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Social media platforms for entertainment and creative use: An analytical study on students at King Faisal University

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the extent to which King Faisal University students employ critical and creative thinking skills when interacting with social media platforms. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the investigation administered a standardized scale measuring critical and creative use of social media to a sample of 507 male and female students. The results revealed that the overall level of critical and creative practices was moderate. No statistically significant differences were found in these practices based on gender or academic specialization; however, significant differences emerged across academic levels, with students at more advanced levels demonstrating higher proficiency. Moreover, a significant correlation was observed between critical and creative practices. The study concludes that the efficacy of social media platforms ultimately depends on the user's approach. Through deliberate and balanced use, these platforms can be transformed into valuable tools for personal development, skill enhancement, and effective communication. It is recommended that university curricula incorporate courses and training programs designed to translate the theoretical aspects of critical and creative thinking into practical skills for the optimal use of social media.

Keywords: Creative thinking, Critical thinking, Digital creativity, Digital education, Social media platforms.

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1. Introduction

The university students live today in the age of information, the Internet, and the computer, which in turn impose many vocabulary, words, and new conditions. Social networking sites have become an important and key element in the lives of our youth, through which they receive various types of religious, political, social, recreational, and scientific thought, despite the existence of many positives in the networking sites. One of the most important roles is that they represent fast platforms that provide news and information at once, as well as job opportunities, career development, and more. However, they also have negatives and risks to society, most notably what our children are exposed to, including inaccurate and misleading information that contradicts identity and culture. To be safe from the dangers of these platforms, we must learn how to arm ourselves with thinking skills. Many conferences have recommended that educational institutions urgently work to educate students at different educational stages on the use of social media platforms and emphasize the development of various thinking skills to be able to sort out the ideas and opinions presented to them, and not to be led by destructive calls that ham the stability and security of society.

According to Lyall [1], the Internet is used worldwide by 4.3 billion users, including 830 million young people. The Communications and Information Technology Authority explained that Internet users in Saudi Arabia reach 24 million, mostly young people. These figures highlight the importance of discussing the concept of intellectual security and exploring its implications, as it is crucial for protecting national thought from destructive and misleading ideas. Given the growing concern of families for their children's work, social, and practical matters, we now face a threat to our intellectual security, which is a strategic dimension of our national security. Preserving its integrity requires the cultivation of sound thinking, moderate beliefs, good values, and morals. To counter the destructive ideas that threaten this identity, their negative effects are reflected in our society. Therefore, the educational axis is the most important aspect in developing intellectual awareness among our children [2].

Social media platforms are no longer just tools for cross-communication; they have become a vital part of modern lifestyles, affecting various personal, social, and professional aspects. These platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, provide a renewable environment that allows users to explore multiple aspects of digital interaction. Perhaps the most striking feature is their ability to cater to a variety of needs, from simple entertainment and sharing everyday moments to self-expression and creative content that leaves a mark in the fields of art, education, and entrepreneurship [3].

With increasing user numbers and content diversity, these platforms are a driving force for social and cultural transformation. On one hand, they contribute to creating a fun and entertaining environment through common challenges, short videos, and interactive games, making them an ideal destination for rest and relaxation. On the other hand, they are deeply creative, allowing individuals to showcase their talents, ranging from photography and digital arts to writing and creating educational content [4].

With this diversity of uses, fundamental questions arise about how to make the most of these platforms, balancing their use as a source of entertainment with their use as a tool for creativity and development. Conscious engagement with these means not only gives the user an opportunity to entertain but also opens doors to a positive impact on society and personal goals [5].

As a result of the rapid changes that the world is experiencing, our young people are clearly distracted by goals and objectives, which has led to their inability to clearly distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. This has resulted in an intellectual crisis that has significantly impacted the youth's tendency to rebel against values and their near-total alienation from the principles brought about by the scientific-technological revolution [5].

The proper treatment of social media platforms requires a set of critical and creative thinking skills, and the absence of such skills in the communication process makes receiving information from these sites dangerous to the security and stability of societies. On these sites, we can predict any reaction from those who are not skilled in the art of criticism of the topic. They view these sites as chat platforms that allow them to hide behind pseudonyms or even a persona that is not theirs, making it easy for them to say whatever they want, with no accountability, as they believe [6].

The current study seeks to identify the effects of social media platforms and to what extent KFU students employ different skills for critical and creative thinking when dealing with social media platforms. From the previously mentioned review, the study problem can be stated in the following questions:

1. What are the skills for the critical and creative use of social media platforms?
2. What is the extent to which King Faisal University students practice critical and creative thinking skills when engaging with social media platforms?
3. Are there significant differences between the average responses of KFU students regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms based on the variables of gender, specialization, and academic level?
4. Is there a relationship between the critical and creative use of social media platforms for KFU students?

2. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study stems from several considerations as follows.

1. Social media platforms have become the dominant force influencing the interests of people in general, and young people in particular. The study of their most important effects and reflections urges all educational institutions in society to protect the intellectual and ideological integrity, as well as the Arab cultural identity, from aggressive ideas and beliefs to prevent the risk of distorting the Arab-Islamic personality.
2. KFU students' possession of a range of thinking skills serves as a safeguard against the negative effects of the intellectual invasion of social media platforms.

3. It targets most users of social media platforms (the youth group), which the university embraces as an educational and social institution at the most critical stage of their lives, where they need guidance, correction, and protection from various intellectual deviations.

3. Terms of the Study

3.1. Social Media Platforms

Defined procedurally as a term for a group of websites on the Internet through which communication can be achieved between individuals and the formation of groups with shared interests that allow them to share and publish files, information, photos, videos, comments, and opinions.

3.2. Critical and Creative use of Social Media Platforms

Critical thinking refers to self-organized judgment that aims at interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and conclusion, and besides explaining the considerations of evidence, concepts, methods, and metrics on which the judgment reached is based [7]. Creative thinking is the process that leads to the creation of new solutions to the tools or ideas and approaches that make up a problem. Qatami [8] describes it as a complex and purposeful scientific activity directed by a strong desire to seek solutions or to reach original results that were not previously known [9]. In terms of the educational concept of creative thinking, it is the process that helps the learner become more sensitive to problems, deficiencies, and gaps in information, imbalances of harmony, and the like. It involves identifying areas of difficulty, searching for solutions, formulating hypotheses, testing, reformulating, or modifying them in order to reach new results that the learner conveys to others [10].

Critical and creative use of social media platforms is defined procedurally as the ability of an individual to recognize the characteristics of both critical and creative thinking and translate them into behavioral practices that are effectively employed when dealing with different social media platforms.

4. Literature Review

Suleiman and Fadl [11] aimed to identify the relationship between the ability to think critically and deal with social media content. They used a descriptive, relational approach, designed a social media menu, and utilized the Watson-Glaser short scale for critical thinking. The study was administered to a sample of 400 students from Hail University in Saudi Arabia. The researchers concluded a set of results, the most important of which are: Hail students' engagement with social media content was positive, with students demonstrating a high degree of critical thinking skills, and a direct correlation was found between dealing with social media content and the ability to think critically.

Lee, et al. [12] aimed to use creativity in social media marketing campaigns. The study focused on creative campaigns that employed interactive content and short videos to attract audience attention and concluded that innovative content increased positive engagement with brands.

Ahmed and Chen [13] examined how entrepreneurs use social media to develop innovative ideas and implement successful projects. The study found that platforms like LinkedIn and YouTube helped build professional networks and support creative collaboration.

Johnson and Davis [14] provided an analysis of how businesses and individuals use platforms such as Twitter and Reddit to gather innovative ideas from users. The study showed that group interaction through comments and discussions fostered the development of creative and rapid solutions to problems.

Taylor [15] examined how online writing communities such as Wattpad and Medium improve creative writing skills. The results indicated that these platforms provide a space to share, interact, and receive instant feedback.

Pattanapichet and Wichadee [16] conducted a study aimed at ascertaining the impact of social media use on the development of critical thinking skills in students. The researchers used the experimental method, and the study sample consisted of 80 students who were divided into an experimental group and a control group. The experiment lasted 14 weeks, during which the experimental group was asked to send their answers via Facebook and receive feedback from their colleagues and professors, while the control group was asked to provide their answers in writing and hand them over to their professors directly in the classroom. Critical thinking skills were measured in both groups in a pre- and post-test manner, and the results reported statistically significant differences between the two groups in critical thinking skills in favor of the group that used Facebook.

Ting and Rashied [17] aimed to assess the effect of social media on mental development in a sample of South African university students, using a set of different levels of thinking metrics that analyzed students' Facebook and Twitter posts. Students' posts on these sites were found to have low levels of thinking, and the researchers concluded that students' social media posts did not contribute to higher levels of thinking.

Khelawy [18] aimed to state the relationship between social networking sites and some mental disorders (depression, anxiety, introversion) among university students, to identify the disadvantages of the abuse of social networking sites, and the possibilities of predicting mental disorders. The study was administered to a sample of 210 students from Blonde University and used the analytical linking approach. She designed the social media scale based on Russell and Cotren's psychological loneliness scale, Beck's depression scale, and Taylor's apparent explicit anxiety scale. The results of the study showed that there is an abuse of social networking sites and a direct positive correlation between the use of social networking sites and (depression, anxiety, introversion), with statistically significant differences between male and female students in their anxiety when using social networking sites, favoring males.

Abed [19] identified the variables related to the role of social networks in mobilizing public opinion toward social and political change. The researcher used the descriptive approach after implementing the study instrument measuring the role of

social networks in mobilizing public opinion to a sample of 500 Palestinian university students in Gaza. The study concluded that social networks influence and mobilize public opinion, and that email is the most used social media network.

Quneita [20] identified the negative effects of Internet use. The researcher used the descriptive approach and designed a questionnaire that was administered to a sample of 333 students at the Islamic University of Gaza. Analyzing the differences between student responses according to the study variables, it was found that the negative effects of Internet use on Islamic University students were 51.60%.

Jain, et al. [21] identified the impact of social networking sites on the thinking of young people. After applying the study to a sample of 100 young people aged 18-30 years, a questionnaire was sent via email and various social sites. The participants' responses showed that social networking sites largely mobilize public opinion.

Moorman and Bowker [22] identified the effect of Internet and social network use on psychological compatibility, consisting of 541 undergraduate students in Canada. After analyzing the relationship between the use of the Internet and social networks and psychological compatibility, the results indicated that there is no significant relationship between communication networks and psychological compatibility in students.

Afaneh [23] studied the different uses of social networks among higher education students in Malaysia. The results indicated that students do not use social networking services 100% of the time, and that respondents spend most of their time online for learning. The results also indicated that respondents used social networks for informal learning activities.

Previous studies have generally dealt with the research variables from different aspects. Some studies have surveyed critical thinking skills and their relationship to other variables, while others have sought to reveal the relationship between social media platforms and different mental skills. Most previous studies have used questionnaires as a field study tool to figure out the different uses of social media platforms and their most important implications.

On the other hand, most of the previous studies conducted to develop critical thinking skills used metrics such as the Watson-Glaser scale and the California Test to measure critical thinking skills in the study samples, while trying to link them to some forms of networking.

The most important feature of the current study is that it seeks to review and analyze the different measures of critical and creative thinking to identify some of the characteristics that underpin critical and creative thinking skills and translate them into behavioral practices related to different forms of dealing with social media platforms.

5. Theoretical Framework

Social media platforms are not just passing tools in our digital world; they have become a cornerstone affecting many aspects of life, from everyday human interaction to innovation and creativity. They maintain proper communication among individuals, giving them the opportunity to be more than just consumers but creators of content at a time when self-expression and creativity have become an integral part of modern digital culture. Entertainment is one of the most prominent aspects of social media platforms, as it meets the natural human need for entertainment and pleasure. These platforms are full of fun content, such as short videos and viral challenges that appeal to different age groups. With the development of technology, the entertainment on these platforms has become more interactive than ever, encouraging users to share through comments, likes, and content reposting, reinforcing the sense of belonging to a broad virtual community [24].

The current research focuses on studying the availability of various practices for critical and creative thinking skills in relation to social media platforms. It aims to identify the extent of the impact of these practices and their implications for the intellectual security of KFU students, along with the definitions of each of the basic concepts covered by the research.

5.1. First: The Skills of Critical Thinking and its Characteristics and the Importance of Its Practices to the Learner

Thinking has been linked to the emergence of modern psychology and has evolved with it in general. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, most prominent psychologists have addressed the subject of thinking and given it priority and importance in their studies. Solso [25] describes thinking as a hypothetical concept referring to an internal process attributable to a mental, cognitive, interactive, selective, and intentional activity geared towards the search for a solution to a problem, taking a stance on a particular issue, satisfying a desire to understand a matter, knowing a particular discourse, answering a question, devising something new, or verifying a particular meaning [26]. Critical thinking is based on the following basic set of skills [27].

- Analytical skill: It is intended to identify relationships between intended and actual connotations of phrases, questions, concepts, and qualities to express a belief, judgment, or experience, examine opinions, and discover and analyze arguments.
- Induction skill: This skill means that the validity of the results is linked to the validity of the introductions. Examples of such skills include scientific evidence and experiments, as well as connotations and judgments made by a person after referencing a situation or event.
- Reasoning skill: Refers to the practice of a set of processes that depend on generating arguments and assumptions, searching for evidence, and reaching results.
- Deduction skill: Analyzing information refers to identifying and providing the necessary elements to draw logical conclusions of deductive relationships and the ability to create or form controversy or debate through logical steps.
- Evaluation skill: Intended to measure the logical strength of the deductive relationships between phrases or qualities, and to assess claims and arguments.

The individual who practices critical thinking skills possesses a variety of characteristics [28-30].

- Raise or seek questions relevant to the article with which he is familiar.

- Judge statements and arguments and modify his opinions when he receives new facts.
- Have curiosity and are interested in discovering new solutions.
- Capable of acknowledging that he lacks understanding or information.
- Searches for the guide to support Muslims, beliefs, and opinions, examines them, and bases them on truth.

5.2. *Second: Creative Thinking, its Levels, its Components, and the Importance of the Development of Learners*

Ever since, nations have paid attention to creators, as they have shown their admiration and appreciation for the work of certain individuals, which can be difficult for many of us. Nations appreciate these creators for the importance of their actions in the progress of these nations, and as an essential tool of creativity to help people face life and global problems both in times of peace and in times of war [31]. True creativity does not mean adapting to the environment but rather adapting the environment to our needs and desires to be creative. Creativity has five levels, culminating in the ideal one at the fifth level [32].

1. Expressive level: Its essence is the independent expression of skills, authenticity, and quality of production. At this level, it is insignificant, and what distinguishes creators is an automatic and free quality, similar to automatic children's drawings.
2. Productive level: Individuals move from the expressive level of creativity to the productive level when they develop their skills to produce complete works. This production is creative. When an individual reaches a certain level of achievement, this production should not be inspired by the work of others or intended solely for a productive level. It aims to produce artistic and scientific products characterized by an effort to balance the tendency to play freely while developing methods that lead to the creation of complete products.
3. Inventive level: This level requires flexibility in unfamiliar new relationships between previously existing separate parts, represented by inventors and detectors whose genius is demonstrated using different resources and methods.
4. Modernized Level: This level requires a strong capacity for abstract perception, which exists when basic principles are understood as "sufficient," while the creator can improve and modify them. This level signifies evolution and improvement involving the use of individual and photographic skills.
5. Emerging level: The highest level of creativity, which includes the conception of an entirely new principle "at the most abstract level," as well as the emergence of a new principle or a new Muslim.

Creativity is based on three main components: fluency, flexibility, and authenticity. Fluency means the ability to produce the most creative ideas. A creative person is superior in terms of the number of ideas proposed on a particular topic within a fixed unit of time compared to others, indicating a high degree of ability to fluidly and easily generate ideas. Al-Omaria [33] flexibility refers to the ability to generate diverse ideas that are not typically expected, guiding and transforming thinking with changing excitement or attitude requirements. Authenticity means being able to provide long-term reflections or produce serious ideas, whether for the individual or the community in which they live, and these are the most relevant characteristics. "Creativity, creative thinking, and authenticity here refer to seriousness and uniqueness" [34].

Many senior educators and psychologists, such as Guilford, Torrance, and Lunas, have called for attention to the field of creative thinking, emphasizing that such thinking could grow within universities in two ways: a direct method of establishing a special "school" program aimed at developing this type of thinking, which may be inappropriate in many Arab universities due to uniformity in the curriculum and centrality in the education system; and a second, indirect method, using some pedagogical approaches with the actual curricula adopted by the university to develop and stimulate creative thinking. This means that universities adhere to their usual curricula while employing methods that foster creativity, thereby making the development of thinking an objective that is not isolated but added to the list of goals that the university plans to achieve, including the use of multi-answer activities, motivational questions, exploratory methods, brain stimulation techniques, and methods of interaction with previous materials [35].

In light of the foregoing, the current research has been conducted on the measure of critical and creative use of social media platforms. The scale's development followed these procedures.

- Reviewing research literature on critical and creative thinking and their most important applications in learning processes [23, 36-39].
- Identifying critical thinking skills: analysis, extrapolation, inference, conclusion, and evaluation [40-42].
- Starting creative thinking skills include fluency, flexibility, authenticity, elaboration, and sensitivity to problems [33, 34, 43].
- Identifying the most important characteristics of critical thinking includes a love of inquiry, the discovery of new solutions, and a desire to examine beliefs [44, 45].
- Identifying the different characteristics of creative thinking, including: the ability to produce new ideas, intellectual fluency, intellectual fluidity, the generation of ideas, and guiding the course of thinking [35, 46-48].

In light of the above, critical and creative thinking skills and characteristics have been translated into behavioral practices for optimal use of social media platforms. Therefore, adjustments to the usage of social media platforms are key to balancing benefits and risks. When we use these tools rationally and creatively, we transition from passive consumers to active contributors. Critical use protects us from becoming victims of misleading information and addiction, while creative use provides us with an opportunity to have a positive impact on our societies. Ultimately, communication platforms are not just entertainment tools; they are platforms that can reshape our lives if they are well exploited, making them a real opportunity for personal and social development.

Reviewing theoretical frameworks that highlight the most important critical and creative use skills provides a deeper understanding of the methods for dealing with social media platforms with awareness and creativity. This contributes to transforming these platforms into effective tools for learning, communication, and positive impact, thereby addressing the first research question: What are the critical and creative use skills of social media platforms?

6. Methodology of the Study and Its Procedures

The study employs a descriptive approach, which is a form of systematic scientific analysis and interpretation, to describe and quantify a specific phenomenon or problem by collecting measured data and information, and proceeds according to the following procedures.

6.1. Participants

A random sample of King Faisal University students enrolled in the academic year 1444/1445 AH was selected. The following table shows the distribution of the study sample by the variables of type, specialization, and level of study.

Table 1.

Description of the participants by type, specialization, and level of study.

Genre			Specialization			Study level		
Statement	No	%	Statement	NO	%	Statement	NO	%
Male	285	56.21	scientific	324	63.91	First	223	43.98
Female	222	43.79	literary	183	36.09	At all	284	65.02
Total	507	100	-	507	100	-	507	100

7. Instrument of the Study

- The design of the questionnaire in its final form included 42 items divided into two dimensions: the critical use of social media platforms (1-22) and the creative use of social media platforms (23-42).
- To verify the validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to a panel of jury members to ensure the integrity of the content and the scientific formulation, as well as its effectiveness for the purpose for which it was designed. The questionnaire was modified in light of the feedback received and finalized in its final form.
- To verify the consistency of the questionnaire, it was administered to a survey sample consisting of 194 students, using the "Cronbach's Alpha" coefficient, which was 0.92. This is significant because of the high reliability of the questionnaire and its alignment with the objective for which it was established.

8. Findings of the Study: Analysis and Discussion

The field study addresses the following questions.

- What are the skills for the critical and creative use of social media platforms? The first research question was answered by reviewing the theoretical framework of the study.
- What is the degree to which King Faisal University students practice critical and creative thinking skills when dealing with social media platforms?

Table 2.

Response scores, mean scores, and rankings of responses on the dimension of the critical use of social media platforms.

No	Critical use of social media platforms	Mean Scores	Standard deviation	Extent of use	Rank
1	I can assess the discussions occurring on social networks.	3.4398	0.99893	Moderate	11
2	I feel free on social networks when quantifying or understanding information.	3.8304	0.97337	Large	5
3	My social networks foster curiosity.	4.0986	0.97302	Large	2
4	When I am interested in a topic, I look for it on social media.	4.2899	0.93713	Large	1
5	I respond critically to ideas and topics shared across networks.	2.7613	1.19462	Moderate	20
6	I define criteria for analyzing ideas or topics raised across networks.	3.0118	1.11043	Moderate	17
7	Mention the source of digital content when quoting or publishing.	2.8600	1.29689	Moderate	19
8	Beliefs and postulates based on the opinions expressed on social networks regarding the truth.	2.9211	1.19687	Moderate	18
9	I compare the published statistical figures and data with reference to the official sources responsible, such as ministries and other bodies.	2.7456	1.38039	Moderate	21

No	Critical use of social media platforms	Mean Scores	Standard deviation	Extent of use	Rank
10	I can provide an echo of good listening over networks.	3.3116	1.17850	Moderate	14
11	I revise my opinions when I receive new information from various networks.	3.7988	1.02487	Large	7
12	I support my beliefs with evidence before sharing them with others on social networks.	3.7436	1.18344	Large	8
13	I do not judge facts online until I have information.	3.9467	1.08307	Large	4
14	I can distinguish between facts and opinions on the topics raised through the networks.	3.9862	0.96878	Large	3
15	Make sure to disseminate new information across networks.	3.3195	1.30992	Moderate	13
16	Evaluate ideas and information presented across networks without personal bias.	3.8166	1.12107	Large	6
17	I determine the goals, mission, and sources of social media support before quoting or posting.	3.7298	1.16264	Large	9
18	I am eager to participate in networking groups based on the needs of my scientific specialization.	3.5404	1.30059	Moderate	10
19	Remove those who disagree with my thoughts from my friends list.	2.3905	1.35474	Moderate	22
20	Pain associated with the responsibilities and laws of digital citizenship.	3.2268	1.36219	Moderate	16
21	I rationalize my reasoning for topics across networks.	3.2308	1.32175	Moderate	15
22	I check the authenticity and reliability of digital materials (texts, films, and visual components) across networks.	3.3945	1.26920	Moderate	12
Overall average		3.42701	Moderate		

8.1. The First Dimension: Critical Use of Social Media Platforms

Table 2 indicates that the critical use of social media platforms from the perspective of King Faisal University students has a mean score of 3.43, reflecting a moderate level of approval. All items in this dimension received scores ranging from moderate to high approval.

Table 3.

Response scores, mean scores, and responses regarding the creative use of social media platforms.

No	Creative use of social media platforms	Mean scores	Standard deviation	Extent of use	Rank
23	Social networks contribute to my flow of ideas.	3.9961	0.91538	Large	1
24	Communication networks enable the development of numerous solutions.	3.9941	0.93777	Large	2
25	Social networks contribute to the diversity of ideas I generate.	3.9803	0.98987	Large	3
26	I utilize social networks to direct my thinking in alignment with the situation.	3.4438	1.06799	Moderate	12
27	I utilize the scientific method to generate, develop, and organize ideas across networks.	3.4103	1.14093	Moderate	13
28	The new ideas I receive through social networks make me more open-minded.	3.7870	1.11493	Large	6
29	I understand the patterns of information displayed across social networks.	3.7377	0.98015	Large	7
30	I utilize intuitiveness and tacit knowledge when dealing with social networks.	3.6548	1.02208	Moderate	8
31	Make good use of social networks to synthesize the elements of an idea.	3.6331	1.05178	Moderate	9
32	Social networks help me discover things in my environment.	3.9093	1.01357	Large	4

No	Creative use of social media platforms	Mean scores	Standard deviation	Extent of use	Rank
33	Social networks help me create or discover new ways of doing things.	3.8087	1.05804	Large	5
34	Social networks help us create an unprecedented action plan for a topic.	3.4960	1.06659	Moderate	11
35	Social networks contribute to my incubation of ideas for both long and short periods.	3.3807	1.09934	Moderate	14
36	Through social networks, I discover the shortcomings of certain situations or ideas.	3.5562	1.07353	Moderate	10
37	Employ digital tools and materials for research planning, project management, and problem-solving.	3.2742	1.19029	Moderate	16
38	Through social networks, I initiate the formation of new scientific connections outside the curriculum map.	3.0020	1.25187	Moderate	18
39	I document my ideas gained through networks, noting where they came from, how they changed, what influenced them, and what I can work with.	3.1341	1.25651	Moderate	17
40	Collaboratively utilize social networks to contribute to the learning of others and support individual learning.	3.3787	1.22175	Moderate	15
41	I aim to enhance the quality of digital materials (texts, films, visual components) published to me across networks.	2.9704	1.32516	Large	20
42	Employ digital materials across networks in knowledge development and innovation processes.	2.9980	1.24713	Moderate	21
Overall average		3.5272	Moderate		

8.2. The Second Dimension: Creative use of Social Media Platforms

Table 3 shows that the creative use of social media platforms from the perspective of KFU students has a mean score of 3.53, indicating a moderate approval score. All the terms in this dimension range from moderate to large approval scores.

Are there statistically significant differences between the mean scores of King Faisal University students regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms that can be attributed to the variables of "Gender, Specialization, and Level"?

Table 4.

Mean scores, standard deviations, and the value of "T" reflect differences between the responses of KFU students regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms.

Dimensions	Gender	No	Mean Scores	Standard deviation	Value "T"	Level significance
First	Males	285	3.3989	0.52538	-1.359	0.175
	Females	222	3.4595	0.45937		Non-significant
Second	Males	285	3.5042	0.66076	-1.815	0.070
	Females	222	3.6059	0.57757		Non-significant

8.2.1. First: Variable Gender

Table 4 shows that the value of "T" was -1.359, with a significance level of 0.175. The second value of "T" was -1.815, with a significance level of 0.070, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of males and females at King Faisal University regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms.

Table 5.

Mean scores, standard deviations, and "T" values reflect differences between KFU students' mean scores for the critical and creative use of social media platforms according to their specialization.

Dimensions	Specialization	No	Mean Scores	Standard deviation	Value "T"	Level significance
First	Scientific	324	3.4019	0.50673	-1.421	0.156
	Literary	183	3.4672	0.48063		Non-significant
Second	Scientific	324	3.5444	0.63855	-0.204	0.838
	Literary	183	3.5563	0.60805		Non-significant

8.2.2. Second: Specialization Variable

Table 5 shows that for the first dimension, the value of "T" is -1.421, with a significance level of 0.156. In the second dimension, the value of "T" is -0.204, with a significance level of 0.838. This indicates that there is no statistically significant

difference between the mean scores of the responses of King Faisal University students regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms attributed to their specialization.

Table 6.

Mean scores, standard deviations, and "T" values reflect differences between KFU students' mean scores for critical and creative use of social media platforms according to their level of study.

Dimensions	Study level	No	Mean scores	Standard deviation	Value "T"	Level significance
First	First	223	3.3502	0.51464	-3.038	0.003 Significant
	At all	284	3.4845	0.47715		
Second	First	223	3.4565	0.63865	-2.956	0.003 Significant
	At all	284	3.6211	0.60933		

8.2.3. Third: Variable levels of Education

Table 6 shows that the value of "T" was -3.038, with a significance level of 0.003. The second value of "T" was -2.956, also at a significance level of 0.003, indicating a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of KFU students regarding the critical and creative use of social media platforms attributable to the final levels.

Is there a correlation between the critical and creative use of social media platforms among King Faisal University students?

To verify the correlation between the critical and creative use of communication platforms, Pearson's correlation coefficient has been used, and the result of this analysis is as follows:

Table 7.

Correlation coefficient between the dimensions of critical and creative use.

		Critical	Creative
Critical	Correlation coefficient	1	573**
	Significance		0.000
Creative	Correlation coefficient	573**	1
	Significance	0.000	

Note: **, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows a significant correlation regarding the focus of the study. The critical use of social media platforms is linked to creative use. This means that an increased critical use of communication platforms clearly affects the creative use of social media platforms.

9. Research Findings and Recommendations

9.1. Findings

The critical practices of King Faisal University students in dealing with social media platforms have a moderate degree, and the results of this study are consistent with [Suleiman and Fadl \[11\]](#), which aimed to recognize the relationship between the ability to think critically and to deal with social media content, emphasizing the existence of an exclusive relationship between the handling of social media content and the ability to think critically. The creative practices of King Faisal University students in dealing with social media platforms have come with an intermediate degree, and the results of [Smith and Brown \[49\]](#), which aimed at how to utilize social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to promote creative thinking in undergraduate students. The study noted that using these platforms to exchange ideas and share projects has helped improve critical and creative thinking skills.

The study also found that there is no statistically significant difference between KFU students' mean scores for critical and creative use of social media platforms attributable to gender and specialization, while statistically significant differences exist between KFU students' mean scores for critical and creative use of social media platforms attributable to the level of study, in favor of final levels. There is also a functional correlation between critical use practices and creative use of social media platforms.

In light of the foregoing, one of the distinctive aspects of social media platforms is their ability to combine entertainment and education, as these platforms have become spaces for learning in a fun manner. For example, we find many accounts that offered educational content in an innovative and seamless way, whether it be in the fields of science, technology, arts, or even self-development. This type of content achieves wide circulation as it offers knowledge in a simple and attractive way, making it an effective means to reach a large audience. On the other hand, these platforms play a prominent role in shaping community awareness and promoting constructive dialogues. They are used as platforms to support issues such as human rights, the environment, and mental health, making them instrumental in changing perceptions and driving positive change.

In conclusion, social media platforms are a double-edged sword, the effect of which depends on how they are used, as they can be a means of simple entertainment or a tool for creative and professional achievements. What distinguishes them is their ability to adapt to individuals' needs and aspirations, but the most important role remains with the user in determining how he or she wishes to use them, so that social media platforms become a means of enriching life, not just a drain on time and energy. Through conscious and balanced use, we can transform these platforms into self-building tools, enhancing skills and connecting with the world in ways that improve our quality of life and expand our horizons.

9.2. Recommendations

- Enriching the curriculum with university education through topics that contribute to enhancing students' skills and abilities in critical and creative thinking.
- Activate the partnership between the Ministries of Education, Higher Education, and Communications, and develop a national education program aimed at acquiring basic skills in dealing with technology.
- Universities should actively strive to bridge the gap between the existing technological practices of educational institutions and the technological environment created by the web generation.
- Universities should include courses in their curricula aimed at translating the skills and characteristics of critical and creative thinking into behavioral practices for the optimal use of social media platforms.
- Launch innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives to encourage university students to design an Arab networking platform.
- The university should undertake training programs aimed at creating a collaborative educational environment between professors and students and activate students' use of social media platforms for academic purposes.

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