

Measuring The Negative Effects Of Social Media Languages On Students' English Academic Writing Skills In Pakistan: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become an integral and fundamental part of the life of almost all the individuals having a smartphone. Whatsapp is one of the most popular and easiest mobile applications among all which is commonly used by almost all students. The present study attempts to study the negative effects of social media and WhatsApp chatting on formal writing of the students after the assessment of students' narrative essays. This research is exploratory in nature that looks at the gender-based impact of WhatsApp and social media messaging on inter level students' English writing skills. A quantitative technique was

applied, with a survey design. The sample size for this study was 160 students randomly selected from the population of ten higher secondary schools in south Punjab. The narrative writings of the students were used to collect data. SPSS-20 was used to analyze the research data, which has been shown via tables. The ultimate findings of the research shed some light and awareness on the relation between gender and WhatsApp's impact on higher secondary school students' English writing abilities. The use of abbreviations, misspell words, unnecessarily simplified phrases, including the use of numerals instead of the full word form were all found more common among male students than female students. As a result, it was discovered that the language students use in messaging when using WhatsApp and social media messenger frequently deviates from traditional spelling and grammatical rules. It was also discovered that the students' informal writing style, which developed as a result of their extensive use of WhatsApp, is emulated in their academic writing. The majority of the learners' writing aptitudes are badly affected by the linguistic terms they practice on social media and WhatsApp. The linguistic terms used over social media and WhatsApp by the majority of the students affect their writing skills adversely.

Key Words: Writing skills, Social media, WhatsApp, Negative impacts.

INTRODUCTION

Technology has occupied a very significant space in the life of every individual. The lives of the masses have become technologically handicapped. The day of modern man starts and ends with the use of technology. Right after getting up in the morning, the first thing they check is their cell phones. Social media is a means of electronic communication that enables individuals from different walks of life to interact and socialize with each other. It includes different websites and mobile applications used for social networking. WhatsApp and Facebook have become the most commonly used social-networking applications on mobile phones and computers. These cross-platform applications can be installed on different types of smartphones. It allows users to send free messages to each other via the Internet. Users can also share pictures, audio files, and videos. WhatsApp offers the option to create a group of users who can communicate among each other. Language is a comprehensive kind of communication that includes sounds, phrases, symbols, and patterns. It's the medium of communication and expression. Communicating is conveying information, or exchanging what one knows, with others. It necessitates

a strategy for bringing words together in order to create context. Language is required for communication, therefore it is likely to remain a conversational medium capable of conveying ideas, concepts, emotions, attitudes, and perceptions (Canale, 2014). Simultaneously, teen usage of cell phone applications continues to climb year after year. Not only are mobile phones considered essential equipment for teenagers, but parents' concerns about their children's safety often push them to be given cell phones at an earlier age. In Pakistan, most of the students aged 15 to 18 use cell phones, and WhatsApp is a popular phone feature among this age group. In Pakistan, people between the ages of 18 and 18 own cell phones, and WhatsApp is a popular phone feature among this demographic. The most common way for this age group to form friendship is through WhatsApp talking and then growing the connection to its full potential (Nouwens, Griggio, & Mackay, 2017). Parents' difficulties and rising concerns about their children have been answered thanks to the introduction of these cell phone gadgets. Now that they're linked, they can keep an eye on their children's social and scholastic development throughout the day (Nikken & Schols, 2015). Texting has become a medium of education in recent decades as a result of the usage of WhatsApp in schools (La Hanisi, Risdiany , Dwi Utami, & Sulisworo, 2018). The quick change in language use and expectation has opened the path for WhatsApp messaging to have a positive or negative impact on learners' language learning, eventually culminating in linguistic variety and difference (MILOUD, 2019). As a result, the researcher decided to conduct a study on the negative Impacts of social media WhatsApp on English Language Writing Proficiency of Male and Female Students at Higher secondary School Level in south Punjab to see if there is a supposed variance in performance between male and female students as a result of social media's effect. The basic purpose of this study is to explore how social media and WhatsApp chatting affect higher secondary school students' learning skills in academic writing. The current study will be noteworthy since no similar study has ever been conducted at the higher secondary school level. This research might be helpful for the class teachers to implement different teaching techniques and approaches that are simple and helpful to their learners in English language learning process. Because young high school students spend the majority of their free time using Facebook and WhatsApp not only for social networking but also for study concerns, the researcher has decided to highlight the role of social media and WhatsApp messaging on English academic writing with special reference to Gender at higher secondary school level. We need to know whether WhatsApp has any influence on

male and female high school pupils developing English language academic writing skills, and if so, to what extent. The researcher attempted to determine the impacts of social media and WhatsApp messaging on male and female students' performance in English academic writing, with the hypothesis that there could be a relation between students' WhatsApp texting ratio and their performance in the relevant subjects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid growth of mobile technologies such as mobile phones and hand-held computers has helped MALL Mobile-assisted language learning. WhatsApp is a text and voice communications programme that was first introduced in 2007. Now it has subsequently grown in popularity as a result of its use and adaptability. WhatsApp is a free service that allows people to send messages and make calls from their computers, laptop, or smartphone (Taipale & Farinosi, 2018). What makes this program interesting is that it works on a variety of platforms, including mobile phones and laptop computers, making it useful for messaging. It can also use Wi-Fi and mobile internet to make one-on-one or group calls (Fiadino, Schiavone, & Casas, 2015). Today WhatsApp is considered as one of the most popular social media platforms, and it plays an important part in the English language learning process since English learners may use it to send texts, records, documents, photographs, videos, and audio files. WhatsApp Messenger is a text messaging application for mobile phones that allows users to send and receive messages quickly (Awada, 2016). English learners may utilize WhatsApp to trade images directly, and therefore can benefit from these online social media platforms for acquiring and communicating information in a straightforward and systematic manner (Kaid Mohammed Ali & Rashad Ali Bin-Hady, 2019). Another key point is that learners can share their pdf files directly with their friends and professors and ask questions if they are unsure about any issue (Seufert, Hoßfeld, Schwind, Burger, & Tran-Gia, 2016). Another compelling point is that WhatsApp is widely utilized for social networking and message sharing on a worldwide scale. Wan, Dastane, Mohd Satar, and Ma'arif (2019) estimate that millions of people use WhatsApp consecutively.

How Facebook usage influence students' English language proficiency

Facebook is an example of the social-interactionism approach to language learning that Lantolf (2000), in line with Vygotsky (1978), has proposed. This is because of the interaction chances that Facebook provides its users. According to Harrison and Thomas (2009) and Harrison (2013), Facebook can offer new opportunities for real-time cultural and linguistic exchange to language learners. Furthermore, from an ecological standpoint, which sees context as essential to language acquisition, Facebook can serve as the best language learning environment due to the contextual cues and conversational elements it offers. Cain and Policastri (2011) suggest that students might employ affordances—defined as things, places, events, or things—while working with their professors to make the most of language.

Are social media sites are helpful for the students?

While some researchers and educators bemoan the dearth of empirical research that examines the issue of social media as language learning facilitators (Stevenson & Liu, 2010; Lamy & Zourou, 2013; Zourou, 2012), others have asserted that university students' use of social media is more detrimental than beneficial. Selwyn (2012) contends that social media platforms aren't always utilized for educational purposes. Selwyn (2009), who discovered that 95% of Facebook conversations involving UK students had nothing to do with their academic worries, is cited by the author. Instead, the research showed that these students frequently utilize social media to discuss common topics. Tariq et al. (2012) argues that social media use has a detrimental impact on Pakistani students' academic success, these pupils were driven to conversing and topics unrelated to their study. Facebook distracted Saudi students, Akram and Albalawi (2016) discovered, harming their ability to focus and perform academically. In the middle of the aforementioned assertions and denials, the current study attempts to establish if and when social media in general, and Facebook in particular, have an impact on students' performance at the University of Tabuk in the field of second language acquisition, especially that of learning English vocabulary.

Learning Threats of Social Media and WhatsApp Messaging

With the growing popularity of social media and WhatsApp messaging among students, particularly teenagers, there has been growing concern among educators, parents, professionals, and the general public that this training may be harming the use of language in speaking and writing, as well as influencing future standard structures (Cremades, Onieva-López, Maqueda-Cuenca, & Ramírez-Leiton, 2019).

While the long-term impact of social media messaging on the character of teenage communication is unknown, our students' lives are full of innovation (Indrajith & Varghese, 2018). The twenty-first century uses social media communication more than any prior age (Indrajith & Varghese, 2018). Texting has surpassed calls and human conversation as the preferred way of communication among young people. Messaging is a contracted sort of brief informing administrations (SMS) (Minalla, 2018). Adolescents spend around an hour and a half every day on WhatsApp messaging exchange, according to an educational fact (Toh, Howie, Coenen, & Straker, 2019). Internet accesses to electronic gadgets have allowed us to change customary verbal and face to face correspondence. Undoubtedly, we have been extraordinarily profited by the incessant utilization of text information which happens between a particular social gathering, among students and business groups (Kumar, Anandhan, Kumar, & Damodharan, 2021) We have been able to replace traditional verbal and face-to-face contact with Internet connectivity and electronic gadgets. Without a doubt, the constant use of text information that occurs between a specific social gathering, among students, and among corporate groups has really benefited us (Kumar, Anandhan, Kumar, & Damodharan, 2021). Companionship frequently begins with sharing via WhatsApp and continues with the development of solid connections (Abbas, 2021). Text messaging has made correspondence extremely easy without intruding on one another and offers increasingly informal, loose, personalized frameworks for contact since our busy daily routines prevent us from making long conversations or paying visits individually (Chambers, 2017). In comparison to previous cell phone devices, advanced mobile phone students are faster at using social media. The internet era surpassed all expectations.

Language & Vocabulary Features of WhatsApp

According to Allagui (2014), WhatsApp messages may be divided into logical and informative messages, which necessitate a register change. Furthermore, the physical signature of the contained messages is dependent on factors like abbreviations and moods, as well as the message's size. WhatsApp users' lexicon was established by this orthographic and typographic communication, which is sociolinguistically understandable. The vocabulary and language used in WhatsApp chat these days include the following characteristics:

Practice of Pictorial symbols in a variety of ways

Pictograms and Logograms: Pictograms and logograms are mostly used for text messaging on WhatsApp. Words are reduced using either word representation symbols or symbols whose names sound like a syllable in a word (Ayan, 2020). For example, for 'you' as '4 U' and 'before' as 'b4', 'and we are' as VR.

Practice of Short Terminologies

WhatsApp messaging has a key feature called Short Terminology (Yus, 2017). For example, in the sentence 'to whom it may concern,' one may simply type 'twimc'. 'Love you with all my heart' might alternatively be texted as 'luwamh' (Songxaba & Sincuba, 2019). They noticed the effect of social media writing on student academic writing. According to Asare (2019), a learner's language is influenced by a variety of factors. One habit that was investigated in the study was the use of short terms in writing, which is not authorized in formal language. Plz for please, b/w for between and, gud nyt for good night, thnx for thanks, b4 for before, BTW for by the way, and thanku for thank you are some examples of these terms. A study of the flaws reveals a number of blunders that are comparable. The study also highlighted the issue of WhatsApp lingo being used so frequently in academic work that it is implicitly utilized by students.

Students' practice of homophones of numbers and letters while using social media

For words, homophones of letters and numbers are employed, and letters are superseded by numbers in order to save time and be more efficient in writing (Salem, 2013). As a generic language, English has a wide range of extensions, such as letter and number homophones of words, as seen below:

B..... Be
C..... See
O..... Oh
R..... Are
4..... for
8..... Ate
Y..... why
U..... You
D..... The

Multiple syllables in a sentence can also be substituted using numerical representations. A

message may also be conveyed entirely using numbers (Plester, Wood, & Joshi, 2009).

Social media and WhatsApp Messaging Has Negative Impacts on English Language Learners

Hussain and Lukmana (2019) obtained evidence from instructors to back up their argument that WhatsApp has a significant and meaningful impact, as demonstrated in the question: 'Have you noticed any grammatical inconsistencies in written work that may be attributed to WhatsApp-speech? Two of the five teacher participants said they "agree," while the other three said they "strongly agree." Teachers clearly highlighted the types of faults detected in students' written work when asked to identify them, such as: The incorrect usage of a verb. Reduce the length of words and phrases. Answering questions as quickly as possible while using wrong spelling. The usage of acronyms for frequently used electronic media terms such as "u" or "v" Students disregard some simple norms and abuse it in academic writing such as examinations, assignments, and reports, often expressing anything they want to convey since they are unfamiliar with identifying context and scenario as a result of the excessive use of message language. Furthermore, they see this communication language as the industry standard (Shahid, 2018).

Language and different Genders

You'll notice that masculinity and femininity are depicted in a variety of ways as you glance around. Any of these decisions, from how individuals dress to how they style their hair, sends a statement about how they relate to the societal idea of gender, or how they engage with man and woman divides (Eder & Parker, 1987). Gender has such a strong influence on how we express ourselves that it may also influence our everyday speech (Fontecha, 2010). This may come as a surprise to you. At first appearance, gender may appear to be unconnected to language. Gender, on the other hand, has been linked by studies to how language is learnt, developed, and utilized on several occasion. Gender also has an impact on language formation in a variety of historical and cultural contexts (Grace, 2000).

Language Acquisition and Genders

To begin, gender may have an impact on language acquisition, or how early children learn their native tongue. Early language is commonly copied by a female speaker since infants and toddlers in many cultures spend more time with female parents (Snow, 1977). In most language

programmers, young girls learn at a little faster rate than boys, however this tends to even out by middle childhood (Clark, 1995). Early on, there are gender differences in language usage: females are more likely to use language to describe interpersonal relationships with others, whereas boys are more likely to use language to name objects and activities (Cole, 1997). On average, girls learn to read quicker than boys, but this, too, evens out by puberty's midway. Nonetheless, on average, women outperform males on measures of verbal cognitive ability and life success (Coles & Hall, 2002). According to the findings of all of the research described above, there is a link between high school students' WhatsApp messaging ratio and their performance in academic writing assignments based on their gender.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study is exploratory in nature. The data for this study was collected using a survey research approach. Learners' narrative essays served as the data collecting tool. For data analysis, SPSS-20 was utilized, and the results were presented via tables. In order to identify and determine the use of social media and WhatsApp language, the researcher counted and evaluated the mistakes and errors made by the research participants. Tables were used to reveal the outcomes of the study. The mistakes made by male and female respondents were quantified using tables. On the tables the errors committed by the respondents were shown using percentages.

Population and Sample of the study

The population of this research study was all those students (male and female) who were enrolled in 1st year and 2nd year of intermediate in the government higher secondary schools of south Punjab. Sample size of this current study was one hundred (160) students both male and female who were selected randomly from the government higher secondary girls and boys schools of south Punjab.

Research Tools

The data collection instrument consisted of learners' narrative essays. The researchers gathered information on orthographic errors in academic English essay writing of the sample. The mistakes and errors committed by the participants were counted in order to classify and evaluate the effect of use of social media and WhatsApp language. The researchers graded and manually analyzed the essays that were submitted. The errors were divided into three categories: WhatsApp

language errors, WhatsApp language errors involving numbers, and WhatsApp language errors involving words with missing letters.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the writing samples of the students' test was organized and analyzed very carefully. Data analysis tends to discover the impact of WhatsApp on the academic writing skills of the students.

Table.1 Comparison of social media sites used by the male and female students

Questions	Respondents	Facebook	WhatsApp	Messenger
1. Which social media sites do you use the most?	Male	F 47 78.3%	F 49 81.6%	F 34 56.6%
	Female	F 43 71.6%	F 52 86.6%	F 27 45%

According to the above results, it can be concluded that WhatsApp is the most popular social media cite used by male and female students for communication. When students were asked about which social networking platform they use the most. They were given choices between Facebook, WhatsApp and messenger. 78.3% of the male and 71.3% of the female students answered that they mostly use Facebook. Similarly, 86.6% of the female students and 81.6% of the male students responded that they use WhatsApp daily. On the other hand, the use of messenger application was low among the male female students and only 56.6% male and 45% female students were in favor of messenger application.

Table. 2: Facebook and WhatsApp Language mistakes Committed by Research participants in their narrative writing with Correction.

Mistakes	Correction
I (wz) (nt)	I was not
Day kam (lyt)	They come late
Hiz brother works @8	His brother works at
He vizit hiz friend (z) house	He visits his friend's house

I askd him 2 (cm) 2 (mi)	I asked him to come to me
U remember (diz)	You remember this
M (f9)	I am fine
Gd (dy)	Good day

Results and Interpretation of table 1 indicate that these mistakes were noted by the researcher in respondents' narrative writing test during the survey of the different higher secondary schools. The majority of the male students unconsciously committed such kinds of writing mistakes as they were habitual due to the excessive use of WhatsApp and social media languages in their daily routine. Unlike the male respondents, female participants of the research committed a smaller amount of writing mistakes in their narrative writing test.

Table 3: Use of Numbers for Words Errors Committed by Respondents in Essay Writing.

Mistakes	Gender	N	Frequency	Percentage
2 (nit)	Male participants	60	17	28.33%
	Female participants	60	5	8.33%
2 (two)	Male participants	60	13	21.66%
	Female participants	60	7	11.66%
Be(4)	Male participants	60	16	26.33%
	Female participants	60	9	15%
He works (4)	Male participants	60	11	18.33%
	Female participants	60	7	11.66%
Good 9 (t)	Male participants	60	17	28.33
	Female participants	60	6	10%

The data analysis described in the Table 2 indicates that use of numbers for word errors were less than 10% in the essays of female students,

whereas in the narrative essays of the male students, the use of numbers for word errors were more than 20%. Hence it might be supposed that use of numbers for word errors occur much more in narrative writing of the male respondents who use WhatsApp and social media, whereas use of numbers for word errors are negligible in the academic writing of the female students who use WhatsApp and social media.

Table. 3 Use of mis-spelled words or omitted letters Errors with Correction.

Mistakes	Correction
Da	The
Evr	Ever
Nd	And
Wn	When
Coz	Because
Ovral	Over all
abval	Above all
Kandishn	Condition

Table.4 Mistakes of mis-spelled words and omitted letters that were committed by the respondents of the Study.

Mistakes	Group	N	Frequency	%
Da	Male participants	60	7	11.66%
	Female participants	60	4	6.66%
evr	Male participants	60	9	15%
	Female participants	60	2	3.33%
Nd	Male participants	60	13	21.66%

	Female participants	60	5	8.33%
Wen	Male participants	60	10	16.665
	Female participants	60	6	10%
Coz	Male participants	60	16	26.66%
	Female participants	60	8	13.33%

The data analysis described in Table 4 showed that use of mis-spelled or omitted letters words errors were less than 7% in the essays of the members of female group, whereas in the essays of the members of male group, the use of mis-spelled or omitted letters words errors were more than 10%. Hence it might be presumed that use of mis-spelled or omitted letters word errors occur much more in academic writing of the male students, whereas use of miss-spelled or omitted letters word errors are negligible in the academic English writing of the female students who use social media and WhatsApp.

**Table. 5 Mistakes of poor vocabulary and sentence construction
Committed by the respondents of the Study**

	Gender respondents	N	Frequency	%
Mistakes of vocabulary.	Male	60	43	71.6%
	Female respondents	60	29	48.3%
Sentence formation mistakes.	Male respondents	60	39	65%

	Female respondents	60	34	56.6%

The responses and data analysis described in Table 5 revealed that Poor Vocabulary errors were almost 70% in the narrative writing of male group, whereas in the female group, these mistakes were observed only 48%. The responses and results of the respondents in table 5 regarding Sentence Construction errors were more than 50% in the essays of the members of female and male groups. Hence it might be assumed that sentence construction errors were almost the same in both groups of gender.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was carried out to explore the negative impacts of social media and WhatsApp texting on students' academic writing expertise. Considering the technologically advanced era of the twenty-first century, a variety of writing errors that have arisen from the usage of social media WhatsApp chatting tend to be prominent in learners' writing. During the research it was observed that the informal written or oral Communication of social media affects the learners' formal communication in various dimensions of linguistic elements or features that is in the use of spellings, words, phrases, sentences (grammatical or syntactical structures), culture-specific terms, etc. The purpose of this study was to see how social media and WhatsApp Messenger affect students' academic writing abilities. It was discovered that several writing mistakes made by students in their formal writing show their habits acquired as a result of their regular usage of WhatsApp. The above data collected from the essays written by students suggest that the use of Whatsapp text messaging negatively affects the writing skills of students. As a result, they unconsciously adopt the informal method of writing in their academic writings as well. The errors committed by the students in their essays point towards their writing habits of Whatsapp chatting. They use short forms, incorrect spellings and are unable to differentiate between the pair of words due to their poor writing habits on Whatsapp messaging. This article has shown that, by

using error analysis, a majority of mistakes in male and female learners' writing and poor vocabulary can be traced back to WhatsApp messaging. Moreover, such errors were committed comparatively more by male learners. The results of this research regarding social media and WhatsApp errors can help language instructors, as well as course and syllabus creators, develop training and learning resources that can help male and female students stop making these mistakes. Educators can make language teaching and learning more effective and reliable by using WhatsApp error analysis methods and methodologies to make learners conscious of these mistakes.

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