



## **SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN LEARNING ENGLISH**

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**Abstract:** Social media plays an increasingly important role in today's society, serving a variety of functions, including education. Its widespread use by students raises questions about its impact on their learning outcomes. This study aims to determine social media use among class XI students at Adventist High School Unklab Airmadidi, analyze their academic performance in English, and investigate the correlation between these variables. This research used a descriptive-quantitative approach involving 91 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data collection used a questionnaire adapted from Gupta and Bashir (2008) and translated into Indonesian. A pilot study validated the instrument, showing high consistency (Cronbach Alpha = 0.907). The results show a significant positive correlation between social media use and students' academic performance in English. These findings challenge the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between social media use and academic achievement, thereby triggering resistance. It highlights the potential of social media as a valuable tool for English language learning, emphasizing the development of students' critical skills. In an educational context, integrating social media into teaching can support interactions between teachers and students, enhancing students' learning experiences. Future research efforts should consider expanding sample sizes, using more robust research designs, and exploring additional variables that may influence the relationship between social media use and academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Social Media Usage, Academic Achievement, Learning English

**Abstrak:** Media sosial memainkan peran yang semakin penting dalam masyarakat saat ini, melayani berbagai fungsi, termasuk pendidikan. Penggunaannya yang luas oleh siswa menimbulkan pertanyaan tentang dampaknya terhadap hasil belajar mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat penggunaan media sosial di kalangan siswa kelas XI di SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi, menganalisis prestasi akademik mereka dalam bahasa Inggris, dan menyelidiki korelasi antara variabel-variabel tersebut. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-kuantitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan 91 responden yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. Pengumpulan data menggunakan kuesioner yang diadaptasi dari Gupta dan Bashir (2008) dan diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia. Sebuah studi percontohan memvalidasi instrumen, yang menunjukkan keandalan yang tinggi (Cronbach Alpha = 0,907). Hasil menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang signifikan antara penggunaan media sosial dan prestasi akademik siswa dalam bahasa Inggris. Temuan ini menantang hipotesis bahwa tidak ada hubungan signifikan antara penggunaan media sosial dan prestasi akademik, sehingga memicu penolakan terhadap hal tersebut. Hal ini menyoroti potensi media sosial sebagai alat yang berharga untuk pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, menekankan pada pengembangan keterampilan kritis siswa. Dalam konteks pendidikan, mengintegrasikan media sosial ke dalam pengajaran dapat mendukung interaksi antara guru dan siswa, meningkatkan pengalaman belajar siswa. Upaya penelitian dimasa depan harus mempertimbangkan perluasan ukuran sampel, penggunaan desain penelitian yang lebih kuat, dan eksplorasi variabel tambahan yang mungkin mempengaruhi hubungan antara penggunaan media sosial dan prestasi akademik.

**Kata Kunci:** Penggunaan Media Sosial, Prestasi Belajar, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris

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## INTRODUCTION

Social media is a means or instrument many people use to socialize with one another and to transcend information across many people. It has an essential role in today's world. It is used for education, business, and other purposes, allowing users to quickly create and share content with colleagues or friends. Sitamraju (2018) stated that the role played by social media in human life is very dominant since it can have a significant influence when news is reported or an event is shared using this platform. Moreover, Siddiqui and Singh (2016) believe that with the development of technology, social media has become inseparable from everyone's daily routine. It means that not only adults use social media, but children do the same thing, especially students. Students nowadays use social media as their Wikipedia, and how they deal with its usage is expected to contribute to their ability and eventually improve their academic achievement (Akram, 2017).

Achievement is a success reached by someone with hard work and effort. There are various kinds of achievements, such as work and education. Academic achievement is considered how well students can fulfill their learning responsibilities and tasks assigned to them. Students are subject to this to prove that they have accomplished the learning goals set for them to achieve. It can be observed and measured by teachers by giving some examinations. The learning outcomes obtained by students will provide an infinite sense of satisfaction if they succeed in achieving brilliant achievements or if students can obtain them successfully. Within the past decades, several studies on how students learn the English language identified essential factors that need to be considered by English teachers. The findings have shown that student's academic achievement is significantly related to economic, social, and psychological factors (Bianchi & Philips, 2005; Lagi & Raja, 2017). In addition, other factors of increasing and decreasing learning, such as gender differences, teacher qualifications, and experience, student attitudes towards learning, or interest in learning as part of the teacher or student characteristics, were also examined as being significantly related to student academic achievement (Aripin et al., 2008; Mlambo, 2011). Other studies found that student academic achievement is related to different factors such as teaching strategy, learning style, class environment, parents' educational background, and socioeconomic status (Aripin cited by Oguguo et al., 2020).

The data obtained found that more than 4.5 billion users use internet facilities, and the most widely used is in social media, reaching 3.8 billion users. It was also revealed that from the entire world population, almost 60% of the population has been accustomed to using the Internet. It means that more than half of the world's population depends on social media daily (Kemp, 2020). Despite the widespread belief that social media might improve students' learning, dealing with it severely affects their academic achievement. It is not surprising if the academic achievement of students is worrisome (Aina & Olanipekun, 2014). Since students have become dependent on the exciting attractions offered by social media, they tend to neglect their schoolwork and spend more hours on social media. Moreover, based on the interview with the English teacher, it was admitted that some students at one private high school in Airmadidi, North Sulawesi, were reluctant to join the teaching-learning activity on time and tended to be passive and were

late in submitting their assignments. As a result, they showed unsatisfactory performance in English subjects in their final test result.

Unfortunately, increasing social media availability and usage decreases students' attention to learning. On the other hand, students expected to use social media wisely tend to spend their time using it not for learning but to satisfy their desire for entertainment (Muthui & Sirera, 2017). Social media addiction causes students to spend more hours on mobile phones and access social media continuously throughout the day. Not only that, Oguguo et al. (2020) claimed that low learning outcomes in recent times are associated with rapid technological advances.

On the other hand, studies by Altam (2020) and Thariq (2020) argued that academic achievement is attained by permitting students to use social media to interact, share, and exchange information and ideas with their teachers and classmates. Those researchers argued that social media has become one of several valuable instruments in improving students learning, and its usage enables students to learn and work together to achieve their academic goals. Many studies on social media usage and academic achievement have yielded different results. Thus, this situation triggered the researcher to study whether social media usage significantly correlates with students' academic achievement. Based on the identification of the problems elaborated before, the research questions of this study are to determine 1) The level of social media usage and 2) The level of students' academic achievement in learning English. It was also to prove that 3) There is a relationship between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement. This study is expected to inform English teachers about their student's social media usage level and academic achievement in learning English. Students will know their level of academic achievement and realize whether they utilize social media for learning correctly. Moreover, the findings of this study are also expected to prove that students' academic achievement is related to how well they use social media in learning, and they will be motivated to optimize their achievement using social media accordingly.

This study focused on the relationship between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement in grade XI SMA Unklab in the second semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. The researchers used questionnaires about social media constructed by Gupta and Bashir (2008) to collect the data. The questionnaire is based on the theory of Uses and Gratification by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974). The respondents involved in this study were grade XI students of a private high school in Airmadidi. The limitation faced by the researchers during the data collection was that the researchers could not control how the respondents answered the questionnaire. Even though some explanations have been given to the respondents, the researcher did not know whether the respondents answered honestly or carelessly. The other limitation was the physical condition of the respondents, whether they were in good condition or not when they responded to the questionnaire. Their physical condition could influence how they answer the questionnaire items.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study attempted to determine if social media usage and students' academic achievement in learning English are related. It is based on the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). This theory is an approach to explain why and how people use social media actively to meet their needs. It is mentioned that social media users choose any media that can give them satisfaction because it allows people to increase their knowledge, makes them feel comfortable, provides opportunities to interact with others, or serves as a means of escaping from the problems they face (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974). That is why the influence of social media in education and communication hardly ever being underestimated (Gulbahar et al., 2008). Social media carries and functions as a tool of communication to share information among learners and teachers and as a learning tool to enable students to improve their academic achievement further. These two functions will be elaborated as the following, respectively.

### **Social Media as a Communication Tool**

The existence of social media makes it easier for every user to interact. According to Akram (2017), the use of social media by billions of people around the world is to create relationships and share information. Various platforms from social media are used, including WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Google, to achieve this goal (Oguguo et al., 2020). The variety of applications provided in social media makes it easier for students to establish relationships and communicate with friends or teachers. Likewise, the advantage of various existing features in social media makes the interaction not only done by sending current news to each other but can also occur by sending pictures, photos, or videos (Baruah, 2021). This inevitable technological growth unconsciously leads students to rely more on social media and the growing need to interact with peers and teachers or express themselves (Joo & Teng, 2017). Thus, utilizing social media can provide many alternative ways for students to build a sense of community, a sense of social connectedness, and student-teacher relations.

Concerning the advantage of using social media as part of teaching, it was explained that social media also makes it easy for students and teachers to communicate with each other in real time and only takes a relatively short time to get feedback from the teachers (Bosch, 2009). Not only for sharing information between students and teachers, but the use of social media also allows discussions related to the subject matter, rapid distribution of learning materials, and functions as an effective means of communication for teachers to be able to reach students who dare not to speak in class (Browning et al., 2011). Thus, social media strengthens and supports students as a communication tool.

### **Social Media as a Learning Tool**

It can be said that social media is also a means used in the classroom, specifically during the teaching and learning process. It happens because research found that more than half of students who study in schools use social media to learn with group mates, exchange ideas directly, and share knowledge, information, and assignments. Data also showed that the use of social media to connect with classmates to study or do schoolwork is done by 64% of students several times each month. The rest use social media to ask

teachers about assignments or lesson materials (Caraher & Braselman, 2010). The information attained means that the primary use of various social media applications for students while learning is to gain knowledge and mastery of the lessons. It is even stated by Altam (2020) that most of the student's time is spent on social media because learning through social media gives them exciting and new experiences in learning.

Moreover, when learning English at school, it is rare to find native-speaking teachers, but through social media, native speakers can be easily found. Social media can be an effective medium for learning new languages for novice students, especially international languages such as English. Consequently, their knowledge and skills in the English language are gained.

### **Students' Academic Achievement**

Achievement is the result of hard work done by someone. Academic achievement is described as the results or abilities of a student, which indicate the extent to which the student can achieve specific goals at the end of the school year. These goals are the core of all learning activities carried out at school. Learning achievement is also defined as the highest achievement that determines students' success in the future (Omachonu, 2019), so what happens to these students is a positive change in behavior from what was not done before to something they did. More specifically, Tuckman (1975) explained that academic achievement is a tangible manifestation of students who can understand the concepts and knowledge taught, master some skills, and produce the right and acceptable ideas. Adane (2013) added that the academic achievement achieved by these students leads to how students can overcome or complete various tasks given to them by teachers. Thus, their hard work makes it possible to complete their education following the specified period.

The achievement obtained by students is the final result of what students have coped with, or in other words, it is the mark of student's performance after having their final examination. As something that concerns students, teachers, and even parents, the learning achievements accomplished by students are always the main focus of educators. Some even try to discover what factors can improve student achievement through various research efforts. In their research, Tapscott and Williams (2010) proved that applications contained in social media used by students can significantly improve student learning outcomes and mastery of knowledge, enable students to interact with each other, work together, participate actively during learning, share learning resources, and be able to think critically. This situation occurs because social media allows students to engage in meaningful learning activities, which support the development of their skills and competencies. Furthermore, Tiryakioglu and Erzurum (2011) specified various benefits that can be obtained from using social media to learn, including the absence of limited time and place. Students can learn from anywhere. Students also have the chance to learn systematically and briefly with technological advances obtained through social media.

Similarly, students can get answers instantly if they have questions. Even with existing platforms, students can repeat viewing and learning the material that has been taught. That is why students must pay attention to factors related to their academic

achievement since good academic achievement is significant and needed to prepare for their next level of education.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study is descriptive-quantitative. The descriptive research design was used to measure the level of social media usage and the level of students' academic achievement in learning English. The population of this study were grade XI students from SMA Unklab Airmadidi who enrolled in the second semester of the school year 2020/2021. 134 students in grade XI are divided into 4 classes: grade XI IPA 1 consists of 38 students, XI IPA 2 consists of 36 students, XI IPA 3 consists of 35 students, and XI IPS consists of 25 students.

### **Data Collection**

The researcher used the purposive sampling to gather the data needed for this study. 91 respondents out of 104 filled in the questionnaire in this study. The instrument was used to collect data in the form of a questionnaire. This inventory was adapted from Gupta and Bashir's (2008) Social Networking Usage Questionnaire: Development and Validation in an Indian Higher Education Context. The researcher then translated it into Indonesian and handed it to experts in this field to validate the content. This instrument consisted of 19 items. Items 1,3,4,6 and 19 are social media as a communication tool, and items 2,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17, and 18 are social media as a learning tool. To fill out the questionnaire, the researcher provided the responses to be chosen by the respondents in the form of a Likert Scale, such as follows: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always. To ensure that the questionnaire's items were valid and reliable to be used as the instrument to collect the data.

The instrument was distributed to 30 respondents who were students from different parallels from the same high school. The result from the pilot study showed that out of 19 items, one item was invalid. The invalid item was item number 12. Then, the invalid item was removed. A pilot study was conducted to determine whether the valid items were reliable, and those 18 items were analyzed using statistical tools. The score of Cronbach Alpha was 0.907. This score indicated that the 18 items were reliable enough to be used as the instrument in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

To interpret the level of social media usage in learning English, the researchers utilized the Likert Scale, from 1 to 5, where 1 = 1.00 – 1.49, 2 = 1.50 – 2.49, 3 = 2.50 – 3.49, 4 = 3.50 – 4.49, and 5 = 4.50 – 5.00. The interpretation was based on the scale from very low to very high. In addition, to interpret students' academic achievement, *Laporan Penilaian Hasil Belajar Siswa* was applied with the grading system set by Permendikbud (2013), which is categorized into <50 means Not Enough, 51 – 65 means Enough, 66 – 80 means Good, and 81 -100 means Very Good. Whether a significant relationship occurred or not was determined by the p-value < or > 0.05. If the significant value is < 0.05, it means there is a significant correlation between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement. On the contrary, if the significant

value is  $> 0.05$ , there is no significant correlation between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

This part presents the result of the data's findings, analysis, and interpretation. It discusses the answers to three research questions. The first is the level of social media usage in learning English, and the second is the level of student's academic achievement and the relationship between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement.

#### The Level of Social Media Usage in Learning English

The first research question of this study was to find out the level of social media usage in learning English. Table 1 shows the mean score of social media usage by the students. Based on the analysis, the mean score of social media usage was 3.82, in the range of 3.50-4.49, which was interpreted as a high level of social media usage in learning English.

Table 1. The mean score of social media usage

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social_Media_Usage	91	2.67	4.50	3.8208	0.48192
Valid N (listwise)	91				

#### The Level of Students Academic Achievement in Learning English

The second research question of this study was to find out the level of English achievement. Table 2 shows the mean score of students' achievement in learning English. Based on the analysis, the mean score of English achievement was 91.03, in the range of 80 – 100, which was interpreted as an excellent level of English academic achievement.

Table 2. The mean score of student achievement in learning English

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learning achievement	91	77	99	91.03	6.359
Valid N (listwise)	91				

#### The Correlation between Social Media Usage and Students' Academic Achievement in Learning English

The third research question was determining the correlation between social media usage in English learning and students' academic achievement. The data was computed using a Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool. Table 3 shows the correlation between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement. The finding showed  $r = 0.230$  and the  $p = 0.014 > \alpha = 0.05$ .

Table 3. The correlation between social media usage and students' academic achievement

	Student's Academic Achievement	
Social Media Usage	Pearson Correlation	0.230
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.014
	N	91

## Discussion

Grade XI of SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi experiences high social media usage in learning English. It is nothing new that students nowadays tend to use social media anywhere and at any time, including social media in the school environment during class hours. It is just that using social media without restrictions regarding what content is examined, the results obtained may deviate into negative things. Since the teacher directs the students to utilize social media to help them obtain knowledge and information about the material being studied, they can benefit from it.

Grade XI of SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi students also showed that they could accomplish remarkable performance in English subject learning. The learning results show that they can achieve the learning targets or objectives. Achieving excellent English scores results from their efforts to be active during learning activities, utilize the infrastructure provided in class, including using social media for learning purposes, diligently complete the assignments given by the teacher, and prepare themselves by studying diligently.

The finding proved that a significant correlation occurred between social media usage in learning English and students' academic achievement. The relationship that emerged between the two variables under study was in a positive direction. It means that an increase in the level of social media usage causes an increase in students' learning outcomes in English subjects.

The result of this study is similar to the findings of previous studies conducted by different researchers. The study conducted by Baruah (2012) aimed to determine the impact of social media on student academic achievement. The result showed that social media usage served better as a tool for teachers and students to effectively communicate learning materials or homework. They admitted that they used social media to seek help from their English teacher in doing homework and finding information about academic matters. Moreover, some English reading activities they did regularly helped them learn the target language.

Education and social media can complement one another since social media usage is related to students' academic achievement. These findings support the theory that social media is used to satisfy its users who want to improve their knowledge, feel comfortable, reduce stress, and make friends as much as possible. That is why it is related to students' social and psychological factors as well since the usage of social media might reduce students' anxiety and unease during learning, especially when they have to learn new vocabulary or speaking skills in an English classroom (Bianchi & Philips, 2005; Lagi & Raja, 2017). Not to mention, other factors that students gain from social media usage, such as students' skills improvement by self-learning through social media and self-evaluation of their progress, are examined as significantly related to enhancing their academic achievement (Muthui & Sirera, 2017; Oguguo et al., 2020). So, grade XI students of SMA Advent Unklab's academic achievement is significantly related to their social media usage.

Therefore, it would be the responsibility of English teachers to continuously give students an understanding that students' textbook is not the only source of learning.



Instead, social media is the other source of knowledge that they can utilize as long as they use it for academic purposes. English teachers may integrate social media into class exercises so students can post or share their group projects regularly, with clear explanations about the danger of social media if it is misused.

It is also essential to encourage students to be responsible in using social media when communicating with friends and teachers to avoid inappropriate social media usage. Students have to use social media more for academic purposes than for entertainment. They can still increase their academic achievement if they can manage their time well and elevate their skills and knowledge by using social media applications on Instagram, such as applications for learning English speaking, reading, and writing.

One aspect that needs to be emphasized in using social media for English language learning is the development of students' critical skills. Productive use of social media should encourage students to cultivate skills such as deep understanding, critical analysis, and evaluation of information (Bouvier & Machin, 2018; Habibi & Salim, 2021). When students use social media to search for information or understand learning material, they must be trained to dig deeper into it. This important skill can help them in English learning and everyday life.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that using social media positively impacts students' academic achievement in learning English. Grade XI students at SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi demonstrated high social media usage, and their academic results in English were also excellent. These findings also revealed a significant correlation between social media usage and students' academic achievement. Therefore, the hypothesis stating the absence of a significant relationship between social media usage in learning and students' academic achievement has been rejected. Social media can be a valuable tool in enhancing English language learning, provided it is used wisely and responsibly, emphasizing the development of students' critical skills in understanding, analyzing, and evaluating information.

In the educational context, social media can serve as a supportive tool for interaction between teachers and students, enabling students to seek additional information and enhancing their understanding of the learning material. However, it is essential to continually instill in students the understanding that social media usage should be for academic purposes, and English teachers can integrate social media into their teaching. Expanding the sample size, employing more robust research designs, and considering other variables affecting the relationship between social media usage and academic achievement would benefit future research.

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