



Influence of social media utilization and parent adolescent communication on academic- achievement of secondary school students in south Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the influence of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on academic achievement at Hodo Public Secondary School. The basic research questions formulated for the study were: 1. Is the intensity of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication predicting academic achievement among study participants? 2. What is the extent of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication among the study participants?; and 3. Is there a gender difference in terms of social media utilization? The cross-sectional design was applied to achieve its objectives. Both stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used. 253 participants were selected, including ten percent contingency, from a total of 487 students. Nine teachers were randomly selected for interviews; both the primary and secondary data were collected. The quantitative data was analyzed by descriptive (mean, standard deviation, percentage) and inferential statistics (linear regression, sample, and independent t-test) using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.0. Also, the process of analyzing qualitative data began with coding, classifying, and categorizing the obtained text data from interviewees through note-taking and tape recording into concepts or codes. The findings of this study revealed that the intensity of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication have a statistically significant influence on academic achievement ($=.001$, $F(2,216) = .101$, $p = .034$). The extent of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication was 95%CI: social media utilization ($M = 1.90$, $SD = 2.63$), $t(219) = 1.498$, $p = .046$, and parent-adolescent communication ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 3.50$), $t(219) = 1.736$, $p = .012$, which implied that there is a statistically significant difference in the extent of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication among study participants, and there was no statistically significant difference between the mean score of social media utilization among male ($M = 65.97$, $SD = 3.950$, $n = 152$) and female ($M = 65.97$, $SD = 3.950$, $t(67) = 1.576$, $p = .049$) at the .05 significant level. This implies that the finding shows that there is a significant influence of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on the academic achievement of secondary school students. This indicates that parents or guardians, teachers, counselors, or concerned school personnel and the government should take part in designing an awareness-creation program to utilize social media and boost academic achievements.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Several studies have demonstrated consistent poor academic performance among senior secondary

school students (Kolawale & Dele, 2012; Aina & Olanipekun, 2014). Aina and Olanipekun (2015) also emphasized the worrisome state of academic achievement in both secondary and post-secondary schools. This concern is shared by students, parents,

teachers, and educational authorities worldwide. To improve the quality of education, Ethiopia introduced the school improvement program, which aims to enhance student learning and academic achievement (MOE, 2016). Various factors, both internal and external to students, can influence their academic performance, including the use of social media and patterns of parent-adolescent communication. Social media has become ubiquitous in almost all aspects of human life, but it is especially influential during adolescence, a period characterized by unique communication dynamics between parents and adolescents (Smetana *et al.*, 2015). While parenting plays a crucial role in fostering autonomous functioning during adolescence, it can have negative effects on academic achievement and behavior if not properly managed (Suizzo, 2020).

According to Nalwa and Anand (2018), social media is defined as a form of electronic communication wherein users interact and freely share, exchange, and discuss information, ideas, personal messages, and other content about themselves and their lives using a multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos, and audio. This communication occurs through online platforms while connected to the Internet. Additionally, Ahn (2019) states that social media refers to the means of interactions among people in virtual communities and networks, where they create, share, and exchange information and ideas. Students actively engage in connections for new information, knowledge sharing, research groups, and other interests as part of an online academic society (Kuppuswamy & Narayan, 2018). The evolution of social media has led to both negative and positive effects on society (Dhaha & Igale, 2013). According to other studies, the negative impact is more prevalent when social networking sites are used in the classroom, as multitasking diminishes performance (Nicole, 2017).

Parents play a significant role in adolescents' lives and education. Their communication limits and parameters can influence adolescent behaviors (Rodríguez-Fernández *et al.*, 2019) and act as a protective factor in risk situations (deLooze *et al.*, 2012), promoting positive trends in adolescence overall (Grolnick *et al.*, 2015). Academic achievement among adolescents has been linked to positive

parental communication (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). Parents' involvement in their children's education, as well as the joint influence of parental warmth from both fathers and mothers, play a role in their children's achievements and school engagement (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). Some research has shown a positive association between parental communication and academic outcomes in adolescents (BrajšaŽganec *et al.*, 2019; Otani, 2020), while other research suggests no or even a negative relationship between a lack of parental communication and achievement (Bronstein *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, communication between parents and children has an impact on adolescent behavior through interactions where parents express beliefs and values while sharing emotional elements (Hollmann *et al.*, 2016). Communication between parents and children is associated with improved performance in adolescents (Trung & Ducreux, 2013).

Academic achievement refers to how students handle their studies and the completion of assigned tasks by their teachers (Kimberly, B., *et al.*, 2019). According to similar research conducted by Ward *et al.* (2016), academic achievement is defined as the outcome of education, measuring the extent to which students, teachers, or institutions have accomplished their educational goals. Therefore, academic achievement can be observed and measured through an individual's behavior in a particular situation. Semester average achievement (SAA) and test results are used to assess students' academic achievements, and this issue particularly affects underperforming students in both secondary and postsecondary schools (Kolawale *et al.*, 2012).

As a result, the researchers feel that further study is needed to better understand the influence of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on academic achievement among secondary school students. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to examine the impact of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on academic achievement among Hodo secondary school students in the Kembeta Temaro zone of southern Ethiopia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is no doubt that we are experiencing technological developments that are influencing our daily lives, and social media has become a significant presence in the minds of students, resulting in drastic changes. Nowadays, most youth and students have Facebook accounts. According to Kuppuswamy and Narayan (2018), students these days are so engrossed in social media that they spend almost 24 hours online. They encounter many negative impacts on their education, to the point where students tend to neglect their studies to keep up with media platforms such as chatting, texting, and gaming. Additionally, Nicole, (2017) states that students addicted to social media platforms spend most of their time chatting about unrelated issues, pay no attention during teaching hours, and fail to concentrate during learning hours. Students typically spend more time multitasking by visiting multiple sites and consuming a large amount of content (Nicole, 2017; Nalwa & Anand, 2018). Even in classrooms, it has been observed that some students are constantly engaged in messaging and using Facebook while the teaching is taking place. Other studies conducted by Obi *et al.* (2012) have shown that the use of these sites also affects students' use of English and grammar. Students become accustomed to using abbreviations and short forms of words in their chat rooms and then unintentionally incorporate them into their classroom writing. For example, they may use "4" instead of "for," "U" instead of "you," and "D" instead of "the," which could negatively impact their assessments in class.

A lack of communication and ineffective communication between parents and their children can be considered a major source of family problems that inevitably result in adjustment problems among adolescents in school. Maladjustment includes manifestations such as unfavorable attitudes toward learning, poor academic performance, low self-concept, lack of motivation, and misbehavior. Nowadays, most adolescents encounter various levels of negative experiences through social networking sites (SNS) that educational institutions fear may negatively influence students' self-esteem and academic performance due to social media disturbances and ineffective parent-adolescent com-

munication (Satir, 2013).

However, there were no studies done on the aforementioned issues concurrently in the same study. In addition, the researcher undertook this study because there haven't been any local studies in this field. Most of the researchers focused on examining the effects of parental adolescent communication on academic achievement and social media utilization on academic achievement among university students, except for a few studies carried out at secondary schools with small sample sizes. Furthermore, no studies have been conducted on the simultaneous effects of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on academic achievement. Thus, this study is designed to fill the previous research gaps and meet the needs of local research. The researcher believes that more studies are needed to increase awareness of how to use social media and parent-adolescent communication to improve academic achievement. Without such efforts, social media utilization and communication between parents and adolescents related to academic achievement will continue to be significant challenges for secondary school students in Ethiopia. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between social media utilization, parent-adolescent communication, and academic achievement among students at Hodo Public Secondary School.

Based on this objective, the researcher formulated the following research questions:

- Is the intensity of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication predictive of academic achievement among study participants?
- What is the extent of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication among the study participants?
- Is there a gender difference in terms of social media utilization?

1.3 Operational Definitions

- **Academic Achievement:** The selected students' 2020 academic year first-semester performance was based on the student's semester average performance (SAA) from 100%.

- **Parent-adolescent communication** is an interaction between adolescents and biological or non-biological parents who are demanding and responsive to them. In this study, it is operationally defined as a ratio-level measurement that refers to the respondents' total score on the parent-adolescent communication scale during the data collection period.
- **Social media utilization** is the usage of on-line technology platforms that help connect people from far and wide. In this study, it is operationally defined as a ratio-level measurement that refers to the respondents' total score on the Social Media Utilization Scale

during the data collection period.

2 Conceptual framework (relationship) between the variables

The researcher briefly discussed the contents of the framework for investigating the impact of social media usage and parent-adolescent communication on the academic achievement of secondary school students. In this study, the independent variables (IV) were social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication, which were believed to influence academic achievement (DV). Additionally, Figure 1 below illustrates the connection between the demographic variable (sex) and social media usage.

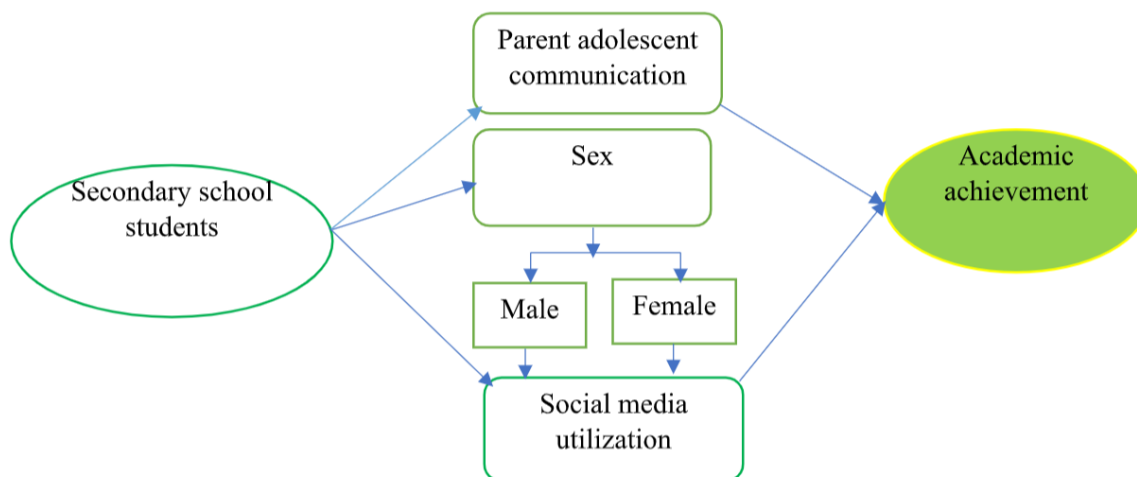


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on the influence of Social Media Utilization and parent-adolescent communication on Academic Achievement

3 Research Design and Method

3.1 The Study Area

The study area of this research was Hodo public secondary school in Kembata-Tembaro Zone. The Hodo public secondary school is located in SNNPRs. It is also found 329 km southwest of Addis Ababa, 187 km west of Hawassa town, 56km west of Durame town, and 31 km east of Omo River (Tembaro woreda transport office). The researcher purposefully selected Hodo public secondary school from other public and private secondary schools in Kembata Tembaro Zone. The reason for selecting Hodo Secondary School was that the majority of students are found to be extreme users of social media. In this area, students are ex-

tremely using social media by using mobile phones through free Wi-Fi at school as well as Internet cafeteria shops based on the worries of teachers, school principals, and the school community, which initiated the researcher to study this area.

3.2 Study Design and Period

From April 1 to April 30, 2020, in this study, the researcher applied a cross-sectional research design to collect data at a single point in time to analyze and interpret in connection to qualitative data collected from selected teachers. It allows the researcher to apply surveys, questionnaires, and interviews to gather data from participants as well as explore characteristics, behaviors, or attitudes within a specific time frame.

3.3 Study Participants

There were 3 principals (2 males and 1 female), 37 teachers (26 males and 11 females), and 487

students (309 males and 178 females) who were available during the data collection period.

Table 1: Population frame

Grade	Sections											
	A			B			C			D		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Ninth	44	28	72	48	24	72	40	32	72	36	36	72
Tenth	37	13	50	31	18	49	34	16	50	39	11	50

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

To select participants for this study, a mixed probability sampling technique involving stratified and simple random sampling was used. In stratified sampling, the researcher divided the students into strata based on grade level, gender, and sections. Using simple random sampling, sample students were then selected from each grade level and section in proportion to their representation in the population. The number of sample students from each grade level and section was determined by multiplying 0.52. The table below displays the

proportion of the sample size from each grade and section. Individual students were then selected using simple random sampling, similar to a lottery method. In this case, every student in the population had an equal chance of being selected. In the subsequent process, pieces of paper with "Yes" and "No" written on them were placed in a box, corresponding to the total number of students in each section. Students were then asked to randomly select one piece of paper. The final sample consisted of 253 students from both grade levels. Only those who chose "Yes" were included in the study.

Table 2: Sample Frame

Grade	Sections												Grand Total
	A			B			C			D			
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
9 th	23	14	38	25	12	37	21	17	38	19	19	38	150
10 th	19	7	26	16	9	25	18	8	26	20	6	26	103

To get information researcher expected to get sub-groups or subsets of the population which is called a sample. In line with this concept out of 487 populations, 253 samples were selected including 15 percent contingency by Yemane (1967).

3.5 Sample size determination formula

$$n = \frac{NZ^2P(1-P)}{E^2(N-1)+Z^2P(1-P)}$$

Key: n = sample population

N = total population

Z = z - score

P = proportionality

E = alpha significance level

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

In the study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. Primary source information was used in the study to find out the more relevant and original characters of the research participants (Kothari 2007). The primary source of data was distributed to 253 actual samples of the study through a questionnaire (Likert scale). But clear data collected from 219 participants, an in-depth interview with nine participants of the interview, and also the secondary sources of data addressed by document analysis reviewing the semester achievement report (SAA) of the students that were brought from the record office of the school to explore the influences of social media utilization and parent-adolescent

communication on secondary school student's academic achievement.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

To gather reliable and well-organized information, the following procedures were used: the Likert scale survey questionnaire and an in-depth interview.

Questionnaire

Social media usage was measured by a five-point scale questionnaire adopted and modified by the researcher (Helou & Ab-Rahim, 2014; Mingle & Adams, 2015). Initially, the instruments were adapted, modified, and checked by an expert in the English language and then translated into Amharic. They modified and translated the questionnaire to make it clear to the respondents. The total number of indicators and items is 15. Examples from the items: I use social media to keep in touch with my relatives.

Parent-adolescent communication was measured by a five-point scale questionnaire adopted by the researchers from Mehmood and Taswir (2013) and Wanajak (2011). Initially, the instruments were adapted, modified, and checked by an expert in the English language and then translated into Amharic. They modified and translated the questionnaire to make it clear to the respondents. The total number of indicators and items is 10. Examples from the items: I am sometimes afraid to ask my parents for what I want.

In-depth Interview

In-depth interviewing is a data collection technique designed to bring out a colorful picture of the participant's point of view on the research topic. In the present study, the researcher selected 9 teachers (7 male and 2 female) randomly for the interview. The interview session was held for thirty (30) minutes with each interview participant from the sample.

Document Observation

In this study, the researcher collected the semester academic achievement reports of students from the school record office based on their roll numbers that

were collected when they filled out the questionnaire. The participants who did not write their roll number when they filled out the questionnaire were not taken from the record office, and automatically, they were excluded from being part of the analysis of the study.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher organized the close-ended questions and had them adopted and adapted, then translated them into the Amharic language by subject experts to ensure clarity for the participants. The researcher then obtained an ethical letter from the Psychology Department at Dilla University, allowing them access to the necessary data and documents for the study. Next, the researcher coordinated with school principals to determine when teachers would have class and how to provide participants with free time to complete the questionnaire. Before distributing the questionnaire, participants were provided with a clear objective of the study and received sufficient guidance on how to respond. The participants filled out the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher and their assistants. Ample time was provided for participants to comprehend and complete the questionnaire.

3.9 Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. The collected quantitative data were edited, coded, summarized, and analyzed using SPSS software. Different statistical analyses were applied after the data was coded and entered into the computer via SPSS version 20. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including linear regression, one sample $t - test$, and an independent $t - test$.

The process of analyzing qualitative data began with coding, classifying, and categorizing the obtained text data from interviewees through note-taking and tape recording into concepts or codes. The qualitative information from the interview was transcribed by the investigator in the local language, Amharic. The transcription was done word-for-word from the audio recordings. Various speech figures or body language expressed by interviewees were taken into consideration during the translation process.

4 Results

4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

According to data gathered from 219 participants as shown in Table 1, indicates, the majority (67.1%) of students in the study area are found in late adolescents (16 to 18 years) old. This indicates the majority of students in the study area are found in late adolescence.

Regarding sex, the majority of participants were males which constituted 69.4%, and the remaining 30.6% females. The implication of the above finding the majority of participants were male in the study area.

Table 3: Demographic variables on the effect of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on academic achievement of high school students, south Ethiopia (219)

Age	N	%	Sex	N	%	Grade Level	N	%
16-18 (Late adolescence)	147	67.10	Male	67	30.60	Ninth	115	52.50
19-22 (Early adulthood)	51	23.30	Female	152	69.40	Tenth	104	47.50
Above 22 (Middle adulthood)	15	6.80	Total	219	100.00	Total	219	100.00
Below 15 (Early adolescence)	6	2.70						
Total	219	100.00						

n=frequency, %=percentage

4.2 Influence of Social Media Utilization and Parent-Adolescent Communication on Academic Achievement

In Table 5, social media utilization has a statistically significant impact to academic achievements, $F(2,216) = .101, p = .034$.

Table 4: R Square

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F-Change	
1	.031 ^a	.001	-.008	14.227	.001	.101	2	216	.304	2.089

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parent-adolescent communication, social media utilization

b. Dependent Variable: Academic achievement

The above Model Summary Table indicates the power of the regression line to account for total variation in the criterion variable. In that, as can be seen from the above Table the value of R for two predictor variables (*i.e.*, parent-adolescent communication and social media utilization) is; that .101 is, 1.01% of variance in the academic achievement was explained by the combined effect of parent-adolescent communication and social media utilization.

In the Durbin-Watson test, one of the assumptions of regression is that each of the observations is independent. If observations are made over time, successive observations are likely related. If there

is no autocorrelation (*i.e.* where subsequent observations are related), the Durbin-Watson statistics should be between 1.5 and 2.5. Having this assumption in the current study, the Durbin-Watson was 2.089, which was between 1.5 and 2.5, and the data was not auto-correlated.

4.3 Overall Interpretation/Reporting of the Results of Regression Analysis on Academic Achievement

In Summary, step-wise multiple regression analysis was conducted to test if social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication have a statistically significant influence on participants' academic achievement. The result of the regression indicated

that social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication were explained ($=.001, F(2,216) = .101, p = .304$). At the same time, when explaining how students rate social media in terms of their academic lives.

4.4 Overall Interpretation/Reporting of the Results of Regression Analysis on Academic Achievement

Based on table 4, ANOVA analysis was conducted to test if social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication have a statistically significant influence on participants’ academic achievement. The result of the regression indicated that social media utilization explained ($=.001, F(2,216) = .101, p = .034$).

In support of this, one participant of the interview, male and aged 41 from teachers affirmed that, *"Excessive use of social media can lead individuals to lose focus on what is important to them. Concerns have been raised by many school teachers and the general public due to the lack of regulations or guidelines provided by school officials regarding inappropriate use of technology. As high school students, their primary focus should be on their education, and it is not beneficial for their academic*

life if they prioritize social media or use it in an unbalanced manner. However, I cannot definitively state that it is detrimental to their academic life when used poorly. It may negatively impact their academic life if they utilize social media in a way that is not aligned with their educational goals, such as spending excessive time on non-academic activities like chatting, sharing, and liking posts, rather than seeking out crucial information for their studies."

However, other participants of the interview, one participant of interview, sex male and aged 34 from teachers stated that, *It is impossible to determine the impact of using social media on academic life, as there are both benefits and drawbacks. On one hand, it provides access to valuable information for academics, social activities, and entertainment. On the other hand, it can be seen negatively as it often distracts students from studying. Therefore, the impact of social media on academic performance depends on the user’s experience and intentions. It is important to acknowledge that social media can both present opportunities and challenges. While it offers access to academic information, unintentionally spending excessive time on it can hurt an adolescent’s academic life.*

Table 5: One-Sample *t – test* Summary on Social Media Utilization and Parent-Adolescent Communication

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	N	r	t	df
Social media utilization	1.90	2.63	219	.046	1.498	-.054
Parent-adolescent communication	2.57	3.50	219	.012	1.736	.393

P <.05*

According to table 4, one sample *t – test* demonstrated significant difference between the social media utilization and parent adolescent communication among the students. The extent social media utilization and parent adolescent communication among was, 95% CI, social media utilization ($M = 1.90, Sd = 2.63$), $t(219) = 1.498$, and parent adolescent communication ($M = 2.57, Sd = 3.50$), $t(219) p = .012$,) which implied that there is a statistically significant difference in extent social media utilization and parent adolescent communication among study participants.

In addition to this, one participant of interview,

sex female and aged 30 from teachers said that, *The use of social media by students at our school, whether for academic purposes or personal enjoyment, is not overemphasized. Students access social media both through the school’s Wi-Fi and their mobile data. Additionally, the interviewees noted that parents stay updated on their children’s academic progress and maintain communication with the school. We organize familiar parent days at the beginning and end of the school year, and when necessary, we contact parents to address any current issues that assist us in managing and supporting students at their respective academic levels.*

In contradict to this, one participant of interview, sex male and aged 52 from teachers said that, *Despite the claims of other informants, the entire school community is not effectively utilizing social media for academic information or entertainment due to the absence of a centralized network and inadequate school Wi-Fi. It can be argued that our community lacks social media usage because there are no funds, preventing students from accessing cell data or online connectivity. Furthermore,*

parent-school communication is deficient. Only a small number of parents attend parent-teacher conferences, and some parents make impersonal phone calls to address their children’s issues. Additionally, certain parents choose not to attend these conferences and evade their responsibilities. Consequently, this highlights the poor interactions or orientations between parents and adolescents at home.

4.5 Gender Differences in terms of Social Media Utilization

Table 6: Independent sample *t* – *test* on social media utilization interns of gender

Social media Utilization	Male			Female			95% CI for MD	<i>r</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	
	Mean	Sd.	<i>N</i>	Mean	Sd.	<i>N</i>					
	65.73	3,292	152	65.97	3.950	67	.267	.483	.049	1.576	212

*P** <.05

Thus, the above finding reveals that there was no statistically significant difference between academic achievement among males and females (*M* = 65.73, *SD* =3.292, *N* = 152; *M* = 65.97, *SD* = 3.950, *N* = 67) at a.05 significant level. This indicates that there were no statistically significant differences between the mean score of academic achievement among male and female participants.

In addition to this, one participant in the interview, a male aged 35 said that, *I don’t understand the gender difference in terms of social media usage. It might be determined by an individual’s purpose and goals for using social media and their perceptions of its outcomes, but biological sex cannot make a difference in terms of social media usage. Whenever there is an opportunity, there is also a challenge. Having access to information for academic purposes is a major advantage of social media, but unintentionally spending too much time on it is a negative aspect of social media usage and can be seen as an influence on academic life for adolescents.*

In contrast to this, one participant in the interview, sex a male aged 52 from teachers said that, *In my opinion, males tend to use social media more than females because females may often be occupied with helping their mothers in the kitchen and other household tasks. Additionally, males are likely*

to spend more time outside of their homes, which grants them the freedom to socialize with their peers on social media sites. These factors contribute to gender differences in social media utilization.

5 Discussion

5.1 The Extent of Social Media Utilization and Parent-Adolescent Communication

The present study suggests that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of social media usage and parent-adolescent communication among the participants. There was minimal variation between the expected and actual values regarding media usage and parent-adolescent communication. Recently, parents have shown a limited understanding of the influence of technology on teenage relationships. However, parents need to comprehend this impact, as it is necessary for fostering a close and loving relationship with their children and for guiding their decision-making and media consumption (Currie, 2014; Toombs, 2014).

5.2 Influence of Social Media Utilization and Parent Adolescents’ Communication on Academic Achievements

Academic achievement is statistically influenced by the use of social media and the communication between parents and adolescents. According to

Oche and Aminu's (2016) study, a large number of students experience setbacks due to their excessive focus on social media. The study by Obi, Bulus, Adamu, and Sala'at (2012) supports these findings, showing that students' language and grammar usage is also negatively affected by their use of these websites. Additionally, adolescents can suffer from difficulties in speaking clearly, and messages can significantly hinder their learning abilities (Abaleta, 2014). Internet addiction is a global issue that has resulted in the increased use of social media among students. Other similar studies suggest that individuals who are addicted to the Internet often prioritize using it over fulfilling their personal and professional responsibilities, which ultimately leads to poor academic performance.

Contrary to the findings of the current study, Camilia, Sajoh, and Dalhtu (2013) claimed that they believed social media had a positive effect on their academic performance. Approximately 75% of the students reported using social media for schoolwork, even if it did not have any impact. Additionally, social media can assist students in personal growth, expanding their knowledge and creativity, and developing their technical abilities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016). Furthermore, research conducted by Harath and Alobaidy (2016) suggests that consuming media, when done effectively, can have a positive influence on academic achievement. Establishing open communication between parents and children is significantly and positively associated with the development of moral reasoning, academic performance, and self-esteem in adolescents (Hartos & Power, 2012). However, these findings contradict the study conducted by Brown & Iyengar (2018), which noted that adolescents who lack parental acceptance, behavioral supervision, and psychological autonomy are at a disadvantage because they lack essential skills necessary for academic success.

5.3 Gender Differences in terms of Social Media

The present study suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in social media usage based on gender. Similarly, Lenhart's (2015) study also found that both male and female students equally prefer to engage in online activities. The demographic variable of gender, which reveals dis-

tinctions between males and females, influences the frequency of social media usage. Although males show more interest in LinkedIn accounts compared to females, women are more inclined towards personal pages on Facebook (Lenhart *et al.*, 2013). According to the theory of social roles, the dissimilarities between genders can be explained by assigning different social responsibilities to men and women. More specifically, men and women develop diverse skill sets and perspectives based on their behavior in social situations; men tend to be more independent, intellectual, and competitive, while women are more focused on communal aspects.

Contrary to this, earlier research on social media focused on the differences in usage and attitudes between sexes, indicating that women prefer to use social media more than men. A study on internet usage also found that men use the internet more than women, primarily due to privacy concerns. This finding is supported by a study by Cho *et al.* (2019), which showed that older female internet users from individualistic cultures are more concerned about online privacy than males. Similarly, Akyildiz and Argan (2012) found that male students use Facebook more than female students and spend more time on it. Tufekci's (2018) study supported this, showing that women are four to five times more likely to use social networking sites than men. Perrin's (2015) research also found that women in America started using social media slightly more than men. Additionally, a study by Mohammed (2014) in Ethiopia showed a significant difference in the frequency of social media site use between males and females. Similarly, Tham and Ahmed's (2016) study on the usage and implications of social networking sites among secondary school students indicated a significant difference in social media network usage based on gender.

Therefore, even if they use social media and have the habit of studying, they will not be distracted and bothered in their academic lives. On the other hand, Tham and Ahmed (2016) presented that using social media has both negative and positive effects equally. Based on their mixed findings, their suggestion focused on the fact that the key role is with parents to control the balance of the effect.

6 Conclusion

The major findings of the present study obtained from the participants are as follows:

1. The intensity of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication has a statistically significant influence on academic achievement;
2. There is a significant difference in the extent of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication among study participants; and
3. There are no statistically significant gender differences in terms of social media utilization among study participants.

This implies that the findings show a significant influence of social media utilization and parent-adolescent communication on the academic achievement of secondary school students. Therefore, stakeholders should take responsibility for addressing the issues arising from the use of technological gadgets by students. Additionally, parents and guardians should aim for positive communication. There should also be collaborative efforts among parents, community members, teachers, school principals, school counselors, and government agencies to address this problem.

The Study's Strengths and Limitations

Firstly, this research is the first of its kind in Ethiopia. However, there are certain limitations to this study. The selection of only one study site was purposeful, and there was a lack of consideration for a diverse range of locations and samples. This may result in a biased response from self-reporting. As a result, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to all secondary school students in the Kembata Tembaro Zone or Ethiopia as a whole.

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Declarations

I, Markos Malimo Setena, hereby declare that the paper entitled “**The Influence of Social Media Utilization and Parent-Adolescent Communication on Secondary School Students’ Academic Achievement**” has been entirely undertaken by me.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

All procedures undertaken during data collection involved obtaining a formal letter of permission from the Institute of Education and the Behavioral Science Department of Psychology. Additionally, a formal letter of permission was obtained from the school director. Following this, the purpose of the study was explained, and written informed consent was received from the participants before collecting data. All information was kept confidential.

Availability of Data

The data for this study was available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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