

Media Dependency, User Satisfaction and Digital Information Challenges in Social Media Use Among College Students in Cainta, Rizal

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media dependency, user satisfaction, digital information challenges, social media use, media literacy

Abstract. This study investigates the levels of media dependency, user satisfaction, and digital information challenges in social media use among college students in Cainta, Rizal, grounded by Media Dependency Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, it also examined differences across profile variables and explored the relationship between media dependency and user satisfaction. Students today rely heavily on multiple platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and X (formerly known as Twitter). This dependency exposes them to issues including misinformation, cognitive overload, and technical barriers. This study addresses the gap of localized research integrating these variables into a unified framework among Filipino college students and proposes a practical action plan to strengthen media literacy in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. This study utilized a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from (N=355) college students from University of Rizal System – Cainta Campus, One Cainta College, Cainta Catholic College and STI College through a self-made survey questionnaire and analyzed using frequency and percentage, weighted mean with standard deviation, the Kruskal-Wallis test, and Pearson's r correlation coefficient. Findings revealed a high level of media dependency, particularly in integration into daily life, and a very high level of user satisfaction, with technical accessibility and information quality as key contributors. Respondents also experienced digital information challenges, especially misinformation and cognitive load. Furthermore, there is no significant difference in media dependency, user satisfaction, and digital information challenges when respondents are grouped according to their profile. However, a significant difference was found in social media usage duration ($X^2 = 45.535$, $p < .001$) and a significant relationship existed between media dependency and user satisfaction ($p < .001$).

Introduction

In the 21st century, communication has evolved beyond just talking to people. It now includes active conversations with online platforms and social media, as well as sharing information in real time. McQuail (2010) defines communication as the process by which people exchange information, ideas, and meanings. Users may learn, connect, and participate with content in online communities via social media, which are interactive digital platforms. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (formerly known as Twitter) are just a few examples of platforms that have changed how people communicate with each other, from commenting in the comment section to replying to threads and chats (Aichner et al., 2021).

Grounded by Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur's (1976) Media Dependency Theory, this theory states that humans depend on media to fulfill their needs for connecting with others, entertainment, and information. Students, especially those in college, use social media regularly for academic, social, and personal reasons. Even though social media has its advantages, it may sometimes be challenging to manage things such as false information, fake news, too much information, and unequal access

to digital resources. These problems show how important it is for the young generation to learn how to utilize digital platforms safely and critically.

Additionally, recent studies are often shared across many areas without considering specific situations, such as college students in Rizal Province. Since there is limited research on the relationship between media dependency, user satisfaction, and digital information challenges in the Philippines, it is difficult to fully understand how these factors influence education and their social implications.

Therefore, this study addresses the research gap by investigating the levels of media dependency, user satisfaction, and digital information challenges among college students in Cainta, Rizal, during the academic year 2025–2026. The study aimed to provide useful statistical information that can help make media literacy and digital resilience programs suitable for students' needs by looking at these factors and how they relate to each other. In doing so, it contributes to both academic conversation and practical solutions for higher education institutions (HEIs).

Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this research supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting media literacy initiatives, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by addressing unequal access to credible information, and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by encouraging HEIs in Cainta, Rizal to develop sustainable programs for responsible media use.

Overall, this study profiles college students in Cainta, Rizal, examines the relationship between media dependency and user satisfaction, identifies digital information challenges, and ultimately proposed an action plan for a media literacy and digital resilience program that contributed to the body of knowledge in media and communication. Hence, these objectives ensured that this paper not only addressed current issues but also provided an intervention to strengthen students' critical and immersive engagement with media.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed descriptive–correlational research design to identify the relationship between level of media dependency, level of user satisfaction, and measure digital information challenges in social media use among college students enrolled in HEIs in Cainta, Rizal. According to Bhandari (2021), the descriptive–correlational design was relevant when describing research variables and investigating the natural relationships or associations between and among these variables.

This study used a descriptive research approach that allows to collect data and information pertinent to the research questions. The descriptive research design served as a foundation for further study by ensuring a thorough understanding of the research issue. The researcher used methods of quantitative study that consisted of the numerical representation and manipulation of data to describe and demonstrate the processes which these findings reflected.

Research Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of college students enrolled at (4) HEIs in Cainta, Rizal. Before the assignment of the number of respondents for each institution, the researcher first obtained the total population of each institution, which consisted of 4,549 college students. After determining the overall sample size using the Raosoft Calculator with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, the computed sample size was $N=355$ respondents. The researcher applied the proportional allocation formula to distribute the respondents accordingly, ensuring that each institution was represented fairly and proportionally in the study. These institutions included the University of Rizal System – Cainta Campus (25), One Cainta College (47), STI College Ortigas-Cainta (168), and Cainta Catholic College (16).

Furthermore, stratified random sampling was also used in this study since the population size was too large, ensuring that each group was adequately represented in the sample.

Research Instrument and Validation

The researcher used a self-made questionnaire that was developed based on concepts and insights drawn from several research literatures and studies. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. The first part focused on the respondents' profile, the second part on the level of media dependency in terms of integration into daily life, duration and platform variety, engagement and dependency, the third part was about the level of user satisfaction in terms of academic utility and engagement, communication and social connectivity, information and quality reliability, and technical accessibility and

external support, and the fourth part focused on the digital information challenges in using social media platforms of the respondents in terms of information integrity and misinformation, cognitive and emotional load, technical and skill-based barriers, and critical awareness and institutional support. The researcher consulted experts in the field of communication and media, education, a panel of experts, and a statistician to validate the instrument used in the study.

Moreover, the reliability of the instrument was measured using a scale of 1-5 with an interpretation of Not Valid at all, Less Valid, Valid, More Valid and Most Valid. The research instrument shows an overall score of 4.93, which means that all the statements given in the survey questionnaire are more valid and can provide unbiased data, allowing 6%–10 % error.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the distribution of the instruments to the respondents, the researcher presented them first to the research adviser for checking, verification, and further modification. The instrument was also validated by three (3) personnel with expertise related to this study. The instrument then underwent pilot testing for 50 random students to determine if it would be accepted or not. Data that were collected were related to the topic presented relative to media dependency, user satisfaction, and digital information challenges in social media use of the respondents.

Furthermore, the researcher included a letter requesting the total population of enrolled students from the college registrar and sought permission from the respondents to conduct the survey through the School Administrators. The researcher explained to the respondents and administrators the purpose and contents of the questionnaire. The online survey questionnaire link (Google Forms) was sent to the official email addresses and via Messenger of the Administrators and Deans. The researcher waited 2-3 weeks for the respondents to answer the online survey with follow-ups. Printed copies were also distributed to other schools on the fourth week since the researcher needed to comply with the computed allocated respondents. After the respondents answered the questionnaires, these were immediately retrieved, and the researcher collated and tallied the data for interpretation. Lastly, the researcher sought assistance from a statistician to determine the appropriate statistical tools used in interpreting the data.

Ethical Consideration

The rules of ethical conduct were implemented during the research period. Necessary ethical considerations served as a guide in ensuring the integrity and protection of the students throughout the entire duration of the study. Participation required that students provide data privacy approval, and they were assured that their involvement was voluntary. Throughout the study, the confidentiality of the research data was maintained and responses were treated with the highest level of privacy. All forms of communication about the study were conducted with utmost integrity and honesty. Moreover, the avoidance of any form of inaccurate information as well as biased portrayals of primary data outcomes is vitally important.

Results and Discussion

Profile	Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	145	40.8
	Female	202	56.9
	Prefer not to say	8	2.3
Age	18 to 19 years old	84	23.7
	20-21 years old	141	39.7
	22-23 years old	97	27.3
	24 years old and above	33	9.3
Preferred Media Platforms	Facebook and Messenger	9	2.6
	Facebook Only	55	15.5
	Multiple (Facebook, Messenger, X, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube)	291	82.0
Social Media usage	Less than 30 minutes	10	2.8
	30 minutes to <1 hour	46	13.0
	1-2 hours	82	23.1

3-4 hours	100	28.2
5-6 hours	59	16.6
7 hours and above	58	16.3

N=355

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The respondents' profile in terms of gender shows that the majority of the college students were female (56.9%), followed by male (40.8%), while a small proportion preferred not to disclose their gender (2.3%). This distribution shows that there were more female students in the study. This suggests that female college students may be easier to reach or more likely to take part in studies on media dependency and social media use.

Next is the largest age group among the respondents was 20–21 years old (39.7%), followed by 22–23 years old (27.3%), 18–19 years old (23.7%), and 24 years old and above (9.3%). The table doesn't provide year-level distribution directly, though the age profile shows that most of the respondents who answered were probably in their second or third year of college, as that's how college students usually become aged in higher education.

Additionally, a significant majority of the respondents (82.0%) reported using multiple platforms such as Facebook, Messenger, X, TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. A smaller proportion used Facebook only (15.5%), while very few relied on Facebook and Messenger exclusively (2.6%). The results show that social media is growing into an integral part of students' everyday life, and many of them spend a lot of time online. The fact that college students use social media for 3–4 hours a day shows that it is not just a convenient thing, yet a key part of how they talk to each other, learn, and engage in entertainment.

In terms of social media usage, the highest proportion of respondents reported spending 3–4 hours (28.2%) on social media, followed by 1–2 hours (23.1%), 5–6 hours (16.6%), and 7 hours and above (16.3%). Only a few college students utilized social media for less than an hour a day. These results show that social media is a significant part of students' everyday life, and many of them spend a lot of time online.

Overall, the demographic profile reveals that the respondents were predominantly female, aged 20–21, mid-college students, who actively engaged with multiple social media platforms for 3–4 hours daily. Therefore, the demographic profile of the students suggests what college life is really like these days, when social media is the main way for people to communicate with each other for educational, social, and personal reasons.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I access social media platforms multiple times throughout the day.	3.56	.682	Very High Dependency
Checking social media is a core part of my daily routine.	3.44	.747	Very High Dependency
I use social media during class breaks or free time.	3.30	.842	Very High Dependency
I open social media apps immediately after waking up.	3.07	.916	High Dependency
Average Weighted Mean	3.34	.636	Very High Dependency

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very High Dependency); 2.50 – 3.24 (High) Dependency; 1.75 – 2.49 (Low Dependency); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Low Dependency)

Table 2. Level of Media Dependency in terms of Integration into Daily Life

The level of media dependency in terms of how social media is integrated into their daily life shows the highest-rated indicator was found on number 1 that college students access social media platforms multiple times throughout the day, with a weighted mean of 3.56 (SD = .682), which was verbally interpreted as very high dependency. The second highest indicator showed that checking social media is a core part of the college students' daily routine, with a weighted mean of 3.44 (SD = .747), also interpreted as very high dependency. Another indicator revealed that college students use social media during class breaks or free time, with a weighted mean of 3.30 (SD = .842), likewise interpreted as very high dependency. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was that college students open social media apps immediately after waking up, with a weighted mean of 3.07 (SD = .916), which was interpreted as high dependency. Although this behavior

did not reach the very high category, it still shows that a significant portion of students consider social media an early priority in their daily routine.

Overall, the average weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .636) indicates that college students show a very high level of media dependency in terms of integration into daily life. This means that social media has become an important part of their daily lives, affecting their habits, free time, and conversations.

The result is supported by the study of Aichner et al. (2021) that college students use social media significantly and regularly, usually multiple times a day. They use platforms during breaks from class, during their free time, and even just after they wake up, showing how important they are to their daily life.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I spend more than three hours daily scrolling through social media.	3.07	.953	High Dependency
I frequently switch between different social media platforms during a single session.	3.19	.831	High Dependency
I use social media more frequently than traditional media (TV, radio, or print).	3.38	.802	Very High Dependency
Average Weighted Mean	3.21	.692	Very High Dependency

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very High Dependency); 2.50 – 3.24 (High) Dependency; 1.75 – 2.49 (Low Dependency); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Low Dependency)

Table 3. Level of Media Dependency in terms of Duration and Platform Variety

The level of media dependency in terms of duration and platform variety garnered an average weighted mean of 3.21 with a standard deviation of .692, which is verbally interpreted as Very High Dependency. This means that the college students not only spend significant time on social media but also actively switch between multiple platforms, showing versatility in their media habits.

The indicator 5 shows that college students spend more than three hours daily scrolling through social media obtained a weighted mean of 3.07 (SD = .953), which was interpreted as high dependency. While the indicator 6 shows that college students frequently switch between different social media platforms during a single session recorded a weighted mean of 3.19 (SD = .831), also interpreted as high dependency. The highest-rated indicator was that college students use social media more frequently than traditional media such as television, radio, or print, with a weighted mean of 3.38 (SD = .802), which was verbally interpreted as very high dependency.

While still indicating a high level of dependency on the two statements, this shows that extended hours of continuous scrolling are slightly less dominant compared to other statements. This also suggest that the college today rely more on social media platforms rather than traditional and print media showing their shift media consumption towards digital platforms.

The result is supported by the literature of Duarte (2026), in fact that students typically do not stick to just one platform. Instead, they frequently switch between applications such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Messenger.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I primarily use social media to fill gaps in my free time or class breaks.	3.22	.801	Very High Dependency
I feel a sense of discomfort if I am unable to check my accounts for an extended period.	2.61	.991	High Dependency
I significantly increase my social media usage during major news events or crises.	3.14	.800	High Dependency
Average Weighted Mean	2.99	.654	High Dependency

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very High Dependency); 2.50 – 3.24 (High) Dependency; 1.75 – 2.49 (Low Dependency); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Low Dependency)

Table 4. Level of Media Dependency in terms of Engagement and Dependency

Table 4 presents the level of media dependency of college students in terms of engagement and dependency. It shows an average weighted mean of 2.99 with a standard deviation of .654, which is verbally interpreted as High Dependency. This indicates that college students shows a considerable level of dependency on social media, particularly in how they engage with it during daily activities.

Indicator 8 shows that the college students primarily use social media to fill gaps in their free time or class breaks, which obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.22 (SD = .801), interpreted as Very High Dependency. Indicator 9 shows that college students feel a sense of discomfort if they are unable to check their accounts for an extended period, with a weighted mean of 2.61 (SD = .991), which was interpreted as high dependency. While the indicator 10 shows that college students significantly increase their social media usage during major news events or crises obtained a weighted mean of 3.14 (SD = .800), also interpreted as high dependency.

According to the results, social media is not only used for pleasure purposes by the college students, but it also serves as a means of dealing with free time, a source of comfort when one feels disconnected, and an important tool during major events or crises. Therefore, the findings strengthen the need of maintaining a balance between active participation and appropriate media use, especially in academic and crisis situations.

The result is in line with the study of Jiang & Ngien (2020), study revealed that this kind of media dependency can indirectly increase students' anxiety, as they feel pressured to keep up with new information and constantly check social media as part of their daily routine.

Scale	Domains	WM	SD	Interpretation
Media Dependency	Integration into daily life	3.34	.636	Very High Dependency
	Duration and platform variety	3.21	.692	High Dependency
	Engagement and dependency	2.99	.654	High Dependency
OVERALL		3.18	.576	High Dependency

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very High Dependency); 2.50 – 3.24 (High) Dependency; 1.75 – 2.49 (Low Dependency); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Low Dependency)

Table 5. Overall Level of Media Dependency

Table 5 shows that the highest-rated domain was that college students integrate social media into their daily life, with a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .636), which was interpreted as very high dependency. Next is the duration and platform variety obtained a weighted mean of 3.21 (SD = .692), which was interpreted as high dependency. Therefore, the lowest-rated domain was engagement and dependency, with a weighted mean of 2.99 (SD = .654), also interpreted as high dependency.

This results suggests that while college students use social media frequently, it's an integral part of their lives, their dependence on it is more useful and habitual compared to the other sub-variables and integration into daily life being the most significant reason of students' dependency.

In relation to the Media Dependency Theory, the findings supports that respondents rely on media to satisfy their needs for information, communication, and engagement (Ma et al., 2023; Dong et al., 2025). However, Wangqu et al. (2024) contradicts that students not simply voluntarily use media; they plan and choose to do so. Furthermore, the data also support the idea that students choose the media platforms that meet their needs on purpose, showing that dependence is not just inactive but influenced by specific goals.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I am satisfied with using social media for both entertainment and academic purposes.	3.45	.709	Very Satisfied
I find social media helpful for collaborating with classmates on academic tasks.	3.47	.737	Very Satisfied
I value the immediacy and interactivity of social media as a tool for learning.	3.42	.702	Very Satisfied
I feel more engaged in my classes when social media is integrated into the coursework.	3.05	.890	Satisfied
I consider platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook to be useful for educational tasks.	3.03	.882	Satisfied

Social media is a convenient way to access tutorials and supplementary learning materials.	3.38	.762	Satisfied
Average Weighted Mean	3.30	.608	Very Satisfied

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Satisfied); 2.50 – 3.24 (Satisfied); 1.75 – 2.49 (Dissatisfied); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Dissatisfied)

Table 6. Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms in terms of Academic Utility and Engagement

The level of user satisfaction in terms of academic utility and engagement has an average weighted mean of 3.30 with a standard deviation of .608, which is verbally interpreted as Very Satisfied. This indicates that, overall, the respondents perceive social media as a beneficial tool that supports both their academic and engagement needs.

The indicator 1 shows that college students are satisfied with using social media for both entertainment and academic purposes obtained a weighted mean of 3.45 (SD = .709), which was interpreted as very satisfied. The highest-rated indicator was that college students find social media helpful for collaborating with classmates on academic tasks, with a weighted mean of 3.47 (SD = .737), also interpreted as very satisfied. Indicator 3 revealed that college students value the immediacy and interactivity of social media as a tool for learning, with a weighted mean of 3.42 (SD = .702), which was interpreted as very satisfied.

The data show that social media is used by the college students for cooperation, immediacy, and supplemental learning as well as pleasure. While satisfaction levels varied among categories, the continuous “satisfied” to “very satisfied” scores show social media’s expanding involvement in academic work and student participation.

The findings align with Ayo et. al. (2025) which suggest that students strategically choose platforms depending on their academic needs, such as using TikTok for short video projects, Instagram for reels, and Facebook or Discord for group discussions.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I feel more connected to my peers and teachers when academic discussions are held online.	2.78	.041	Satisfied
I am satisfied when I can interact with instructors via digital platforms, even for face-to-face classes.	2.90	.956	Satisfied
I am satisfied when social media allows me to express my opinions and receive respectful feedback.	3.13	.778	Satisfied
I find satisfaction in using social media to build my academic and professional network.	3.16	.788	Satisfied
Social media satisfies my need to communicate easily with others regardless of distance or schedules.	3.40	.746	Very Satisfied
Average Weighted Mean	3.07	.674	Satisfied

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Satisfied); 2.50 – 3.24 (Satisfied); 1.75 – 2.49 (Dissatisfied); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Dissatisfied)

Table 7. Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms in terms of Communication and Social Connectivity

The level of user satisfaction with the media platforms commonly used by the respondents in terms of communication and social connectivity has an average weighted mean of 3.07 with a standard deviation of .674, which is verbally interpreted as Satisfied.

The indicator 7 shows that college students feel more connected to their peers and teachers when academic discussions are held online obtained a weighted mean of 2.78 (SD = .041), which was interpreted as satisfied. Indicator 8 revealed that college students are satisfied when they can interact with instructors via digital platforms, even for face-to-face classes, with a weighted mean of 2.90 (SD = .956), also interpreted as satisfied. The indicator 9 shows that college students are satisfied when social media allows them to express opinions and receive respectful feedback recorded a weighted mean of 3.13 (SD = .778), which was interpreted as satisfied. Similarly, the indicator 10 shows that college students find satisfaction in using social media to build their academic and professional network obtained a weighted mean of 3.16 (SD = .788), also interpreted as satisfied. The highest-rated indicator was that college students are very satisfied when social media satisfies their need to communicate easily with others regardless of distance or schedules, with a weighted mean of 3.40 (SD = .746), which was interpreted as very satisfied.

Therefore, the results show that social media helps students interact with other students, professors, and professional networks in a good way. It also gives them chances to express themselves and make communication easier.

The findings align with Manca (2020), who stated that despite the popularity of social media, there remains a gap in achieving deeper academic engagement and connection. It proves that while social media is good for talking to each other, it might not be able to fully simulate the quality of communication that happens in a real classroom.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I am satisfied when social media provides timely and accurate information relevant to my life.	3.25	.787	Very Satisfied
I feel more confident in my learning when social media provides credible and trustworthy sources.	3.34	.702	Very Satisfied
Social media enhances my ability to effectively share and receive educational resources.	3.31	.768	Very Satisfied
I am satisfied when platforms provide a balanced mix of entertaining and helpful information.	3.45	.659	Very Satisfied
Average Weighted Mean	3.34	.624	Very Satisfied

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Satisfied); 2.50 – 3.24 (Satisfied); 1.75 – 2.49 (Dissatisfied); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Dissatisfied)

Table 8. Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms in terms of Information Quality and Reliability

Table 8 shows the respondents' level of user satisfaction in terms of information quality and reliability with an average weighted mean of 3.34 with a standard deviation of .624, which is verbally interpreted as Very Satisfied. This means that most college students think that social media is a good and credible source of information.

The indicator 12 shows that college students are satisfied when social media provides timely and accurate information relevant to their life obtained a weighted mean of 3.25 (SD = .787), which was interpreted as very satisfied. The indicator 13 reveals that college students feel more confident in their learning when social media provides credible and trustworthy sources recorded a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .702), also interpreted as very satisfied. Another indicator found on number 14 showed that college students believe social media enhances their ability to effectively share and receive educational resources, with a weighted mean of 3.31 (SD = .768), which was interpreted as very satisfied. Therefore, the highest-rated indicator was found on number 15 that college students are satisfied when platforms provide a balanced mix of entertaining and helpful information, with a weighted mean of 3.45 (SD = .659), which was interpreted as very satisfied.

This shows that most of the respondents who answered "strongly agree" that social media platforms are informative, trustworthy, and useful for getting and sharing content that is important to their personal and academic lives. However, even though most people believe that the information on social media is up-to-date and helpful, the respondents may still have some doubts about how reliable and accurate it is. The results suggest that students' trust in social media is strongly linked to how well it can provide accurate and reliable information, which in turn strengthens their confidence in acquiring knowledge and sharing content.

The findings support Greenhow et al. (2019), which emphasize that the educational value of social media depends not in the technology, but on the clarity, reliability, and proper use of information within instructional contexts.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
My motivation increases when using social media platforms that are user-friendly and accessible.	3.42	.648	Very Satisfied
My satisfaction decreases significantly when I lack a stable internet connection or digital tools.	3.27	.774	Very Satisfied
My satisfaction depends on the usefulness, ease of access, and relevance of the platform.	3.34	.709	Very Satisfied
I am satisfied when the government supports initiatives for digital literacy and responsible media use.	3.34	.728	Very Satisfied
Overall, I am satisfied when social media keeps me informed about events and growth opportunities.	3.50	.661	Very Satisfied
Average Weighted Mean	3.37	.549	Very Satisfied

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Satisfied); 2.50 – 3.24 (Satisfied); 1.75 – 2.49 (Dissatisfied); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Dissatisfied)

Table 9. Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms in terms of Technical Accessibility and External Support

Table 9 presents the respondents' level of user satisfaction in terms of technical accessibility and external support. This shows an average weighted mean of 3.37 with a standard deviation of .549, which is verbally interpreted as Very Satisfied.

The indicator 16 shows that college students' motivation increases when using social media platforms that are user-friendly and accessible obtained a weighted mean of 3.42 (SD = .648), which was interpreted as very satisfied. Indicator 17 reveals that college students' satisfaction decreases significantly when they lack a stable internet connection or digital tools, with a weighted mean of 3.27 (SD = .774), also interpreted as very satisfied. While the indicator 18 shows that college students' satisfaction depends on the usefulness, ease of access, and relevance of the platform recorded a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .709), which was interpreted as very satisfied. Similarly, the indicator 19 shows that college students are satisfied when the government supports initiatives for digital literacy and responsible media use obtained a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .728), also interpreted as very satisfied. Therefore, the highest-rated indicator was found on number 20 that college students are satisfied when social media keeps them informed about events and growth opportunities, with a weighted mean of 3.50 (SD = .661), which was interpreted as very satisfied.

This means that, even though most of the respondents are very satisfied, issues with their internet connection and limited access to digital tools are still huge problems that can make college students' experience less satisfying. Hence, items 18 and 19 emphasize how important it is for a platform to be useful, beneficial and our government shall support digital literacy and responsible use of media.

The findings aligned with Gamage et al. (2022) stated that students can't communicate well and aren't satisfied with either digital or traditional learning when they don't have access to important resources such as a reliable internet connection and proper technical support.

Scale	Domains	WM	SD	Interpretation
User Satisfaction	Academic utility and engagement	3.30	.608	Very Satisfied
	Communication and social connectivity	3.07	.674	Satisfied
	Information quality and reliability	3.34	.624	Very Satisfied
	Technical accessibility and external support	3.37	.549	Very Satisfied
OVERALL		3.27	.535	Very Satisfied

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Satisfied); 2.50 – 3.24 (Satisfied); 1.75 – 2.49 (Dissatisfied); 1.00 – 1.74 (Very Dissatisfied)

Table 10. Overall Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms

Table 10 presents the overall level of user satisfaction with media platforms across four sub-variables: academic utility and engagement, communication and social connectivity, information quality and reliability, and technical accessibility and external support. The computed data shows that respondents demonstrate a generally very high level of satisfaction, as reflected in the overall weighted mean of 3.27 (SD = .535), interpreted as Very Satisfied.

Among the sub-variables, the highest mean is computed in technical accessibility and external support with a weighted mean of 3.37 (SD = .549), interpreted as Very Satisfied. This is followed by information quality and reliability, which obtained a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .624), and academic utility and engagement, with a weighted mean of 3.30 (SD = .608) which both interpreted as Very Satisfied. On the other hand, the lowest mean is computed in communication and social connectivity, with a weighted mean of 3.07 (SD = .674), interpreted as Satisfied.

Based on the researcher's analysis, this shows that college students really value having user-friendly platforms, trustworthy digital tools, and external support systems to make their overall satisfaction higher. It also shows that college students think social media platforms are beneficial for their university since it provides an accurate information and encourage their participation in educational activities.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I frequently encounter misinformation and disinformation on social media.	3.36	.728	Very Challenging
I struggle to identify which online sources are credible and trustworthy.	2.88	.945	Challenging
I find it difficult when vloggers or influencers spread misleading content that others accept as truth.	3.18	.858	Challenging
I am concerned by how quickly fake news spreads across social platforms.	3.56	.670	Very Challenging
I find it challenging when visual media (photos/videos) is used to mislead people.	3.34	.816	Very Challenging
I find it difficult when peers share information without first validating its accuracy.	3.39	.742	Very Challenging
Average Weighted Mean	3.28	.587	Very Challenging

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Challenging); 2.50 – 3.24 (Challenging); 1.75 – 2.49 (Less Challenging); 1.00 – 1.74 (Not Challenging)

Table 11. Digital Information Challenges in Social Media Use in terms of Information Integrity and Misinformation

Table 11 answers the level of digital information challenges in using media platforms in terms of information integrity and misinformation. This shows an average weighted mean of 3.28 with a standard deviation of .587, which is verbally interpreted as Very Challenging.

Among the indicators, statement number 1 shows that college students frequently encounter misinformation and disinformation on social media obtained a weighted mean of 3.36 (SD = .728), which was interpreted as very challenging while indicator 2 reveals that college students struggle to identify which online sources are credible and trustworthy recorded a weighted mean of 2.88 (SD = .945), which was interpreted as challenging. Another indicator showed that college students find it difficult when vloggers or influencers spread misleading content that others accept as truth, with a weighted mean of 3.18 (SD = .858), which was interpreted as challenging. The highest-rated indicator was found on number 4 that college students are concerned by how quickly fake news spreads across social platforms, with a weighted mean of 3.56 (SD = .670), which was interpreted as very challenging. The indicator 5 shows that college students find it challenging when visual media such as photos and videos is used to mislead people obtained a weighted mean of 3.34 (SD = .816), which was interpreted as very challenging. Finally, the indicator 6 shows that college students find it difficult when peers share information without first validating its accuracy recorded a weighted mean of 3.39 (SD = .742), which was interpreted as very challenging.

This reveals that college students are highly aware of how quickly fake news spreads and see it as major problem when they use social media. Also, those who responded know that content creators have an impact on how people think about issues. Therefore, students encounter severe information integrity and misinformation difficulties that may limit their capacity to critically analyze and verify social media content.

This result is supported by authors Guess et al. (2020) that governments all around the world have begun taking action to prevent the spread of political misinformation. Also, Yang et al. (2023) further revealed that fake photos on Facebook, when shared multiple times, it spread misinformation and change public perception.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information I receive daily.	2.94	.783	Challenging
I experience anxiety trying to keep up with constant updates and notifications.	2.64	.967	Challenging
Social media distractions (trending topics/hot issues) make it hard to focus on academics.	2.89	.966	Challenging
I struggle to distinguish between important and unimportant posts when there is too much data.	2.77	.937	Challenging
I feel stressed when I encounter sensationalist information that triggers negative thoughts.	2.95	.939	Challenging
I feel frustrated by privacy concerns or data security issues on these platforms.	3.09	.849	Challenging
Average Weighted Mean	2.88	.698	Challenging

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Challenging); 2.50 – 3.24 (Challenging); 1.75 – 2.49 (Less Challenging); 1.00 – 1.74 (Not Challenging)

Table 12. Digital Information Challenges in Using Social Media Platforms in terms of Cognitive and Emotional Load

The respondents' level of digital information challenges in using media platforms in terms of cognitive and emotional load shows an average weighted mean of 2.88 with a standard deviation of .698, which is verbally interpreted as Challenging.

The indicator 7 shows that college students feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information they receive daily, with a weighted mean of 2.94 (SD = .783), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 8 reveals that college students experience anxiety when trying to keep up with constant updates and notifications, with a weighted mean of 2.64 (SD = .967), also interpreted as challenging. The indicator 9 shows that college students find it difficult to focus on academics due to social media distractions such as trending topics and hot issues, with a weighted mean of 2.89 (SD = .966), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 10 indicates that college students struggle to distinguish between important and unimportant posts when there is too much data, with a weighted mean of 2.77 (SD = .937), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 11 shows that college students feel stressed when encountering sensationalist information that triggers negative thoughts, with a weighted mean of 2.95 (SD = .939), which was interpreted as challenging. Finally, the indicator 12 reveals that college students feel frustrated by privacy concerns or data security issues on social media platforms, with a weighted mean of 3.09 (SD = .849), which was interpreted as challenging.

These results showed that college students have a minimal amount of information overload, problem in focusing due to distractions, and problem figuring out relevant information. Also, issues about privacy and data security seem to be the factors that add the most to the cognitive and emotional load on students, based on the table.

Furthermore, these findings align with Makki and Bali (2021) stated that although social media is widely used, particularly platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, half of the teachers and students don't think social media is useful for learning, which shows that they are not sure about its role in formal learning. In contrast, Hameed et al. (2022) found out that academic performance decreases when students rely on platforms for non-educational purposes or attempt to multitask across different activities.

Indicators	WM	SD	Interpretation
I lack the stable internet or digital tools necessary for effective online learning.	2.75	.934	Challenging
I feel less motivated when digital platforms are unfamiliar or difficult to navigate.	3.03	.812	Challenging
I experience confusion when educational content is scattered across too many different apps.	3.14	.807	Challenging
Language barriers or unclear digital instructions hinder my ability to use online tools.	3.03	.787	Challenging
I feel my current digital literacy skills are insufficient to fully benefit from social media academically.	2.76	.930	Challenging
Average Weighted Mean	2.94	.662	Challenging

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Challenging); 2.50 – 3.24 (Challenging); 1.75 – 2.49 (Less Challenging); 1.00 – 1.74 (Not Challenging)

Table 13. Digital Information Challenges in Using Social Media Platforms in terms of Technical and Skill-Based Barriers

The respondents' level of digital information challenges in using media platforms in terms of technical and skill-based barriers shows an average weighted mean of 2.94 (SD = .662), which is verbally interpreted as challenging.

The indicator 13 shows that college students lack stable internet or digital tools necessary for effective online learning, with a weighted mean of 2.75 (SD = .934), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 14 reveals that college students feel less motivated when digital platforms are unfamiliar or difficult to navigate, with a weighted mean of 3.03 (SD = .812), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 15 shows that college students experience confusion when educational content is scattered across too many different apps, with a weighted mean of 3.14 (SD = .807), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 16 indicates that college students encounter language barriers or unclear digital instructions that hinder their ability to use online tools, with a weighted mean of 3.03 (SD = .787), which was interpreted as challenging. Moreover, the indicator 17 shows that college students feel their current digital literacy skills are insufficient to fully benefit from social media academically, with a weighted mean of 2.76 (SD = .930), which was interpreted as challenging.

Overall, the findings reveal that college students are having moderate challenges with usefulness, comprehension, and their own level of technical abilities. Basically, the data suggests that the challenges that students encounter are caused by technical difficulties such as internet connection, platforms that are hard to use, and a lack of digital literacy skills that need for continuous educational efforts to develop students' technical competencies and critical digital skills.

These findings are consistent with the study of Asmar et al. (2022), which stated that students are more proficient at using technology than older adults, although there are still differences between groups due to socio-demographic and digital factors.

Scale	Domains	WM	SD	Interpretation
Digital information challenges	Information integrity and misinformation	3.28	.587	Very Challenging
	Cognitive and emotional load	2.88	.698	Challenging
	Technical and skill-based barriers	2.94	.662	Challenging
	Critical awareness and institutional support	2.87	.761	Challenging
OVERALL		2.99	.573	Challenging

Note. Scoring Range: 3.25 – 4.00 (Very Challenging); 2.50 – 3.24 (Challenging); 1.75 – 2.49 (Less Challenging); 1.00 – 1.74 (Not Challenging)

Table 14. Overall Digital Information Challenges in Using Social Media Platforms

The respondents' level of digital information challenges in using media platforms in terms of critical awareness and institutional support shows an average weighted mean of 2.87 (SD = .761), which is verbally interpreted as challenging.

As seen on Table 14, the indicator 18 shows that college students struggle with "confirmation bias," where they or others only believe information that aligns with personal opinions, with a weighted mean of 2.86 (SD = .874), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 19 reveals that college students feel vulnerable because their school or teachers

do not provide enough media literacy training, with a weighted mean of 2.73 (SD = .950), which was interpreted as challenging. The indicator 20 shows that college students believe misinformation and platform differences significantly hinder their ability to learn effectively, with a weighted mean of 3.01 (SD = .866), which was interpreted as challenging. This reveals that college students generally experience challenges with critical thinking and getting support from their institutions when they use social media for academic purposes. This also means that college students are slightly aware of how easily they can think in a biased way, which could affect how they understand and accept information found on social media.

Profile	Groups	Mean Rank	Inferential	p-value	Interpretation
Gender	Male	167.78	$X^2 = 2.675$.2263	Not Significant
	Female	185.75			
	Prefer not to say	167.56			
Age	18 to 19 years old	170.65	$X^2 = 1.591$.661	Not Significant
	20-21 years old	179.66			
	22-23 years old	186.23			
	24 years old & above	165.41			
Preferred Media Platforms	Facebook & Messenger	174.06	$X^2 = 1.309$.727	Not Significant
	Facebook only	164.78			
	Multiple	180.44			
Social media usage	Less than 30 minutes	92.05	$X^2 = 45.535$	<.001	Significant
	30 minutes to <1 hour	110.12			
	1-2 hours	163.05			
	3-4 hours	188.99			
	5-6 hours	200.68			
	7 hours and above	225.77			

Note. Dependent: Media Dependency

Table 15. Differences in the Level of Media Dependency by Profile Variables

The respondents' overall level of digital information challenges in using social media platforms shows an average weighted mean of 2.99 (SD = .573), which is verbally interpreted as challenging.

The results show that the highest weighted mean is found under Information Integrity and Misinformation which has a weighted mean of 3.38 (SD = 0.587), interpreted as Very Challenging. This was followed by Technical and Skill-Based Barriers with a weighted mean of 2.94 (SD = 0.662) and Cognitive and Emotional Load with a weighted mean of 2.88 (SD = 0.698), both interpreted as Challenging. Therefore, the lowest weighted mean is found in Critical Awareness and Institutional Support which obtains a weighted mean of 2.87 (SD = 0.761), interpreted as Challenging. Although it has the lowest mean among the sub-variables, it still falls within the "high" range, indicating that challenges related to limited media literacy training and insufficient institutional support are still evident among respondents.

Overall, the findings reveal that college students experienced challenging levels of digital information issues across all domains, with misinformation and information integrity emerging as the most difficult area. The results show that college students face a combination of cognitive, emotional, technical, and institutional challenges that affect their ability to use social media effectively for academic and personal purposes.

Profile	Groups	Mean Rank	Inferential	p-value	Interpretation
Gender	Male	167.78	$X^2 = 2.675$.2263	Not Significant
	Female	185.75			
	Prefer not to say	167.56			
Age	18 to 19 years old	170.65	$X^2 = 1.591$.661	Not Significant
	20-21 years old	179.66			

		22-23 years old	186.23			
		24 years old & above	165.41			
Preferred Platforms	Media	Facebook & Messenger	174.06	$X^2 = 1.309$.727	Not Significant
		Facebook only	164.78			
		Multiple	180.44			
Social media usage		Less than 30 minutes	92.05	$X^2 = 45.535$	<.001	Significant
		30 minutes to <1 hour	110.12			
		1-2 hours	163.05			
		3-4 hours	188.99			
		5-6 hours	200.68			
		7 hours and above	225.77			

Note. Dependent: Media Dependency

Table 16. Differences in the Level of Media Dependency by Profile Variables

The findings show that gender does not have a significant effect on the level of media dependency ($X^2 = 2.675$, $p = .2263$). This shows that it doesn't matter if the college who answered are male, female, or prefer not to disclose their gender, all of them perceive and view media dependency the same way. In other words, the way college students use or depend on social media sites doesn't change based on their gender.

Age was also determined to be not significant ($X^2 = 1.591$, $p = .661$). This shows that respondents aged 18–19, 20–21, 22–23, or 24 and above demonstrate similar levels of media dependency. This indicates that the level of dependency on social media platforms appears to be not influenced by age differences.

The findings show that preferred media platforms were not statistically significant ($X^2 = 1.309$, $p = .727$). The level of media dependency among students remains unchanged, regardless of whether they utilize Facebook and Messenger, Facebook exclusively, or various platforms. Given that college students use social media no matter what platform they use, this data shows that the platform they choose doesn't have a big impact on how dependent they are on media.

On the contrary, the duration of social media usage was determined to be significant ($X^2 = 45.535$, $p < .001$). College students who use social media for five hours or more are more dependent on it than those who use it for less than 30 minutes or 30 minutes to less than one hour. The mean rankings show that dependency increases as usage time grows up. Students in college who spend seven or more hours a day on social media were the most dependent. Moreover, this result indicates that the duration individuals engage with social media is a significant factor influencing their level of media dependency.

Overall, the results indicate that gender, age, and preferred media platforms do not significantly influence media dependency, suggesting that college students have similar perceptions regardless of these demographic variables. However, the amount of time spent on social media has a significant impact on dependency, with longer usage times strongly related to higher levels of dependency on social media. This pattern shows that people's demographics and platform choices don't change how much they rely on social media. Indeed, the amount of time college students spend on it, on the other hand, has a direct effect on how much it affects their daily lives.

Profile	Groups	Mean Rank	Inferential	p-value	Interpretation
Gender	Male	171.28	$X^2 = 1.341$.511	Not Significant
	Female	181.89			
	Prefer not to say	201.75			
Age	18 to 19 years old	179.17	$X^2 = 2.796$.424	Not Significant
	20-21 years old	177.99			
	22-23 years old	186.01			
	24 years old & above	151.55			
	Facebook & Messenger	180.81	$X^2 = 2.755$.431	Not Significant

Preferred Platforms	Media	Facebook only	158.06	X ² =10.567	.061	Not Significant
		Multiple	181.49			
Social media usage		Less than 30 minutes	137.65	X ² =10.567	.061	Not Significant
		30 minutes to <1 hour	142.07			
		1-2 hours	172.96			
		3-4 hours	185.77			
		5-6 hours	187.52			
		7 hours and above	197.51			

Note. Dependent: User Satisfaction

Table 17. Differences in the Level of User Satisfaction by Profile Variables

The findings show that gender does not have a significant impact on user satisfaction with media platforms ($X^2 = 1.341, p = .511$). This shows that the college who answered the statements, whether they are male, female, or do not want to disclose their gender, basically feel the same level of satisfaction. Gender differences do not affect students' assessments of their satisfaction with social media platforms.

Similarly, age was also found to be not significant ($X^2 = 2.796, p = .424$). This means that college students between the ages of 18 and 19, 20 and 21, 22 and 23, or 24 and older are all equally satisfied. It doesn't seem that students' views on the use and engagement of social media platforms change with their age.

Also, the results show that the preferred media platforms were not statistically significant ($X^2 = 2.755, p = .431$). No matter if students use Facebook and Messenger, Facebook alone, or several additional platforms, their level of satisfaction remains consistent. This data indicates that the choice of social media platforms does not substantially influence satisfaction, as students frequently perceive social media as advantageous, regardless of the specific platform being used.

Conversely, the duration of social media usage was found to be not significant ($X^2 = 10.567, p = .061$). The mean scores indicate that respondents utilizing social media for five hours or more exhibit comparatively higher levels of satisfaction than those engaging for less than 30 minutes; however, this difference does not reach statistical significance. This proves that satisfaction scores remain consistently stable across various durations of social media usage.

Overall, the data indicates that gender, age, preferred media platforms, and social media usage did not significantly influence user satisfaction with media platforms. This means that the natural features of social media, like how easy it is to access, how engaging it is, and how useful it is, have a greater impact on satisfaction than demographics or how college students use it. This structure shows that students of all ages are equally satisfied with social media platforms. This means that social media is useful and engaging for college students of all ages and backgrounds, no matter how long they have been using it. Therefore, the results of this study show that social media is becoming more popular as a way to collaborate with each other, communicate, and acquire assistance while learning.

Profile	Groups	Mean Rank	Inferential	p-value	Interpretation
Gender	Male	181.20	X ² =.278	.870	Not Significant
	Female	176.07			
	Prefer not to say	168.69			
Age	18 to 19 years old	166.50	X ² =2.126	.547	Not Significant
	20-21 years old	182.45			
	22-23 years old	185.06			
	24 years old & above	167.50			
Preferred Platforms	Facebook & Messenger	164.25	X ² =2.804	.423	Not Significant
	Facebook only	165.30			
	Multiple	180.32			

Social media usage	Less than 30 minutes	131.25	$\chi^2 = 6.230$.284	Not Significant
	30 minutes to <1 hour	162.78			
	1-2 hours	183.70			
	3-4 hours	191.34			
	5-6 hours	163.81			
	7 hours and above	181.51			

Note. Dependent: Digital information challenges in using social media platforms

Table 18. Differences in the Digital Information Challenges by Profile Variables

The findings show that gender does not have a significant impact on the extent of digital information challenges ($\chi^2 = .278$, $p = .870$). This means that the college students who answered the statements, whether they are male, female, or choose not to disclose their gender, they share the same problems with using social media. Gender differences do not affect challenges such as misinformation, overload, or technical barriers.

Likewise, age was determined to be not significant ($\chi^2 = 2.126$, $p = .547$). This indicates that respondents aged 18–19, 20–21, 22–23, or 24 and older face similar levels of challenges regarding digital information. It doesn't seem such as college students deal with or handle the problems that social media causes any differently based on their age.

Also, the findings indicate that preferred media platforms were not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 2.804$, $p = .423$). The level of challenges for students stays the same whether they use Facebook and Messenger, just Facebook, or more than one platform. This means that the type of social media platform really has no significance when it comes to how hard it is, since college students usually have the same problems on all of them.

Lastly, the duration of time college students spent on social media was also not significant ($\chi^2 = 6.230$, $p = .284$). The mean ranks indicate that respondents utilizing social media for extended durations (3-7 hours above) generally report marginally greater challenges than those engaging for under 30 minutes; however, this difference has no statistical significance. This means that the problems that college students have are almost the same no matter how long they spend on social media.

In general, the results show that gender, age, preferred media platforms, and how long someone uses social media do not have a significant impact on the level of digital information challenges. This means that students have the same problems, no matter what their age, gender, or how they usually use technology could transform social media platforms into significant educational resources.

Media Dependency	Academic Utility and Engagement	Communication and Social Connectivity	Information and Quality Reliability	Technical Accessibility and External Support
Integration into daily life	$r = .624$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .429$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .567$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .568$ $p < .001^*$
Duration and platform variety	$r = .497$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .303$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .503$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .547$ $p < .001^*$
Engagement and dependency	$r = .592$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .490$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .472$ $p < .001^*$	$r = .527$ $p < .001^*$

*Note. Correlation: 0.00 – 0.19 (very weak); 0.20 – 0.39 (weak); 0.40 – 0.59 (moderate); 0.60 – 0.79 (strong); 0.80 – 1.00 (very strong). (Evans, 1996) *Significant at <.05.*

Table 9. Relationship Between the Level of Media Dependency and Level of User Satisfaction with Media Platforms

Based on the results presented, all computed correlation coefficients (r) are positive, and the corresponding p -values are less than .001, which is lower than the set level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). This shows that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' level of media dependency and their level of user satisfaction in using social media platforms. Since $p < .05$, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) is therefore rejected.

One of the most significant findings this study found was a strong relationship between media dependency and user satisfaction. This means that as the college students become more dependent on media, they also tend to be more satisfied with social media platforms. In other words, students who use social media more often are more likely to see it as useful, easy to use, and beneficial in many areas, such as getting involved in academic activities, communicating to each other,

obtaining accurate information, and acquiring technical assistance. Indeed, dependency can also cause a cognitive bias, which makes students think that platforms are more approachable and satisfying simply since they use it frequently.

The result is supported by the findings of Li et al. (2021), he found that during the COVID-19 pandemic, students' daily screen use increased by around 3–4 hours compared to pre-pandemic levels, which highlights how crises increase their dependency on digital platforms. Additionally, Ma & Sheng (2023), reported that accessing entertainment websites or participating in online conversations during class hindered academic performance and increased their media dependency. Furthermore, these studies found strong and significant relationships, it is also evident that when students use social media as part of their daily lives and positively contributes to their perceived usefulness, engagement, and overall satisfaction.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it was concluded that social media is highly integrated into the daily lives of college students, particularly females aged 20 to 21, who engage with multiple platforms. Survey respondents exhibited a high level of media dependency and satisfaction regarding ease of access, quality of information, and utility for academic purposes. Nonetheless, they encountered moderate to high challenges related to digital information, such as misinformation, information overload, technical difficulties, and insufficient institutional support. Gender, age, or preferred platforms did not significantly impact media dependency, satisfaction, and digital information challenges. However, those who spent five hours or more on social media demonstrated increased dependency. Therefore, a significant relationship was found between media dependency and user satisfaction. This means that the more dependent a user is on social media, the more they use it and the more satisfied they are with it.

In light of these conclusions, several recommendations were made. College students are encouraged to engage with social media responsibly by managing screen time, verifying information, and sharing only factual content. Higher education institutions in Cainta, Rizal, should enhance their curricula with media literacy, digital resiliency, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Educators are advised to utilize specific platforms—Facebook for collaborative activities, TikTok for concise educational content, Pinterest for visual learning resources, and YouTube for instructional videos and professional discussions. Local governments and policymakers are urged to develop programs promoting responsible digital use, alongside improving students' access to technology through reliable internet connections. Furthermore, communication and media professionals should focus on producing credible content. Future research should explore qualitative or mixed-method approaches, incorporating theories such as media richness, mood management, and cultivation theory to deepen understanding of media influence and digital engagement.

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Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.