The Impact of Social Media, Familial Issues, and Academic Performance on Students' Mental Health

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ABSTRACT

Various factors, including social media use, family problems, and academic achievement, significantly impact the mental health of university students. This study examines the intricate relationships among these factors and how they collectively affect third-year Faculty of Business and Communication students' mental health results. The comprehensive analysis of this study aims to provide insights that could guide focused efforts and support structures to enhance the well-being of students. Through a detailed analysis of the linkages among social media use, family dynamics, and academic success, the research aims to identify the complex dynamics that impact mental health outcomes. This study also aims to reduce stigma associated with mental health issues, increase awareness of these issues, and motivate students to get treatment. Researchers utilized IBM SPSS to analyze the data, explaining and summarizing the findings in this study. Pearson correlation tests were used to determine links between variables. Reliability testing and frequency analysis were conducted, revealing a significant link between mental health and social media use among third-year students. According to the study, academic performance and social media have a favorable influence on these students' mental health. However, the second finding found no significant relationship between family issues and students' mental health. The third finding found a strong favorable relationship between social media use and mental health difficulties among students. Cyberbullying, fear of missing out, addiction, and exposure to disturbing content were cited as negative effects of social media. Understanding these elements can aid in developing measures to reduce the negative impacts of social media on mental health.

Keywords: Social media, familial issues, academic performance, mental health.

1. INTRODUCTION

The occurrence of mental health issues among students is concerning, particularly when they seem well in public. Challenges in students' mental health can affect many areas. Numerous elderly individuals, such as parents, might not be aware of their children's mental health challenges. Mental health issues, as opposed to cancer or heart disease, cannot be diagnosed using medical tests. Patients endure distressing emotions and thoughts that harm their lives, with nothing concealed that only experts could understand. The National Center for Biotechnology Information indicates that anxiety and depression are the most frequently assessed mental health outcomes. Anxiety is a common issue related to mental health in today's society. Cheung et al. (2020) discovered that merely 50% of adolescents with a depression diagnosis get identified before reaching adulthood. Moreover, as many as two out of three young individuals with depression remain undiagnosed by their primary care providers, resulting in restricted access to treatment and interventions.

Considering this factor, researchers have decided to carry out a study on the mental health of university students. This research has explored various key elements that can affect mental health response, including elements of family issues and the impact of social media usage among students. The research, carried out on third-year students specializing in International Business at Universiti Malaysia Perlis, also seeks to establish if there is a notable connection between students' mental health and their academic success at the university. An expanding corpus of studies emphasizes the complex connections between students' mental health and social media use. Nonetheless, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the precise interactions between these elements in the particular scholarly and social setting of the department at the university. To close this gap, however, this research will examine the intricate relationships and their combined effects on third-year students' mental health outcomes. The ultimate aim is to offer insights that can guide focused interventions and support systems that enhance student wellbeing. Prior research has frequently looked at mental health, familial problems, and academic achievement separately. However, in order to fully comprehend the combined effects of these elements, it is imperative that these factors be looked at collectively. Furthermore, current research might not sufficiently address the unique context and difficulties experienced by students in the business and communication areas, nor might it offer focused insights that could guide the development of efficient support solutions.

This study is significant as it uncovers the intricate links and associations related to students' mental well-being. The research priorities also focus on diminishing the stigma linked to mental health issues, motivating individuals to seek assistance, and enhancing awareness about this topic. Researchers will obtain a better understanding of how academic achievement influences students' mental health, assisting in the development of targeted support systems. University students, particularly those in their third year, frequently encounter heightened academic pressure because of the imminent graduation and the difficulties posed by advanced classes. Understanding the connection between students' mental health and their academic performance can assist in developing focused support systems. Furthermore, this study can offer a thorough comprehension of the traits, risk factors, and prevalence of mental health problems among students. This insight can aid in recognizing students who might require extra assistance and in creating focused interventions. Examining the effects of social media on mental health will reveal its impact on different areas including anxiety, social isolation, self-worth, and overall psychological wellness.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of this study, the researcher used Social Cognition Theory as a theoretical framework to support the findings. Social Cognitive Theory provides a framework for analyzing how psycho-social components influence personal cognitive, environmental, and behavioral aspects through symbolic communication. This theory helps in understanding the cause-and-effect relationship between personal factors, the environment, and behavior. The theory also links environmental factors, such as peers and educational institutions, to academic performance. Moreover, behavioral factors, like social media influences, are also analyzed in the context of social cognitive theory. Social media can shape self-perception and behaviors through modeling and social learning processes, impacting mental health. Overall, social cognitive theory emphasizes the importance of positive environments, role models, and social acceptability in promoting learning and success while also addressing mental health concerns.

In pursuing this overarching goal, the study aims to accomplish the following specific objective:

1. To investigate and analyze the relationship between academic performance and mental health among university students.
2. Investigating the impact of family issues on students' mental health at university.
3. Examine how social media affects mental health among university students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The World Health Organization (2001) characterizes mental health as realizing one's complete potential, handling stress successfully, performing work efficiently, and engaging in one's community. Moradi Sheykhjan (2017) views it as including joy, self-acceptance, and contribution to the community. Alemi et al. (2023) describe mental health as a condition of wellness where individuals recognize themselves, manage stress effectively, and engage positively in society. Research by Arifin et al. (2023) highlights that the mental health of Malaysian university students requires greater attention, particularly since they will serve as a vital resource for the country going forward. In this context, researchers have highlighted multiple factors, such as the potential for students to feel stress from different origins, including difficulties in adapting to a new setting, separation from family, relationship difficulties, financial concerns, health problems, and additional challenges.

Furthermore, anxiety disorders are a prevalent mental health problem globally, including in Malaysia, and are increasingly worrying to professionals and officials. Although certain stressors may inspire students, too much anxiety can be detrimental. Mohamed et al. (2021) conducted a study on the occurrence of anxiety and related factors among university students in Malaysia, involving 1,851 students across several Malaysian universities. In this research, participants completed a survey regarding their background, education, and psychosocial elements informed by the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) tool, which assesses anxiety risk. The research results revealed a 29% prevalence of anxiety among students, with key factors being academic year, financial aid, alcohol consumption, sleep quality, BMI, friendships, uncertainty about the future, and social engagement. These results reflect the existing anxiety levels among Malaysian university students and could assist in formulating targeted strategies to address this concern.

Granrud (2019) discovered that adolescents experience mental health issues according to his study. This research explored the mental health issues faced by adolescents, their interactions with public health nurses (PHNs), and the traits linked to these difficulties. The researchers utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods. A total of 8052 adolescents aged 13 to 16 took part in the quantitative survey. Along with twelve boys, interviews were held for the qualitative aspect with two certified teachers, eight educators, social workers, child welfare specialists, psychologists, and public health nurses. The research found that girls indicated more depressive symptoms compared to boys, alongside increased instances of family conflict, economic stability, lifestyle decisions, satisfaction with education, and usage.

Soo et al. (2024) conveyed in their publication named 'Perceptions and Beliefs Against Mental Health and Mental Illness: A Qualitative Study Among University Students in Malaysia', that mental health components are strongly connected to emotional and belief factors. This research conducted by Soo et al. (2024) sought to explore college students' perspectives on mental health and mental illness. In this research, interviews were conducted with sixteen respondents from Malaysian institutions. Every interview was meticulously transcribed, audio-recorded, and subsequently analyzed thematically. The findings of the research indicated that while a minor fraction of participants linked "mental health" to "mental illness," the majority of respondents connected mental health with personal beliefs, feelings, and behaviors. Most individuals identified socio-environmental factors as the primary cause of mental illness. The majority of interviewees determined that socio-environmental factors were the primary cause of mental illness.

Furthermore, research conducted by Hasan (2023) examining the effects of social media on students' mental health and well-being revealed that although social media has transformed communication, there are worries regarding its psychological effects. The study offers an extensive overview of the subject by critically evaluating the literature, gathering expert insights,

analyzing empirical data, and conducting longitudinal studies. Researchers utilized an altered Likert scale to gather information on four topics and discovered that social media platforms greatly influence our everyday lives. In the meantime, Longest and Kang (2022) investigated the impact of social media on the mental health of young adults in the United States. Qualitative surveys were employed to gather information about the damage inflicted by social media, revealing connections to adverse effects like anxiety, hopelessness, and loneliness.

In a study conducted by Qureshi, Bhatti, and Khoso (2023), a notable link was discovered between grade point average and social media addiction among 600 full-time undergraduate students at a Sindh college, indicating that male students experienced higher levels of social media addiction compared to female students, impacting their psychological well-being and academic success. Research conducted by Marquez and Karling (2022), which examined the influence of social media use on the mental health of individuals from various age groups, discovered that social media adversely affects users' mental well-being. Participants in the research, hailing from the Millennial Generation (born 1981–1995) and Generation Z (born 1996–2012), revealed that social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter significantly affected the mental health of individuals identifying with Generation Z in a negative way.

2.1 Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory offers a framework for analyzing and identifying psycho-social factors that influence an individual's cognitive, environmental, and behavioral aspects through symbolic communication. Social cognitive theory looks for the relative causes and effects of an individual's behavior, environment, and personal experiences in order to identify thoughts, feelings, and attitudes (Bandura, 1999). Instantaneous and sociable communication contexts work well together. The elements of Social Cognitive Theory are illustrated visually in the image below.
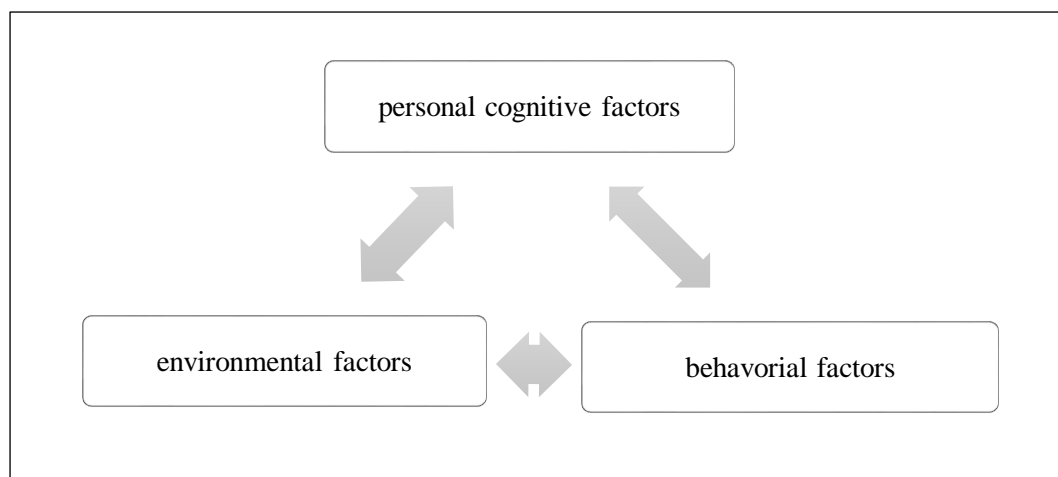
Figure 1. Social Cognitive Theory

Source: Bandura, A. (2013).

The individual cognitive component that underlies family problems is one of them. Students learn cognitive underpinnings in the family, including attitudes, self-assurance, and social skills like interacting with family members. According to social cognitive theory, social learning happens via modeling and observation. Thus, in the context of family matters, an individual's perspective of life and relationships will be influenced by the way family members interact and resolve disagreements. A person's social skills and self-confidence, for instance, might be strengthened if they have a supportive and encouraging family (Masfufah & Masnawati, 2023). Conflict and lack

of communication within a family can led to negative impacts such as low self-esteem and relationship issues. Furthermore, studies have connected environmental elements to students' academic success.

The learning environment, educational institutions, and peers can all affect a student's academic performance. Self-improvement and goal-setting are crucial, according to social cognitive theory. Social acceptability and role models also play a critical influence in learning and achievement (Wentzel et al. 2021). For instance, students do better academically when they attend an educational institution with sufficient resources and support and are surrounded by classmates who share their enthusiasm in learning. If not, however, it will negatively impact the student's mental state. By integrating these factors, the study enhances understanding of their collective influence on student well-being. This approach provides insights into complex interactions, informing future research and model development to promote mental health and academic success in university settings through effective interventions and policies.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This study aims to explore how academic performance, family issues, and social media impact the mental health of third-year international business students at the Faculty of Business and Communication. It will examine the literature on these factors' effects on students' well-being and mental health. A conceptual framework to investigate the connections within the domain of mental health has been created using the knowledge gained from the review of the literature. Figure 2 provides an illustration of the suggested conceptual framework. Three important aspects are included in the list of independent variables (IV) in this framework which is social media, family issues, and academic performance. The third-year students' mental health in the Faculty of Business and Communication is the dependent variable (DV) that is being examined. The theoretical connections between the identified independent factors and mental health in the given environment are tested empirically using this framework as a basis.

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework
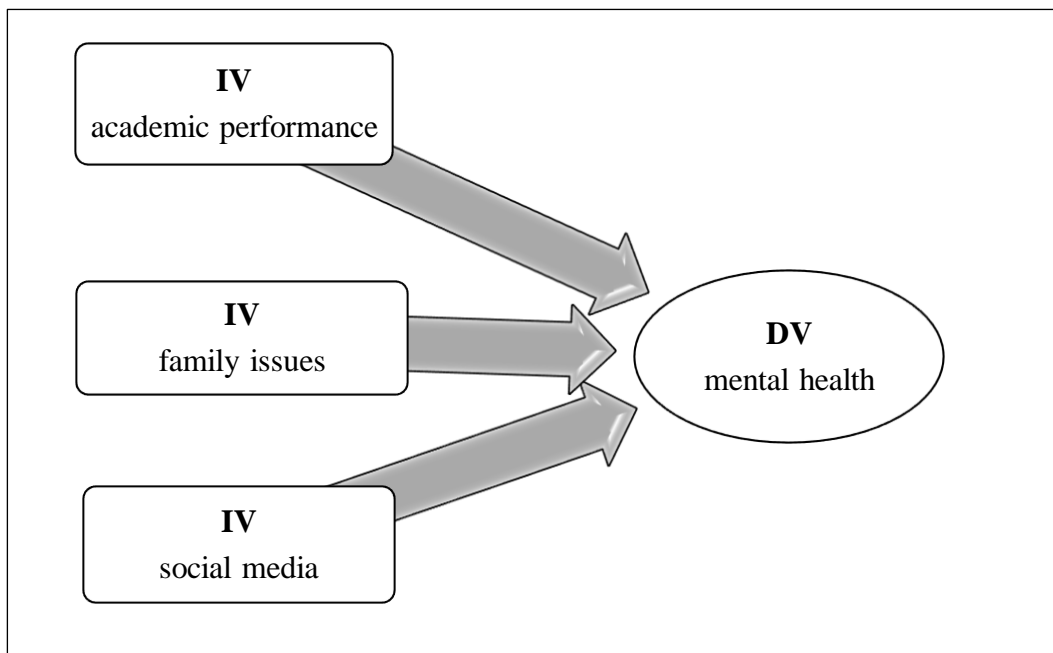
2.3 Hypothesis Development

This study explores the complex relationships that exist between third-year students' use of social media, academic performance, family issues and mental health. Recognizing the significant influence of mental health on individuals' behavior and choices, the research investigates how mental health influences students' academic achievement, family dynamics, and social media usage. This study aims to illuminate the intricate network of pressures faced by third-year university students through the exploration of these related factors.

The following research hypotheses are developed by researchers based on the body of existing literature:

1. H1: There is a significant interaction between academic performance and mental health among Year 3 students
2. H2: There is a significant between family issues and mental health students
3. H3: There is a significant interaction between social media and mental health among students

3.   METHODOLOGY

3.1 Procedure

This research encompasses several important components in the study process. Initially, it's important to carry out research with instruments such as surveys to clarify concerns. This phase helps in developing an accurate research question. For instance, the researcher has seen from earlier case studies regarding mental health issues that Malaysian students as well as students worldwide face. This piques the researcher's interest in learning more about this subject. Second, a thorough research proposal is created, detailing the goals, approach, and parameters of the investigation. Third, deciding how to get data to evaluate hypotheses is an important part of designing research. Defining the study population helps generalize results. Data is collected using questionnaires. The study's design strategy, which included data collecting and sampling, was meticulously developed to assure its robustness and representativeness. Pilot testing of questions and instruments was conducted before full-scale data collecting to ensure effectiveness and refinement. After receiving input from pilot tests, the instrument was revised to improve reliability and validity. After laying the groundwork, data collecting began with meticulous planning and organization. The acquired data was carefully analyzed and interpreted using statistical approaches to identify patterns and associations. The study's findings shed light on the complex relationship between academic success, family concerns, social media use, and mental health in kids. Research aims to enhance student well-being and academic achievement by analyzing complex linkages and developing targeted treatments.

3.2 Research Design

The impact of social media on students' mental health is the subject of a study, and a quantitative analysis has been selected to examine both dependent and independent variables. In order to gather information on mental health concerns among third-year students, questionnaires will be distributed. The study aims to investigate the relationship between mental health and social media. The independent variables comprise the attributes related to the relative influence of social media on the mental well-being of students. Google Forms was used to get direct data from students. This study uses a deductive approach to explore the complex relationship between social media usage and mental health outcomes among third-year students. This strategy begins

research using existing theories and information about the impact of social media on mental health.

A thorough assessment of the literature on social media and mental health in the context of third-year students served as the foundation for the deductive process. This review, which identifies conceptual frameworks and empirical data that will support the ensuing hypotheses, will act as the theoretical cornerstone. Specific hypotheses were developed, describing the expected correlations between third-year students' mental health and social media usage, based on the literature review. For example, there may be a theory that links increased social media use to lower mental health and higher levels of stress.

3.3 Data Collection & Data Analysis

This study investigates the mental health of students in the Faculty of Business and Communication using a deductive methodology to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between variables. The study focuses on third-year students, with data collected through Google Forms questionnaires using simple random sampling. The results aim to enhance understanding of mental health effects among this specific student population. Planning, diligence, and attention to detail are essential in gathering data, despite the challenges it may present. The study's population included 709 students from the Faculty of Business and Communication studying International Business, Entrepreneurship Engineering, and New Media Communication. The sample size for this study comprised 248 third-year students who majored solely in International Business. A probability sampling technique was used to ensure representation from all courses. The study's sample size, according to the population size, ranges from 248 to 254 students, utilizing the approach by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The researchers will select the population to be studied, ensuring they maintain an extensive list of participants. The researcher additionally utilized a five-point Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The researcher may find it simpler and more transparent to obtain data from the sample size by using a likert scale. To ensure validity, data was gathered from the sample to confirm that the number of students who completed the questionnaire matched the aim. Researchers used IBM SPSS to analyze data, explaining and summarizing findings. This study utilized pearson correlation tests to determine links between independent variables and those strongly correlated with the dependent variable, along with reliability testing and frequency analysis.

4.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Sample of Characteristic

The study included 248 third-year students who majored solely in International Business from the Faculty of Business and Communication. Out of them, 31.9% were male and 68.1% were female, indicating more female participants. The majority of students were aged 23-25 years old (68.1%), followed by 18-22 years old (29.8%) and 26-30 years old (2%). In terms of race, 50.4% were Malay, 40.3% were Chinese, 7.3% were Indian, and 2% were from other races. Additionally, 96.4% of students were not married, with only 3.6% being married. Most students (49.2%) had an STPM background, followed by Diploma (33.9%) and Matriculation certificate (16.9%) backgrounds, indicating a diverse educational profile among participants.

Table 1 Sample of Characteristic

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	79	31.9
Female	169	68.1
Age		
18–22-year-old	74	29.8
23–25-year-old	169	68.1
26–39-year-old	5	2.0
Race		
Malay	125	50.4
Chinese	100	40.3
Indian	18	7.3
Others	5	2
Marital status		
Married	9	3.6
Not married	239	96.4
Education background		
STPM	122	49.2
Diploma	84	33.9
Matriculation	42	16.9

4.2 Correlations Between Variables

Table 2 displays a Pearson correlation of (r=.073, p > .001) between academic performance and mental health, indicating a weak association and there is no significant relationship between these two factors. The relationship between family issues and mental health is also no significant relationship with a Pearson correlation of (r=.083, p > .001). Social media and mental health relationship have a statistically significant linear relationship with a moderate correlation of (r=.604, p < .001).

Table 2 Correlations between variables

		Mental Health	Academic performance	Family issues	Social media
Mental health	Pearson Correlation	1	.073	.083	.604**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.251	.192	.001
	N	248	248	248	248

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

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis – Coefficients

Table 3 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis including three independent variables which is social media, academic performance, and family issues and one dependent variable which is mental health. The outcome displays academic performance have an impact on mental health that is significant (β=-0.176, t=-2.466, p=0.014), while family issues do not significantly predict mental health (β=-0.014, t=-0.197, p=0.844). According to β=0.676, t=12.488, p=0.001, social media was found to be a substantial favorable predictor of mental health in the meantime. In conclusion, this study supports only two (2) hypotheses.

Table 3 Multiple Regression Analysis – Coefficients

Model		Standardized Coefficients			t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Academic Performance	-.210	.085	-.176	-2.466	.014
	Family Issues	-.020	.100	-.014	-.197	.844
	Social media	.823	.066	.676	12.488	.001

Sig. (p<0.05).
a. Dependent Variable: Mental Health

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis – Model Summary

According to table 4, the R-square value is 0.394. This figure suggests that the independent variables of academic performance, family issues, and social media accounted for 39.4% of the factors influencing student mental health. At the same time, an additional 60.6% of elements influencing students' mental health are derived from other independent variables that have not been assessed in this research. This finding is probably derived from a statistical evaluation, like R-squared (coefficient of determination) from regression analysis, where the research's independent variables (e.g., social media, family issues, academic performance) account for just a part of the variability in the dependent variable (mental health).

Table 4 Multiple Regression Analysis – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.628a	.394	.387	.60676

a.   Predictors: (Constant),

The study found that academic performance and social media positively influence mental health among these students. The first objective supported a positive relationship between academic performance and mental health. However, the second objective showed no significant correlation between family issues and mental health. The absence of this correlation may be due to effective coping mechanisms and support networks within the university. The third objective revealed a significant positive correlation between social media use and mental health issues among the students. Cyberbullying, fear of missing out, addiction, and exposure to upsetting content were identified as negative impacts of social media. Understanding these variables can help develop strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of social media on mental health.

5.   CONCLUSION

This research investigates how academic performance, family issues, and social media influence the mental health of third-year students, providing an in-depth perspective on the interaction of these elements. The study adds to current frameworks by emphasizing the joint effect of these variables on student well-being. This conceptual clarity guides forthcoming research and model creation, assisting in the formulation of effective strategies and policies to enhance mental health and academic achievement. Practical implications involve customized strategies to tackle issues

concerning academic achievement, family dynamics, and social media usage. Proactive intervention methods can pinpoint at-risk students and deliver tailored assistance, blending academic and psychosocial approaches for comprehensive well-being. Partnering with different stakeholders, such as community groups and healthcare professionals, can enhance support systems for students and fortify family connections. In conclusion, this comprehensive method seeks to improve the overall well-being of third-year university students, cultivating a nurturing campus atmosphere that emphasizes mental health resilience and individual development.

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