

Exploring The Relationship Between Inner Peace and Social Media Use

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Abstract - Social media has become an integral part of everyday communication, information access, and entertainment, but its influence on personal well-being may vary according to usage patterns and individual motivations. This study, titled “Sweet Peace Where Dost Thou Dwell?”, explores the relationship between social media use and perceived inner peace among students and employees. A preliminary survey-based study was conducted in June 2026 using a Google Forms questionnaire. Fifteen respondents participated, comprising 12 students and 3 employees. The survey examined daily social media usage, morning checking behavior, sleep-cycle disturbance, task management, social comparison, anxiety or restlessness when access was unavailable, perceived stress, peace-related activities, and overall perceived effects of social media on peace of mind. Descriptive analysis showed that 53.3% of respondents reported at least three hours of daily social media use, 53.3% checked social media immediately after waking, and 73.3% reported disturbed sleep cycles. In addition, 66.7% perceived social media as having both positive and negative effects on their peace of mind. The findings indicate that social media should not be treated as uniformly beneficial or harmful. Instead, usage duration, behavioral patterns, social comparison, and mindful engagement appear relevant to perceived digital well-being. Based on these observations, the study introduces the PEACE Model as a practical framework centered on sleep quality, stress management, emotional stability, life satisfaction, and focus/productivity. The findings are preliminary and intended to guide a larger study and future digital-wellness intervention.

Keywords - Social media use, inner peace, digital well-being, screen time, social comparison, mindful digital habits, PEACE Model.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms have transformed communication by enabling continuous connectivity, rapid information exchange, and participation in online communities. These benefits coexist with concerns related to excessive or problematic use, including anxiety, sleep problems, reduced well-being, and unhelpful comparison with others. Recent systematic evidence indicates that problematic social media use is associated with poorer well-being and with mental-health

and sleep-related outcomes among young people [1]. Research also indicates that social comparison and problematic social media use are closely related [2].

The effect of social media is nevertheless not uniformly negative. Online interaction can provide connection, information, entertainment, and social support. A systematic review of social media, social anxiety, and loneliness reported that individuals may use social media to seek or compensate for social connection, while problematic patterns can also be associated with negative experiences [3]. Similarly, a systematic review and meta-analysis reported a positive association between social anxiety and problematic social media use, while emphasizing the need for further research into causal pathways [4].

The present study therefore examines social media use through the broader concept of perceived inner peace. Rather than evaluating social media as simply good or bad, the study considers how long people use it, when they use it, how they respond to social media access and comparison, and whether their daily habits support sleep, emotional stability, satisfaction, and productivity.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

The primary research question is: “Has social media brought us closer to peace, or further away from it?” The study investigates this question by examining self-reported social media habits and indicators related to inner peace.

The working hypothesis proposed in Phase 1 was: “Excessive and un mindful social media usage negatively affects inner peace.” Because the present study is based on a small descriptive sample, the hypothesis is treated as a research proposition rather than a statistically confirmed causal relationship.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze social media habits among students and employees.
2. To examine the relationship between screen-time patterns and perceived inner peace.
3. To identify behavioral factors associated with digital well-being.
4. To identify perceptions related to sleep, stress, social comparison, and productivity.
5. To recommend strategies for healthier and more mindful social media engagement.
6. To develop a practical framework for digital well-being.

IV. RELATED WORK

Existing literature suggests that the relationship between social media and well-being is multidimensional. Ahmed et al. [1] synthesized evidence from 182 eligible studies and reported that problematic social media use was associated with depression, anxiety, sleep problems, and lower well-being, while also noting substantial heterogeneity across studies. This supports the need to consider patterns of use rather than relying only on total screen time.

Demir et al. [2] conducted a 2026 meta-analysis of 20 independent studies and found a relationship between problematic social media use and social comparison. This is relevant to the present survey because

one of its questions directly asks respondents whether they compare their lives with others on social media.

O'Day and Heimberg [3] reviewed social media use in relation to social anxiety and loneliness and highlighted the importance of examining motivations and types of use, rather than frequency alone. Wu et al. [4] similarly reported a positive relationship between social anxiety and problematic social media use across a large body of research. Together, these studies provide a basis for examining social media behavior alongside perceived peace, sleep, stress, and emotional experiences.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study used a survey-based descriptive research design. Data were collected in June 2026 through a Google Forms questionnaire. The survey included 15 respondents: 12 students and 3 employees. The questionnaire covered daily social media usage, platforms used, screen-time evidence, task management, sleep-cycle disturbance, perceived peacefulness, morning social media checking, anxiety or restlessness when unable to access social media, social comparison, stress or overwhelm, peace-related activities, and overall perceived effect of social media on peace of mind.

The responses were summarized using frequency counts and percentages. Since the sample size was small and the survey was not designed as a controlled experiment, the analysis is descriptive. No causal conclusion is drawn from the observed percentages

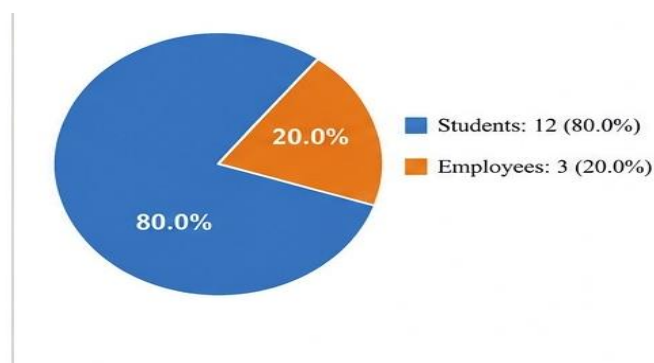


Fig.1 Respondent Profile

VI. SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Survey area	Response	Count	Percentage
Task completion	Yes	11	73.3%
Task completion	No	4	26.7%
Sleep cycle disturbed	Yes	11	73.3%
Sleep cycle disturbed	No	4	26.7%
Peaceful life	Yes	4	26.7%
Peaceful life	Moderate	9	60.0%
Peaceful life	No	2	13.3%
Daily social media use	Less than 1 hour	2	13.3%
Daily social media use	1-3 hours	5	33.3%
Daily social media use	3-5 hours	4	26.7%

Daily social media use	More than 5 hours	4	26.7%
Checks social media after waking	Yes	8	53.3%
Checks social media after waking	No	7	46.7%
Anxious/restless without access	Yes	5	33.3%
Anxious/restless without access	No	10	66.7%
Compares life with others	Yes	6	40.0%
Compares life with others	No	9	60.0%
Stress/overwhelm	Yes	3	20.0%
Stress/overwhelm	Sometimes	8	53.3%
Stress/overwhelm	No	4	26.7%
Peace-related activities	Daily	3	20.0%
Peace-related activities	Sometimes	11	73.3%
Peace-related activities	Rarely	1	6.7%
Peace-related activities	Never	0	0%
Perceived effect on peace of mind	Positive	3	20.0%
Perceived effect on peace of mind	Negative	2	13.3%
Perceived effect on peace of mind	Both	10	66.7%

The results show several notable patterns. First, 73.3% of respondents reported disturbed sleep cycles. Second, 53.3% reported at least three hours of daily social media use, including 26.7% reporting more than five hours. Third, 53.3% reported checking social media immediately after waking. These observations suggest that social media is embedded in the daily routine of a substantial portion of the sample.

With regard to perceived inner peace, 60.0% described their lives as moderately peaceful, while 26.7% reported being peaceful and 13.3% reported not leading a peaceful life. In addition, 73.3% reported that social media causes stress or feeling overwhelmed at least sometimes, combining the “yes” and “sometimes” responses. Forty percent reported comparing their lives with others on social media.

The most balanced finding appears in the final question: 66.7% of respondents perceived social media as having both positive and negative effects on their peace of mind. Only 20.0% perceived a positive effect and 13.3% perceived a negative effect. This supports the study's central premise that the effect of social media is context-dependent rather than uniformly beneficial or harmful.

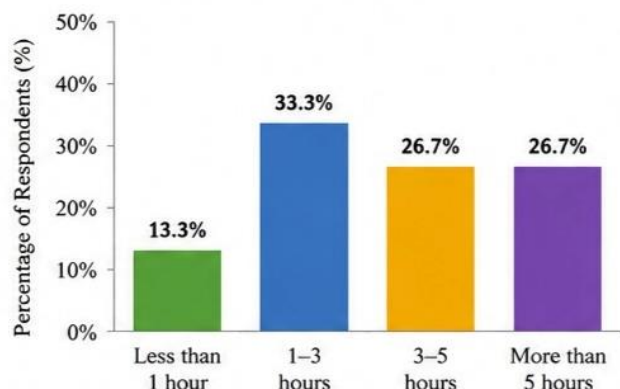


Fig. 2 Social Media Usage

VII. THE PEACE MODEL

Based on the Phase 1 investigation, the study proposes the PEACE Model as a practical digital-well-being framework. The model is evaluated through five dimensions identified in the Phase 1 presentation: sleep quality, stress management, emotional stability, life satisfaction, and focus and productivity.

The model is intended to shift the focus from screen-time reduction alone toward balanced digital behavior. A practical implementation can combine awareness of screen-time patterns with reflection on sleep, stress, emotional state, satisfaction, and ability to concentrate. The model can subsequently be converted into a mobile application or digital-wellness intervention, as proposed in Phase 1.

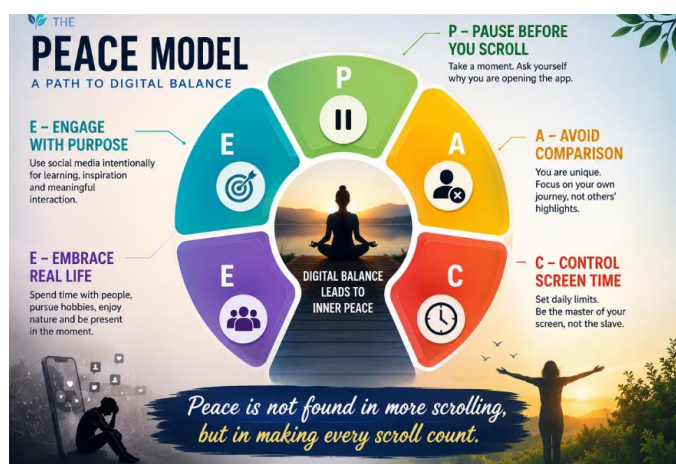


Fig. 3 Peace Model

VIII. DISCUSSION

The preliminary findings are broadly consistent with concerns identified in previous research, particularly around problematic use, sleep, anxiety, social comparison, and well-being [1]–[4]. However, the present data also show that respondents do not uniformly perceive social media as harmful. The majority selected “both” when asked about its effect on peace of mind. This suggests that digital-well-being interventions should not necessarily aim for complete avoidance of social media. Instead, they may focus on awareness, intentional use, healthy routines, and reduction of unhelpful behaviors such as excessive checking and comparison.

The survey also indicates that peace-related activities remain present in participants' routines: 20.0% reported practicing such activities daily and 73.3% reported doing so sometimes. This provides a potential basis for future intervention research that combines healthier digital

habits with existing activities such as reading, meditation, prayer, hobbies, or exercise.

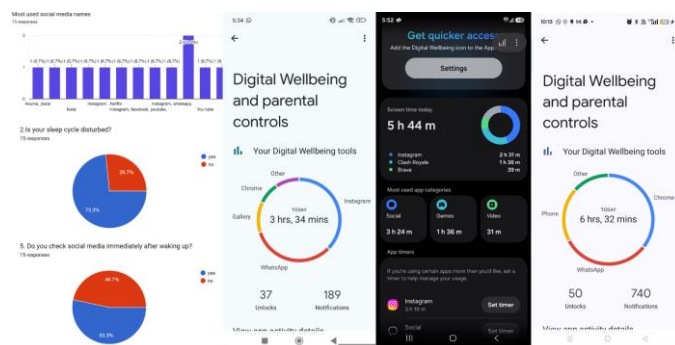


Fig. 4 Survey Result

IX. LIMITATIONS

- The sample size was limited to 15 respondents.
- The sample consisted mainly of students (12 of 15 respondents), so the employee group was comparatively small.
- The survey used self-reported responses, which may be affected by recall or reporting bias.
- The study is descriptive and cross-sectional; it does not establish causation.
- The present analysis uses frequency and percentage summaries and does not establish statistically significant relationships.
- The screen-time evidence was collected as participant-provided screenshots; the available summary does not provide a standardized platform-by-platform extraction of those images.

X. FUTURE SCOPE

Phase 1 provides a preliminary basis for a larger study. Future work can increase the sample size, balance student and employee participation, use validated measures of well-being and problematic social media use, and perform inferential statistical analysis. Longitudinal data can be used to examine changes in sleep, stress, focus, and perceived peace over time. The PEACE Model can also be implemented as a mobile application that provides self-monitoring, digital-wellness prompts, and personalized recommendations. A future evaluation can compare participant outcomes before and after using the intervention.

XI. CONCLUSION

This Phase 1 study explored the relationship between social media use and perceived inner peace through a 15-person survey of students and employees. The findings show substantial daily social media engagement, frequent morning checking, reported sleep disturbance, occasional stress or overwhelm, and the presence of social comparison. At the same time, most respondents viewed social media as having both positive and negative effects on peace of mind. The results therefore support a balanced perspective in which the impact of social media depends on patterns, duration, motivation, and mindful engagement. The proposed PEACE Model provides a framework for organizing digital-wellness practices around sleep quality, stress management, emotional stability, life satisfaction, and focus/productivity. Since the current study is preliminary, larger and methodologically stronger studies are required before generalizing the findings.

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