
| RESEARCH ARTICLE**The Influence of Social Media Fatigue on Academic Procrastination and Psychological Well-Being among University Students: Evidence from Vietnam****Hanh Tran T***Thu Dau Mot University, Vietnam***Corresponding Author:** Hanh Tran T, **E-mail:** hanhtt@tdmu.edu.vn

| ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media has transformed students' learning, communication, entertainment, and social interaction. Although social media platforms can support information exchange and peer connection, excessive exposure may also generate social media fatigue, distract students from academic tasks, increase procrastination, and reduce psychological well-being. This study investigates the influence of social media fatigue on academic procrastination and psychological well-being among Vietnamese university students. Using a mixed-methods design, data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The illustrative sample included 150 university students who actively used social media for both academic and personal purposes. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency and percentage calculations, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis. The findings indicate that most students use social media daily, mainly for communication, entertainment, academic information, news updates, and short-form video consumption. A substantial proportion of respondents reported symptoms of social media fatigue, including emotional exhaustion, information overload, distraction, comparison pressure, and difficulty controlling screen time. The results also suggest that social media fatigue is closely associated with academic procrastination, especially delayed assignment completion, reduced concentration, and postponement of study plans. At the same time, students reported mixed effects on psychological well-being: social media helped them maintain social connection but also increased anxiety, stress, sleep disruption, and negative self-comparison. The study concludes that universities should not treat social media only as a communication tool, but should develop digital well-being education, time-management support, counseling awareness, and learning environments that promote healthier technology use.

| KEYWORDS

Social media fatigue; academic procrastination; psychological well-being; university students; digital well-being; Vietnam.

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1. Introduction

Social media has become deeply embedded in the everyday lives of university students. Platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Zalo, and other online communities allow students to communicate with friends, follow academic groups, access learning materials, express personal identity, and participate in social activities. In higher education, social media can support informal learning, peer discussion, collaborative communication, and rapid information sharing. However, the constant availability of online content also creates new psychological and behavioral challenges.

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One emerging concern is social media fatigue. Social media fatigue refers to a state of mental tiredness, emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, or overload caused by excessive engagement with social media platforms. Students may feel overwhelmed by continuous notifications, repeated exposure to short-form videos, social comparison, online conflict, and the pressure to remain updated. Over time, such fatigue may reduce attention, self-control, and motivation for academic tasks.

Academic procrastination is a common behavioral issue among university students. It refers to the intentional delay of academic tasks despite knowing that delay may lead to negative consequences. Social media may contribute to procrastination because it provides instant rewards, entertainment, and escape from difficult learning tasks. When students experience fatigue and distraction from social media, they may postpone reading, assignment preparation, exam revision, and project completion.

Psychological well-being is also important in student development. Well-being includes emotional balance, life satisfaction, positive functioning, self-acceptance, and the ability to manage stress. Social media can support well-being by helping students maintain social connections and access emotional support. Nevertheless, excessive use may increase anxiety, sleep problems, fear of missing out, and negative self-comparison. Therefore, the relationship between social media and well-being is complex rather than purely positive or negative.

In Vietnam, university students are active users of digital platforms. Many students use social media not only for entertainment but also for academic communication, group work, online learning, and career information. However, the boundaries between learning and distraction are often unclear. Students may begin by checking academic notifications but then spend long periods scrolling unrelated content. This situation makes social media fatigue an important topic for psychology and behavioral studies.

This study aims to examine the influence of social media fatigue on academic procrastination and psychological well-being among Vietnamese university students. The study follows a mixed-methods structure by combining descriptive quantitative analysis with qualitative thematic interpretation of students' open-ended responses.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- RQ1. How frequently do university students use social media in their daily lives?
- RQ2. What are the main purposes for which students use social media?
- RQ3. What symptoms of social media fatigue are reported by students?
- RQ4. How is social media fatigue related to academic procrastination?
- RQ5. How do students perceive the influence of social media use on their psychological well-being?
- RQ6. What strategies do students suggest for healthier and more responsible social media use?

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Sample

The illustrative sample consisted of 150 university students in Vietnam who actively used social media for academic or personal purposes. Participants were mainly second-year, third-year, and fourth-year students because these groups usually have regular exposure to academic assignments, group projects, online learning activities, and social communication through digital platforms.

A purposive sampling method was used to select respondents who had direct experience with social media use. This approach was appropriate because the study focused on students' perceptions, behaviors, and lived experiences rather than statistical generalization to all students. Among the 150 respondents, 60.0% were female and 40.0% were male. Regarding year of study, 26.0% were second-year students, 42.0% were third-year students, and 32.0% were fourth-year students. Respondents came from several disciplines, including business administration, economics, education, information technology, and social sciences.

2.2. Data Collection and Research Instrument

Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire designed via Google Forms. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. This mixed-methods design allowed the study to capture general usage patterns as well as deeper explanations of students' psychological and behavioral experiences.

The questionnaire consisted of 13 main items. The closed-ended questions measured frequency of social media use, main purposes of use, perceived symptoms of social media fatigue, academic procrastination behaviors, and perceived impact on psychological well-being. The open-ended questions asked students to describe how social media affected their study habits, emotional state, concentration, sleep, social comparison, and strategies for healthier use.

The main questionnaire items included:

1. Do you use social media every day?
2. How much time do you usually spend on social media per day?
3. What are the main purposes for which you use social media?
4. Do you feel mentally tired after using social media for a long time?
5. Does social media make it difficult for you to concentrate on academic tasks?
6. Do you delay assignments or study plans because of social media use?
7. Does social media affect your sleep or emotional state?
8. What negative experiences have you encountered when using social media?
9. What strategies do you suggest for healthier social media use?

2.3. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage calculations. This method was suitable because the study aimed to describe students' usage patterns, perceived fatigue, procrastination behaviors, and well-being concerns.

Qualitative responses from open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach, the analysis involved reading responses, identifying initial codes, grouping similar responses, developing themes, reviewing themes, and interpreting the findings. This approach helped identify recurring patterns in students' descriptions of social media fatigue, academic procrastination, and psychological well-being.

3. Results

3.1. Frequency of Social Media Use

The results show that social media is deeply integrated into students' daily routines. Out of 150 respondents, 144 students, equivalent to 96.0%, reported using social media every day. Only 6 students, or 4.0%, stated that they did not use social media daily. Regarding daily time spent on social media, 24.0% used it for less than two hours per day, 38.7% used it for two to four hours, 25.3% used it for four to six hours, and 12.0% used it for more than six hours per day. These findings suggest that social media is not merely an occasional communication tool but a central part of student life.

Table 1. Daily time spent on social media

Daily time spent	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 hours	36	24.0%
2-4 hours	58	38.7%
4-6 hours	38	25.3%
More than 6 hours	18	12.0%
Total	150	100%

3.2. Main Purposes of Social Media Use

Students used social media for multiple purposes. The most common purpose was communication with friends and classmates, reported by 80.7% of respondents. Entertainment and short-form video viewing were reported by 76.0% of students. Academic information sharing was also common, with 64.7% using social media to follow class groups, receive announcements, and exchange learning materials. In addition, 52.0% used social media for news updates, while 39.3% used it for career and job-related information.

Table 2. Main purposes of using social media

Purpose of use	Frequency	Percentage
Communication with friends and classmates	121	80.7%
Entertainment and short-form videos	114	76.0%
Academic information and class groups	97	64.7%
News and social updates	78	52.0%
Career and job information	59	39.3%
Self-expression and posting content	46	30.7%
Online shopping or product discovery	43	28.7%

The findings indicate that social media has both academic and non-academic functions. However, the high proportion of entertainment use suggests a potential pathway through which social media may interrupt study routines.

3.3. Symptoms of Social Media Fatigue

Students reported several symptoms of social media fatigue. About 58.7% felt mentally tired after prolonged use, 54.0% reported information overload, 48.7% experienced distraction and difficulty stopping, and 42.0% felt pressure from social comparison. In addition, 34.0% reported emotional discomfort after reading negative comments, conflicts, or stressful news on social media.

Table 3. Reported symptoms of social media fatigue

Symptom	Frequency	Percentage
Mental tiredness after prolonged use	88	58.7%
Information overload	81	54.0%
Distraction and difficulty stopping	73	48.7%
Pressure from social comparison	63	42.0%
Emotional discomfort from negative content	51	34.0%
Boredom or loss of interest in online content	44	29.3%

Thematic analysis of open-ended responses revealed four major patterns: information overload, emotional exhaustion, comparison pressure, and reduced self-control. These themes show that social media fatigue is not limited to time spent online, but also relates to psychological pressure and behavioral regulation.

Table 4. Thematic patterns of social media fatigue

Thematic category	Frequency	Example response
Information overload	54	There is too much information, and I cannot decide what is useful.
Emotional exhaustion	49	After scrolling for a long time, I feel tired and empty.
Comparison pressure	42	Seeing other people’s achievements sometimes makes me feel behind.
Reduced self-control	57	I intend to check messages only for five minutes but continue scrolling for an hour.

3.4. Social Media Fatigue and Academic Procrastination

The results suggest that social media fatigue is closely related to academic procrastination. About 62.0% of students admitted that social media sometimes caused them to delay assignments or study plans. Around 56.7% reported reduced concentration after using social media, and 45.3% stated that they often started academic tasks later than planned because of online distractions. In addition, 38.0% reported that they used social media as a way to avoid difficult or stressful academic tasks.

Table 5. Social media-related academic procrastination behaviors

Behavior	Frequency	Percentage
Delaying assignments or study plans	93	62.0%
Reduced concentration after social media use	85	56.7%
Starting academic tasks later than planned	68	45.3%
Using social media to avoid difficult tasks	57	38.0%
Submitting work close to the deadline due to online distraction	49	32.7%

Open-ended responses suggested that students often experienced a cycle of avoidance. When assignments felt difficult, they turned to social media for temporary relief. However, after extended use, they felt more tired and had less motivation to return to academic work. This pattern shows how social media fatigue may reinforce procrastination.

3.5. Perceived Impact on Psychological Well-Being

Students reported mixed perceptions regarding the influence of social media on psychological well-being. About 44.7% believed that social media supported their well-being by helping them stay connected with friends, receive emotional support, and relax after studying. However, 41.3% believed that social media negatively affected their well-being through anxiety, comparison, sleep disruption, and stress. The remaining 14.0% were uncertain.

Table 6. Perceived impact of social media on psychological well-being

Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Supports psychological well-being	67	44.7%
Negatively affects psychological well-being	62	41.3%
Not sure	21	14.0%
Total	150	100%

Qualitative responses showed that social media had both supportive and harmful effects. Some students said that social media helped them feel connected, especially when they needed quick communication with classmates or emotional support from friends. Others reported that social media increased anxiety because they compared their lives, academic progress, appearance, and achievements with others.

3.6. Suggestions for Healthier Social Media Use

Students provided several suggestions for healthier social media use. The most frequent suggestion was setting time limits, followed by turning off unnecessary notifications, creating phone-free study periods, increasing awareness of digital well-being, and encouraging lecturers to use official academic platforms rather than informal social media channels for learning communication.

Table 7. Suggestions for healthier social media use

Thematic category	Frequency	Example response
Time limits and usage tracking	66	Students should set a daily time limit for social media apps.
Notification control	48	Turning off unnecessary notifications helps me focus on studying.
Phone-free study periods	52	I study better when I keep my phone away for one or two hours.
Digital well-being education	44	Universities should teach students how to use social media in a healthier way.
Clear academic communication channels	37	Learning announcements should be separated from entertainment platforms.

4. Discussion

This study examined the influence of social media fatigue on academic procrastination and psychological well-being among Vietnamese university students. The findings show that social media is a routine part of student life, with most respondents using it every day and many spending more than two hours per day on social platforms. This result is consistent with previous research suggesting that social media has become an important environment for communication, entertainment, self-expression, and informal learning among young people.

The first important finding is that students use social media for both academic and non-academic purposes. Social media helps students communicate with classmates, receive class announcements, exchange learning materials, and follow academic information. At the same time, entertainment and short-form videos represent a major portion of use. This dual function creates a behavioral challenge: students may enter social media for academic reasons but remain there for entertainment, which can lead to distraction and procrastination.

The second important finding concerns social media fatigue. Students reported mental tiredness, information overload, emotional exhaustion, comparison pressure, and difficulty controlling screen time. These findings support the idea that social media fatigue is not only a technological issue but also a psychological condition involving attention, emotion, motivation, and self-regulation. In the context of psychology and behavioral studies, this suggests that excessive social media use should be understood through both cognitive and emotional mechanisms.

The third important finding relates to academic procrastination. Many students admitted that social media caused them to delay assignments, reduce concentration, and start academic tasks later than planned. This finding is consistent with the view that procrastination is not simply poor time management, but also a self-regulation problem. Social media provides immediate emotional relief and instant reward, whereas academic tasks often require sustained effort. As a result, students may choose social media as a short-term escape from academic pressure, even though this behavior creates more stress near deadlines.

The fourth important finding concerns psychological well-being. Social media had mixed effects. On the positive side, it supported connection, relaxation, peer communication, and emotional support. On the negative side, it contributed to anxiety, comparison, sleep disruption, and emotional discomfort. Therefore, social media should not be framed as purely harmful or beneficial. Its impact depends on usage patterns, emotional vulnerability, content exposure, self-control, and the academic environment.

The findings have practical implications for universities, lecturers, counselors, and students. Universities should promote digital well-being education that helps students understand social media fatigue, online comparison, attention fragmentation, and procrastination cycles. Lecturers should avoid relying only on informal social media platforms for academic communication because this may expose students to unrelated distractions. Student support services should integrate digital behavior into counseling and mental health awareness programs. Students

should be encouraged to set time limits, control notifications, create phone-free study blocks, and reflect on the emotional effects of their online habits.

Overall, the study suggests that improving student well-being in the digital age requires more than advising students to reduce screen time. It requires a balanced approach that recognizes the academic usefulness of social media while helping students develop healthier psychological and behavioral boundaries.

5. Conclusions

This study investigated the influence of social media fatigue on academic procrastination and psychological well-being among Vietnamese university students. The findings show that social media is widely used and serves multiple purposes, including communication, entertainment, academic information sharing, news updates, and career exploration. However, excessive and uncontrolled use can generate fatigue, distraction, information overload, comparison pressure, and emotional exhaustion.

The study concludes that social media fatigue is an important behavioral and psychological issue in higher education. It may contribute to academic procrastination by reducing concentration, delaying task initiation, and encouraging avoidance of difficult academic work. At the same time, the impact of social media on psychological well-being is mixed. While social media can provide connection and support, it can also increase anxiety, stress, sleep disruption, and negative self-comparison.

Based on the findings, the study proposes several recommendations. First, universities should integrate digital well-being education into student support programs. Second, lecturers should separate essential academic communication from entertainment-based platforms whenever possible. Third, students should be trained in time management, notification control, and self-regulation strategies. Fourth, counseling services should pay greater attention to the psychological effects of social media fatigue. Finally, future research should collect larger empirical samples, compare disciplines, and apply more advanced statistical methods such as regression analysis or structural equation modeling to test the relationships among social media fatigue, procrastination, and psychological well-being.

Although this manuscript provides useful insights, the numerical results are illustrative and should be replaced with actual survey data before formal journal submission.

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