy, reliability, informal language, limited context, etc.</p> <p>FT7: People need to learn actual way of writing English. They don't bother with punctuation and use informal words, which create barriers in reading and writing.</p> <p>FT8: incorrect use of language in formal contexts, creating problems.</p> <p>FT9: Before watching any social media video or reel, we should also check the speaker's background. That helps a lot because who we are listening to is important than what we are listening to.</p>

*FT= Female teacher

Table 1 represents themes emerging from female teachers' perspectives regarding social media's role in improving ESL learners' reading and writing skills. These themes include optimizing reading,

writing skills and adverse effects on the language due to social media. In this linking, the details are thus given below.

Optimization of Reading Writing Skill

The study participants report that social media positively affects reading and writing skills. They share that social media helps learners learn new things and improve pronunciation. Social media AI applications and reading newspapers enhance their reading-writing skills (see Table 1; FT1, FT2, FT3, FT4, FT5, and FT8).

Adverse Effects on Language

Social media positively impacts teachers' and students' reading and writing skills and negatively affects communication. Teachers state that students mostly use inappropriate language, words, and useless and ambiguous abbreviations. They mix different languages in single context while writing; for example, they use Roman English in Roman style unfamiliar abbreviations rather than writing full words (see Table 1; FT1, FT2, and FT3). Additionally, study participants state that students learn inappropriate use of words and unreliable knowledge in reading and writing through social media. They use the informal language instead of an academic writing style (see Table 1; FT5, FT7 & FT8). Another side effect of using social media is wasting time on less important and ineffective stuff. The study participants state that students do not use social media for learning. Rather, they use it for entertainment (see Table 1; FT4). Moreover, according to one participant, the content presented on social media is doubtful. The speakers' reliability should be measured before learning from them (see Table 1; FT9).

Figure 1 Female Teachers' Perspectives



The figure 1 illustrates word cloud generated using NVivo software, representing female teachers' perspectives regarding social media's role in improving reading and writing skills among ESL learners. The larger words, such as "reading," "writing," "social," "media," "language," and "improving," highlight the most frequently mentioned themes in analysis. These words indicate the central focus on how social media facilitates the development of reading comprehension and writing proficiency. Other words, like "pronunciation," "teacher," "appropriate," reflect specific concerns or observations,

such as the importance of correct language usage and the influence of social media content. This visualization provides an overview of the key areas discussed by female teachers, emphasizing their perspectives on opportunities and challenges of integrating social media into reading and writing skill development.

Table 2 Male Teachers' Perspectives

SN	Themes	Coding	Original Responses
1	Optimization of reading writing skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective for reading and writing skill• Learning new things• AI application impact	MT1: Traditional methods are extensive and laborious, and you must use books extensively, but now, social media platforms provide us with many opportunities. MT2: There are specific and soft platforms that only aim to educate people about vocabulary and new language skills. MT3: At the international level, multiple people use social media, widening their reading and writing horizons. MT4: I have started using AI, which is more helpful for clearing any confusion about the English language. MT5: I used artificial intelligence and news articles in English, which helped me improve my language proficiency.
2	Adverse effects on language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriate utilization of social media• Negative effects of social media on reading and writing skills.• Informal language• Wastage of time	MT1: Different languages are being misused, and learning tools are also being misused. Students also use informal language in their writing. MT2: Students use social media for entertainment most of the time. MT3: Informal language slang, colloquial language, and substandard expressions are becoming standard language, making it difficult to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate content. MT4: Non-serious content can negatively impact students' learning and waste their time. Unauthentic language is also utilized on social media. MT5: It kills book-reading habits and causes too much screen time

*MT= Male teacher

The table 2 represents themes emerging from male teachers' perspectives regarding social media's role in improving the ESL learners' reading and writing skills. These themes include optimization of reading and writing skills and adverse effects on the language. In this connection, the details are given below.

Optimization of Reading Writing Skill

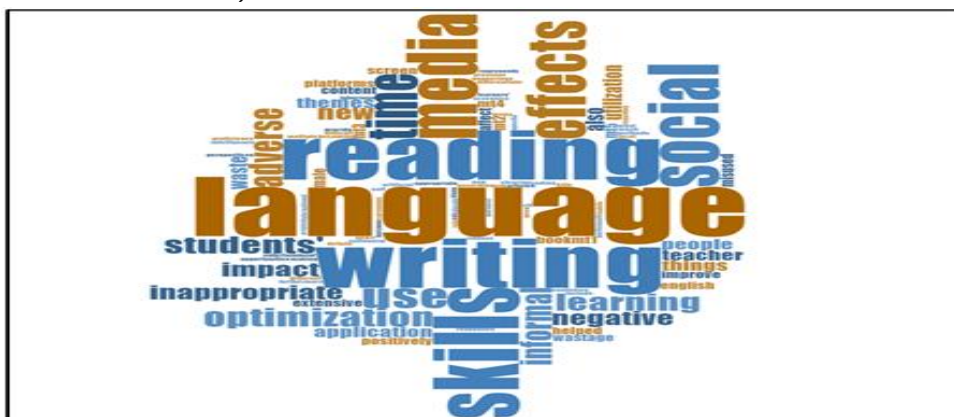
According to the study participants, social media positively affects reading and writing skills. People learn new things. Furthermore, AI applications positively impact ELL (Table 2; MT1, MT2, MT3, MT4, & MT5).

Adverse Effects on Language

The teachers think that inappropriate use of social media, informal language, and time-wasting negatively affect the students' reading and writing skills. Moreover, excessive screen time wastes

students' precious time (see Table 2; MT1, MT2, MT3, MT4& MT5). Figure 2 showcases a word cloud generated using NVivo software, representing male teachers' perspectives on the role of social media in improving reading and writing skills amid ESL learners. Prominent terms like "language," "reading," "writing," "skills," "social," and "media" highlight the central focus on how the social media platforms influence language development. Additional words like "optimisation," "inappropriate," "negative," and "impact" indicate concerns regarding improper usage and informal content, which could hinder academic growth. This visualization effectively summarises key insights, illustrating both the opportunities and challenges of using social media to enhance reading in addition to the writing proficiency.

Figure 2 Male Teachers' Perspectives



Comparison of Female & Male Teachers' Perspectives

The male teachers agree that social media can also enhance learning by using articles to read and subsequent writing of discussion in the social media. They also outweigh the possibility of learners deeming it appropriate to adopt paragoned language regimens given the social media acceptance of informal writing. Female teachers share male teachers' opinions regarding the positive impact of social media on reading and writing. However, they are more sceptical as they substantiate with current often appearing as anti-authentic or anti-deep content. They emphasise the necessity for the tutors to explain to students how to critically assess the reliability of the data received through the Internet, particularly on the issue of enhancing writing abilities. Both male and female teachers recognize the benefits of social media for improving reading and writing skills. Female teachers are more concerned with critically approaching content presented on social networks. In contrast, male teachers are anxious that informal language may negatively impact structural aspects of students' written assignments.

DISCUSSION

This part provides an avenue for presenting study's findings, considering existing theory in response to the raised research questions, and proposing suggestions on the implications of the findings for theory, practice, and future research. The result of study aimed to look into trends and contributions of social media for enhancing the English language proficiency for ESL learners, specifically at the

undergraduate level of students in Sialkot, identifying several themes extracted from participants of study, like vocabulary, reading and writing skills, motivation, practical use, linguistic difference, negative impacts, technology utilization, and some of issues relative to social media in the language learning process.

Interpretation of Findings & Comparison with Existing Literature

The interpretation of findings involves a detailed analysis of the results obtained from data collection and analysis processes. It begins by summarising key findings in the results chapter and discusses their significance in the context of research objectives. Each finding is critically examined, considering its alignment with existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and research hypotheses. The next section compares study's findings with previous research in field. It highlights similarities, differences, and contradictions between the current study and existing literature, providing insights into the consistency and generalizability of findings. Thus, any discrepancies between the current study and previous research are explored, offering opportunities for the further investigation and theoretical refinement.

Female Teachers' Perspectives

Optimization of Reading and Writing Skills

The audio-visual aids such as YouTube facilitate readers with AI software and other kinds of tools which teachers claimed enhance learners' reading comprehension & writing precision significantly. These claims are in corroboration with the findings of [Grosbeck \(2009\)](#) and [Irfan et al. \(2016\)](#), who pointed out interaction with digital content enhances students' language skills through multimedia engagement. [Hussain, et al., \(2023\)](#) have found out that YouTube is the most widely used source among university learners of district Sialkot. Learners who engage with social media writing on social media progressively improve their skills over time, which supports findings by [Harrison and Thomas \(2009\)](#) as cited in their work on the cumulative benefits of consistent exposure to language practice tools.

Adverse Effects on Language

Informal abbreviations and overdependence on unstructured content negatively influence the writing skills of learners. Through text and voice conversations on social sites like WhatsApp and Facebook, teachers noted their students gradually adjusting to language registers that would be very informal and inappropriate in professional contexts. Similar to [Siddig \(2020\)](#) and [Ariantini et al. \(2021\)](#), these informal modes of communication on social platforms wreak havoc on use of proper academic language.

Male Teachers' Perspectives

Optimization of Reading and Writing Skills

Male teachers observed that writing tasks using tools like blogs and collaborative platforms (e.g., Google Docs) significantly improve writing skills. This aligns with [Murray and Hourigan \(2008\)](#), who found that social media fosters continuous writing practice and feedback, leading to skill improvement. Thus, the critical reading exercises via platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn, which

encourage users to analyze posts and articles, were highlighted as beneficial. This supports findings by Grosseck (2009), who noted that social media develops critical thinking and reading skills through interactive content. The teachers emphasize that regular writing on social media, such as commenting or creating posts, enhances learners' confidence in expressing ideas. This aligns with Palombo (2015), who demonstrated that frequent informal writing leads to improved formal writing abilities over time.

Adverse Effects on Language

The increased use of informal tones on social media was flagged as a major drawback. Male teachers observed that students frequently adopt casual language norms in their formal writing. Siddig (2020) and Kaplan (2010) similarly noted that the informality of social media communication blurs the boundaries between academic and conversational language. Over-reliance on slang and abbreviations further undermines writing quality, identified by Ariantini et al. (2021). This creates a divide between students' social media writing habits and expectations of academic or professional writing standards.

CONCLUSION

In today's digital age, online social networking and ICT play a crucial role in students' lives. University students aged 18–20 often use Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp to stay informed and connected. Guided by uses and gratifications theory, views media as fulfilling social and relational needs, this study explores how social media influences English fluency among Sialkot university students learning English as the foreign language. It examines the gender differences and academic backgrounds (social vs. pure sciences) in media use for language acquisition. Research highlights how social networks, like the English language, function as global connectors in modern education. The current research examined the utility of social media for enhancing reading and writing skills among undergraduate English language learners in Sialkot. Via qualitative analysis of teachers' views, it emerged that social media is effective medium for exposing students to English language beyond traditional classroom. The results showed that YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook & Instagram positively contribute to reading comprehension as well as writing fluency through the provision of real-life contexts in which language can be used and through the provision of informal but friendly learning contexts.

Instructors reported that students are reading more English in informal contexts via social media captions, news headlines, subtitles of videos, which helps to boost their vocabulary identification, sentence structure knowledge, and overall understanding. In a like manner, informal writing in the form of comments, posts, and group discussions enables students to develop how to articulate their thoughts with greater frequency and confidence. The ubiquitous digital interaction promotes self-directed learning and encourages learners to engage with English content independently. Yet, the study found some limitations. Informal habit in language use, including overuse of abbreviations, grammatical mistakes, and narrow emphasis on accuracy, were identified as issues. In this linking, teachers underscored how, without coherent instructional guidance, students can develop wrong language habits from unmediated content. Thus, as useful as social media is for practice, its utility hinges on the strategic manner it is incorporated into pedagogical routines. Overall, social media

has become a strong adjunct tool in language acquisition. With proper use under the guidance of competent teachers and in harmony with course objectives, it can well upgrade reading and writing skills by delivering the authentic exposure, improving learner motivation, and stimulating self-expression in English.

Yet deliberate attempts must be made to help students upgrade their informal language use to more scholarly and formalized formats. Based on outcomes of this research, some recommendations are made. First, English language instructors need to integrate social media-based tasks in their teaching, including summarizing online posts, posting reflections on videos, or leaving comments on instructional content written in English. Second, orientation or workshop sessions should be offered for students on effective usage of social media to learn academic language, where they can learn to differentiate between formal and informal language usage. Third, the institutions need to create guidelines or selections of trusted educational social media pages, YouTube channels, and blogs that support proper grammar usage and informative content that students engage in independent practice. The future research should consider longitudinal, mixed-method approaches to measure the long-term impact of social media on academic writing and reading performance, especially in relation to students' exam scores, writing tasks, and reading assessments. With prudent application and teacher guidance, social media can be turned from a simple means of communication into a lively hub for learning, especially the fundamental skills of reading and writing of undergraduate English learners.

Recommendations

1. English language teachers should integrate social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook groups, and WhatsApp forums into their lesson plans through structured activities such as reading comprehension tasks, summarization of videos, or peer writing discussions to reinforce academic skills.
2. Institutions should offer professional development programs to train teachers on how to use social media tools effectively for enhancing students' reading and writing. This training should include techniques to evaluate and guide students' digital interactions for language development.
3. Clear guidelines should be provided to students about the academic use of social media. Emphasis should be placed on avoiding excessive use of slang, abbreviations, or code-mixing that can hinder formal writing skills.
4. Students should be fortified to follow educational pages, blogs, and video channels that focus on English grammar, writing skills, & reading comprehension. Curated lists of such resources can be shared by the department or instructors.

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