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A Modeling Study of the Correlation Between Trust Strength and Academic Performance in Social Media Interactions of Dance Students

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SUMMARY: *With the development of mobile communication technology and the popularization of smartphones, social media has become part of the daily study and life of dance majors and always affects their academic performance. Taking dance majors in a university as the research object, the article selects the variables related to trust intensity and academic performance in social media interaction of dance majors and constructs a multi-period mixed cross-section DID model. On this basis, the variables were analyzed with descriptive statistics, and the effect of trust intensity in social media interaction on students' academic performance was analyzed based on the DID (double difference) model. Finally, placebo test and robustness test were conducted for the regression results to analyze the heterogeneity. The baseline regression analysis showed that the trust intensity of social media interactions has a significant effect on academic performance, and the higher the trust intensity in social media interactions, the more likely it is to lead to good academic performance, meanwhile, competence trust is a direct, effective and stable predictor of academic performance, and among all the variables, reliability trust has the greatest effect on academic performance.*

KEYWORDS: *did model; regression analysis; trust intensity; academic performance*

1 Introduction

Currently, among the target groups of users interacting through social media platforms, the social media interaction behavior of college students is becoming more and more significant, and this group is increasingly moving from the periphery to the core of the social media interaction network, and social media has become an important platform for college students' interactions. The differentiated interaction contexts based on social media are becoming an important underlying context that shapes the digital practices of college students in their daily life and learning [1]. College students use social media to access learning resources, professional-related information on events and policies, and to interact and share their personal learning experiences, enriching their learning experience and improving their learning outcomes [2-4]. However, with the continuous iteration of social platforms, and the continuous spread of social networks, resulting in a significant increase in the types of social media and the amount of information, the flood of false information, an excessive number of netizens and frequent interactive behavior has greatly increased the cost of the public to obtain information and maintain social relationships of the time cost, cost of energy, cognitive and trust risk [5-8]. And college students' difficulty in distinguishing between true and false information and interactions in the online world has weakened the trust in interactions [9]. Based on this, the trust of college students during social media interactions has gradually become a hot topic of

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research.

Dance students also take advantage of social media to obtain creative materials, stimulate creativity, improve choreographic ability, and improve their works through work release and interaction with netizens, in order to realize personalized learning by breaking time and space constraints, and then improve their academic performance [10-14]. The academic performance of dance students covers the mastery of dance skills, fluency, dance expression, stage performance, emotional expression, creativity, music and dance coordination and other aspects of the ability. The reliability of social media learning resources triggers a crisis of trust between teachers and students, which in turn affects the selection and application of learning resources [15, 16]. In addition, the authenticity of interactions between people in social media may affect students' emotional and cognitive crisis of trust in the interaction object, generate negative emotions, and reduce the use of social media and learning sharing [17-19]. Therefore, it is worth paying attention to whether dance students' trust in social media interactions affects students' academic performance.

The article first identifies emotional trust, ability trust, reliability trust, information interaction, emotional support, cooperative behavior and evaluation feedback as variables of trust intensity in social media interaction, and identifies course grades, practical ability assessment, comprehensive academic outcomes, learning behavior indicators and academic performance composite index as variables of academic performance. Then a multi-period mixed cross-section DID model was constructed based on the teaching data of a dance major course in a university from 2023 to 2025. The sample was then analyzed with descriptive statistics, and 2,000 dance majors were divided into treatment and control groups to explore whether the intensity of trust in social media interactions had a significant effect on students' academic performance outcomes, and to conduct a placebo test with a robustness test and further heterogeneity analyses for the baseline regression results.

2 Research design

2.1 Selection of variables

2.1.1 Dependent variables

Based on the selection of academic performance measurement indexes in established studies, this paper selected five items related to academic performance in the CEPS questionnaire as the measurement indexes. The dependent variables in this study include course grades, practical ability assessment, comprehensive academic outcomes, learning behavior indicators and academic performance composite index. Among them, the course grades included professional and technical course grades, dance theory course grades and public course grades. Practical ability assessment includes repertoire performance scores, choreography evaluation and exhibition performance. Comprehensive academic achievements include scholarship awards, competition award grades and numbers, and design scores. Academic Behavior Indicators include attendance, hours of practice after class, and teacher evaluations.

2.1.2 Independent variables

The strength of trust in independent variable social media interactions includes affective trust, competence trust, reliability trust, information interaction, emotional support, cooperative behavior, and evaluative feedback. Among them, affective trust includes the willingness to confide personal distress and share emotional experiences. Competence trust includes trust in the information provided or expertise established by the other party. Reliability trust includes

the degree of fulfillment of the agreed interaction. Informational interactions included dance knowledge quizzes and sharing of learning resources. Emotional support includes encouragement, empathy, and stress relief. Collaborative behavior includes online choreography discussion and co-production video collaboration. Evaluative feedback includes mutual evaluation of works and performance suggestions.

2.1.3 Control variables

Referring to the established studies and combining with the model setting, the control variables in this study were categorized into five dimensions. They are: individual characteristics and demographic variables, basic characteristics of social media use, academic foundation and commitment, offline socialization and psychological support, and dance major-specific factors. Specifically, gender, grade level, type of birthplace, and family socioeconomic status were incorporated at the student level for individual factors. Also included were personality traits, intensity of social media use, motivation for social media use, social media literacy, primary platform of use, entering major grades, professional orientation, years of training, quality of faculty-student relationships, family emotional support, physical condition and history of injuries, and level of performance anxiety.

2.2 Data, sample and indicator design

The research sample of this paper is a total of 2,000 students in the direction of dance program in a university. The sample period is from 2023 to 2025. All the research data in this paper come from the back-end database of the teaching platform of the online course of dance in this university as well as the course teaching records of the instructors. In order to construct the DID model, the empirical indicators should include the explanatory variables, the main explanatory variables and the control variables. The explanatory variables are objectively measured academic performance. The primary explanatory variable is the strength of trust in social media interactions among dance students. The control variables include gender, grade level, type of place of origin, family socioeconomic status, personality traits, intensity of social media use, motivation for social media use, social media literacy, primary platform of use, enrollment major grades, professional orientation, years of training, quality of teacher-student relationship, family emotional support, physical condition and history of injury or illness, and level of performance anxiety.

2.3 Empirical modeling

The purpose of this empirical study is to test whether the strength of trust in students' social media interactions has a facilitating effect on academic performance improvement by constructing the following DID model:

$$\begin{aligned} score = {} & \alpha_1 + \beta_1 \cdot evaluation_{it} + \gamma_1 \cdot \hom escore_{it} \\ & + \delta_1 evaluation_{it} \cdot \hom escore_{it} + \theta_1 \cdot pass_{it} \\ & + \mu_1 \cdot term_{it} + u_{it}^1 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

$$\begin{aligned} score = {} & \alpha_3 + \beta_3 \cdot evaluation_{it} + \gamma_3 \cdot \hom elevel_{it} \\ & + \delta_3 \cdot evaluation_{it} \cdot \hom elevel_{it} + \theta_3 \cdot pass_{it} \\ & + \mu_3 \cdot term_{it} + u_{it}^3 \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

$$\ln score = \alpha_2 + \beta_2 \cdot evaluation_{it} + \gamma_2 \cdot \hom escore_{it} + \delta_2 \cdot evaluation_{it} \cdot \hom escore_{it} + \theta_2 \cdot pass_{it} + \mu_2 \cdot term_{it} + u_{it}^2 \quad (3)$$

$$\ln score = \alpha_4 + \beta_4 \cdot evaluation_{it} + \gamma_4 \cdot \hom elevel_{it} + \delta_4 \cdot evaluation_{it} \cdot \hom elevel_{it} + \theta_4 \cdot pass_{it} + \mu_4 \cdot term_{it} + u_{it}^4 \quad (4)$$

In the above equation, the meaning of each variable can be found above, α, β, γ, δ, θ, μ are the estimated coefficients of each variable, and u is the residual term. By detecting the cross-multiplication terms in the above two equations, it can be determined whether the strength of trust in social media interactions has a significant role in enhancing the effect of academic performance.

3 Empirical analysis

3.1 Descriptive statistical analysis

3.1.1 Explained variables

This subsection provides a descriptive statistical analysis of the differences between the four indicators of dance students' expectations subject to course grades, practical skills assessment, comprehensive academic outcomes, and learning behavior indicators, as well as the fitted composite index of academic performance before and after social media interactions. The statistical descriptions of the explanatory variables and fitted factors are shown in Table 1.

Regarding the overall academic performance index that we are concerned about, longitudinally, the average value of the overall academic performance index for dance major students before the increase in trust interaction was 54.554%, but after the increase in trust interaction, the average value of the overall academic performance index for dance major students rose to 58.563%, an increase of 4.009 percentage points on average, which was a significant increase. By combining several indicators, we can find that the strength of trust in social media interaction has a considerable positive impact on the academic level development of dance major students.

Table 1: Statistical description of the explained variable and the fitting factor

Variable	2023		2025	
	Processing group	Control group	Processing group	Control group
Course grades	15.086	15.644	14.996	15.221
Practical ability assessment	14.789	14.868	16.181	13.876
Comprehensive academic achievements	5.183	5.502	4.983	5.285
Learning behavior indicators	7.754	10.232	7.434	10.603
Academic performance composite index	54.554	58.03	58.563	57.156

3.1.2 Control variables

This section still proceeds with the selection of control variables at the three levels of sample demographic variables, intensity of social media use, and level of offline social support in order to satisfy the assumption of conditional independence. The statistical descriptions of the relevant control variables are shown in Table 2. Through the table, we can find that there are some differences in the characteristic variables at the levels of the dance majors themselves, their families and the intensity of social media use. Starting from the family level, it is easy to find that the proportion of urban households in the final sample is 70.36%, and more than half of the households are urban households. The proportion of rural households in the selected sample is only 29.64%, which is much lower than that of urban households. At the same time, the proportion of families in which the average socio-economic status of the parents is above the medium level is around 65% in both subgroups, indicating that the average socio-economic status of the parents in the selected sample is at a medium-high level, and that the average economic level of fathers is higher than the average economic level of mothers.

Table 2: Statistical description of relevant control variables

Variable	2023		2025	
	Processing group	Control group	Processing group	Control group
Gender	0.825	0.918	11.002	12.012
Grade	0.414	0.542	0.531	0.558
Source type	3.002	3.988	4.52	5.646
Family socioeconomic status	0.449	0.296	0.626	0.343
Personality trait	0.313	0.145	0.21	0.309
Intensity of social media use	0.115	0.174	0.056	0.13
Social media use motivation	0.891	0.709	0.796	0.948
Social media literacy	0.761	0.687	0.539	0.605
Main platform	0.239	0.115	0.119	0.228
Academic performance	0.184	0.257	0.237	0.291
Professional direction	0.702	0.68	0.539	0.594
Training period	0.199	0.116	0.318	0.546
Quality of relationship between teachers and students	0.058	0.02	0.258	0.353
Family emotional support	0.207	0.131	0.318	0.272
Physical and injury history	0.174	0.898	45.017	46.087
Performance anxiety level	0.467	0.556	0.562	2.082

3.2 The Effect of Trust Intensity on Academic Performance of Dance Majors

According to the experimental design of the previous paper,this paper got 250 groups in the treatment group and 1750 groups in the control group. The effect of trust intensity in students' social media interactions on academic performance is shown in Table 3, where (1)~(5) represent including course grades, practical ability assessment, comprehensive academic outcomes, learning behavior indicators and comprehensive index of academic performance, respectively. Robust standard errors are shown in parentheses in the table, ***p<0.01,** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Regressions were performed on course grades, practical ability assessment, comprehensive academic outcomes, learning behavior indicators and comprehensive index of academic

performance respectively, all regressions controlled for fixed effects, standard errors were taken at the level of the individual dance students, and the estimated coefficients of the model improved after the addition of the control variables, and the estimated The standard errors were also slightly increased, but the changes were small, while R^2 was significantly increased, and the interpretability of the model was significantly enhanced. Specifically, controlling for other factors remaining unchanged, increased trust intensity in social media interactions improved the academic performance of dance majors across the board.

The effects of the control variables in the benchmark regression are consistent with existing research or empirical judgment. Emotional trust and competence trust had a significant effect on academic performance, the higher the intensity of trust in social media interactions, the more likely it was to lead to good academic performance, a finding that is consistent with existing research, and competence trust was a direct, effective and stable predictor of academic performance. Among all the variables, reliability trust has the greatest effect on academic performance.Reliability trust measures the learning ability of dance majors and is highly correlated with academic performance, so including it as a control variable strips it of its effect on academic performance and makes the DID estimation results more accurate. Emotional support has a significant effect on academic performance, the better the emotional support,the better the dance students learn. The effect of trust intensity in social media interactions on academic performance of dance majors may be heterogeneous on some of the above variables.

Table 3: The influence of trust intensity on academic performance

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
T	0.585***(0.157)	0.059**(0.021)	0.009(0.029)	0.017*(0.013)	0.678***(0.277)
treat	12.525***(0.761)	0.494***(0.057)	0.68***(0.065)	0.591***(0.037)	11.188***(0.779)
DID	5.287***(0.589)	0.156***(0.071)	0.359***(0.054)	0.143***(0.063)	6.525***(0.883)
Emotional trust	1.073***(0.187)	0.08***(0.007)	0.058***(0.012)	0.081***(0.017)	0.074***(0.011)
Ability trust	1.962***(0.188)	0.104***(0.013)	0.119***(0.015)	0.141***(0.011)	0.133***(0.012)
Reliability trust	6.677***(0.323)	0.335***(0.018)	0.467***(0.01)	0.346***(0.027)	0.071***(0.002)
Information interaction	0.178(0.278)	0.021(0.039)	0.024(0.01)	0.027(0.022)	0.011(0.011)
Emotional support	0.789*(0.435)	0.015(0.022)	0.021(0.017)	0.036*(0.034)	0.045*(0.018)
Cooperative behavior	0.265***(0.006)	0.036***(0.021)	0.026(0.065)	0.365***(0.015)	0.021(0.01)
Evaluation feedback	0.154***(0.26)	0.044*(0.021)	0.026*(0.231)	0.326(0.022)	0.038*(0.015)
Constant term	13.283***(2.419)	0.137(0.134)	0.186(0.195)	0.308(0.3)	38.498***(2.727)
Fixed effect	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample size	3.859	3.859	3.859	3.859	3.859
R^2	0.18	0.057	0.079	0.071	0.414

3.3 Placebo test

The distribution of the estimated coefficients of DID is shown in Figure 1, the solid line is its probability density, and the dashed line is the normal distribution, which shows that the estimated coefficients approximately obey the normal distribution, and the estimated coefficients of the double-difference term of the spurious randomized trial are concentrated around 0, which suggests that the model does not suffer from a serious problem of omitted

variables in the setup, and that the estimated results of the causal effect of the strength of trust in social media interactions on academic performance are robust.

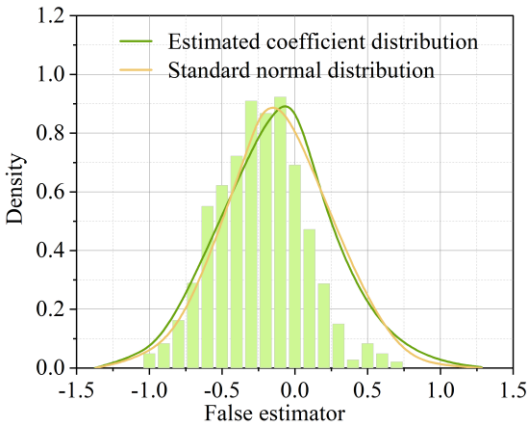

Figure 1: Placebo test

3.4 Robustness Tests

This article selects covariates from four aspects: individual characteristics of dance major students, family characteristics, platform usage, and trust intensity for matching. Specifically: at the individual characteristics level of dance major students, gender, grade, personality traits, and type of hometown are selected. At the parental level: family socioeconomic status is chosen. At the platform usage level: intensity of social media usage, motivation for social media usage, and social media literacy are selected. At the trust intensity level: emotional trust, ability trust, reliability trust, information interaction, emotional support, cooperative behavior, and evaluation feedback, a total of 15 variables are selected as covariates for matching. Three matching methods, namely radius matching, 1:6 nearest neighbor matching, and kernel matching, are used to test the robustness of the core conclusion. The covariate matching results are shown in Figure 2. After matching all variables, they all fall within the range of [-5, 5].

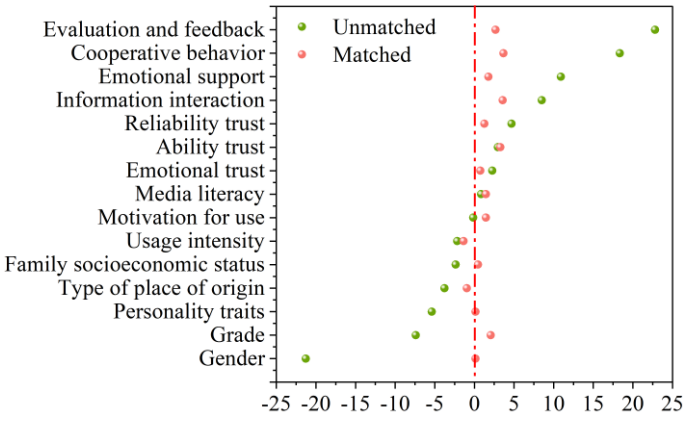

Figure 2: Covariate matching results

The distribution of scores after matching is shown in Fig. 3. The figure further shows the distribution of scores of the processing group and the control group after matching, the distribution is more similar, the above results show that the matching effect is better, and the other two matching results are similar to it, and they are not shown one by one.

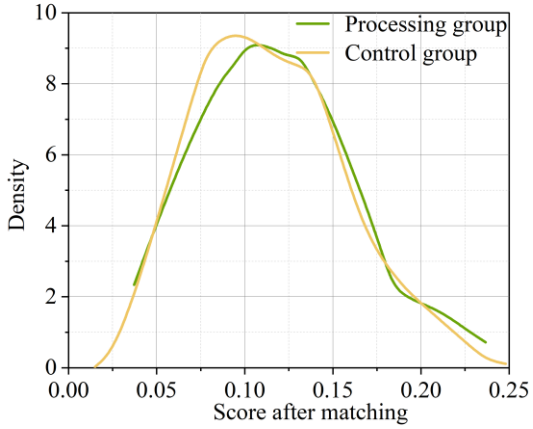

Figure 3: Score distribution after matching

The results of the robustness tests for the replacement regression model are shown in Table 4. Consistent with the baseline regression, fixed effects and other control variables are controlled for and standard errors are taken at the individual level. Overall, compared to the unmatched double-difference estimation results, the sign direction of the DID model for the other academic performance estimates is exactly the same as that of the unmatched double-difference estimation results, which suggests that at least the benchmark regression's estimation results for academic performance are robust, and also the estimated coefficients are reduced after matching compared to those in the benchmark regression, which suggests that the treatment effect of the strength of trust in social media interactions is obtained with the use of a more precisely matched sample more accurate estimation, which is also consistent with the expectation.

Table 4: Change the robustness test results of the regression model

Variable	Course grades(1)	Practical ability assessment(2)	Comprehensive academic achievements(3)	Learning behavior indicators(4)	Comprehensive index of academic performance(5)
Panel A. Radius matching					
PSM-DID	-5.588*** (0.787)	0.177*** (0.066)	0.415*** (0.089)	0.099 (0.066)	-5.896*** (0.968)
Fixed effect	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Control variable	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample size	2563	2563	2563	2563	2563
R^2	0.409	0.161	0.225	0.211	0.495
Panel B. Nearest neighbor matching					
PSM-DID	-5.369*** (0.836)	0.166** (0.069)	0.415*** (0.065)	0.085 (0.069)	-5.698*** (1.365)
Fixed effect	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Control variable	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample size	1533	1533	1533	1533	1533
R^2	0.333	0.22	0.24	0.241	0.478
Panel C. Nuclear matching					
PSM-DID	-5.889*** (0.798)	0.185*** (0.066)	0.412*** (0.085)	0.111 (0.056)	-5.112*** (0.936)
Fixed effect	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Control variable	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sample size	2477	2477	2477	2477	2477
R^2	0.602	0.349	0.409	0.351	0.641

3.5 The Effect of Trust Strength on Heterogeneity in Classes with Different Academic Performance

The effect of trust intensity on classes with different academic performance (DID) is shown in Table 5. From the table, it can be concluded that the most effective trust intensities in social media interactions were teacher lecture, reliability trust and competence trust for classes with poor, moderate and good academic performance, respectively. Specifically, the intensity of trust in social media interactions had a significant positive effect on the performance of the lower-achieving classes, but a significant negative effect on the performance of the middle-achieving classes and no significant effect on the performance of the better-achieving classes. This may be due to the fact that there is generally more room for improvement in the lower-performing classes. While there is a greater differentiation of scores in the middle-performing classes, it is slightly smaller in the higher-performing classes.

Table 5: The Impact of Trust Intensity on Students with Different Performances (DID)

Strength of trust	Bad	Medium	Good
Emotional trust	5.889***(1.478)	-3.589**(1.409)	1.998(1.226)
Ability to trust	3.659***(1.155)	4.695***(1.211)	4.859***(1.054)
Reliability trust	1.263(1.446)	6.058***(1.265)	1.326(1.287)
Information interaction	-3.658*(1.958)	0.899(1.598)	-2.515(1.985)
Emotional support	-0.121(1.362)	1.362(1.265)	8.596***(1.554)
Cooperative behavior	-2.875*(1.669)	-0.985(1.369)	0.087(1.593)
Evaluation feedback	-3.889*(2.021)	-3.336(1.695)	4.263**(1.265)

3.6 The Effect of Trust Strength on Heterogeneity in Classes with Different Academic Performance

The effect of different trust intensities on students' academic performance (DID) is shown in Table 6, where the columns indicate that the three categories of students in poor, medium and good academic performance are in the three categories of low (25%), medium (50%) and high (25%) performance, respectively. Emotional trust in the strength of trust has a significant positive effect on the academic performance of all students in the lower academic performance students, especially the value-added effect on the academic performance of the lower academic performance students is the most significant. However, the negative effect of affective trust on poorer and better academic performance students was significant among students with moderate academic performance. Among the better academic performers, affective trust had a significant positive effect only on the middle academic performers. The possible reasons for this result are: in the poorer students, the students' basic knowledge is generally deficient, and emotional trust can help the students to master more knowledge, and at the same time, the poorer the students' academic performance, the more room for them to improve their scores. In the case of the middle and better students, teachers paid more attention to the middle students. Competence trust had a significant positive effect on students with good and average academic performance. Among the lower academic performers, the better academic performers were more affected. Among students with moderate and good academic performance, students with moderate academic performance improved their academic performance more due to competency trust. Among the middle-performing students, the lower-performing students were also positively influenced by the competence trust. It can be found that competence trust again proved to play a stable positive role in most students' learning, and students of different competence levels benefited from social media interactions. The strength of trust in social media interactions only

significantly increased the academic performance of students in the middle of the academic performance spectrum, and had a greater impact on students in the middle and lower levels of academic performance. This may be due to the fact that among the middle-performing students, the middle-performing students are the majority.

Table 6: The influence of different levels of trust on students' academic performance

	Trust intensity	Academic performance		
		Bad(25%)	Medium(50%)	Good(25%)
Emotional trust	Weaker	7.751***(2.678)	5.641***(1.534)	4.857**(1.901)
	Medium	-6.48**(3.285)	-2.241(1.273)	-4.318***(1.452)
	Stronger	-3.869(2.74)	3.784***(0.976)	0.678(1.626)
Ability trust	Weaker	1.228(2.094)	3.828***(0.966)	5.735***(1.596)
	Medium	3.845*(2.008)	5.544***(0.985)	4.562***(1.323)
	Stronger	3.078(2.309)	5.561***(0.678)	4.447***(1.215)
Reliability trust	Weaker	3.807(3.074)	-0.373(1.021)	1.543(2.106)
	Medium	6.094**(2.404)	6.87***(1.198)	5.036***(1.544)
	Stronger	3.378(2.82)	0.982(1.146)	2.154(1.525)
Information interaction	Weaker	-3.391(3.068)	-2.88*(1.686)	-7.262**(1.94)
	Medium	4.175(2.621)	0.112(1.375)	0.905(1.47)
	Stronger	-5.9(3.866)	-2.139(1.794)	-4.301**(1.94)
Emotional support	Weaker	-0.383(2.226)	1.113(1.181)	-0.73(1.439)
	Medium	-0.429(2.346)	1.579(1.174)	2.485**(1.567)
	Stronger	12.052***(3.329)	8.31***(1.145)	5.675***(1.623)
Cooperative behavior	Weaker	-3.04(2.407)	-2.853*(1.413)	-0.823(2.019)
	Medium	-4.098*(2.306)	-1.031(1.396)	0.365(1.637)
	Stronger	2.827(3.504)	-1.328(1.258)	1.205(1.349)
Evaluation and feedback	Weaker	-6.255**(3.026)	-3.698*(1.099)	-0.985(1.896)
	Medium	-11.659**(4.477)	0.115(2.687)	1.569(3.326)
	Stronger	9.856***(3.269)	4.897***(1.522)	-1.577(1.287s)

4 Conclusion

This article takes a dance major course in a university as an example and uses a multi-period mixed cross-section DID (double difference) model to analyze the effect of trust intensity in social media interactions on academic performance, the article draws the following conclusions:

(1) In the statistical descriptive analysis of the explanatory variables and the fitted factors, the mean value of the composite index of academic performance of dance majors was 54.554% before the trust interaction, but after the increase of the trust interaction, the mean value of the composite index of academic performance increased to 58.563%, which was a large increase. It can be concluded that there is a large positive effect of trust intensity on the level of educational development of dance students.

(2) In the baseline regression analysis, affective trust and competence trust have a significant effect on academic performance,the higher the intensity of trust in social media interactions,the more likely it is to lead to good academic performance. Meanwhile, emotional support has a significant effect on academic performance, the better the emotional support, the better the dance majors learn.

To summarize, in daily study and life, most students only focus on the convenience brought by using social media, but ignore the importance of the strength of trust in social media

interaction. Therefore, colleges and universities should take effective measures to make college students fully realize the possible effects of using social media. They should systematically talk about the use of social media by students and the positive and negative impacts that the strength of trust in social media will bring to college students, and put forward the suggestions and measures for the rational use of social media by college students. Colleges and universities can make students realize the possible effects of social media use through regular special reports, peer sharing and setting up examples.

About the Author

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