

The Impact of Social Media and Browsing the Internet on English Learning in Higher Education, Setting At Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic

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Abstract:

Cell phones have become an indispensable communication tool across the globe. With the technological advancements, cell phones have undergone a significant transformation from being stationary or boot telephones that required cables to hand-held devices that can be carried anywhere without cables. Today, smartphones have become increasingly sophisticated and offer features like cameras, internet access, email, and other applications that support human activities. Public places like airports, terminals, restaurants, or campus canteens are now equipped with WIFI or hotspots, making it easier for individuals to use the internet while enjoying food. However, the use of smartphones on campus is considered disruptive to the student education process. As a result, many higher education institutions prohibit the use of smartphones on their premises. In a recent research study, the authors examined the impact and effects of internet activities, such as browsing and social media usage, on improving students' abilities, particularly in English. The study involved 80 students who completed a 30-question questionnaire. The data analysis revealed that almost all the students were active internet users, with 74 of them using smartphones for both browsing and social media. Only six students did not use smartphones for social media, indicating that Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic students rely heavily on the internet for their academic and personal needs. Out of the total respondents, 21 students spend 20 to 30 minutes a day on social media, accounting for 26.3 percent of the total. 19 students used smartphones for social media for about 2 to 4 hours. Surprisingly, 11 students were willing to spend more than 5 hours a day on social media. The findings reveal that most students at Lhokseuma we State Polytechnic are more inclined towards social media rather than browsing the internet. The t-test and F-test showed a significant correlation between browsing and social media usage with English achievement among students of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic. It indicates that using the internet for browsing and social media has a positive impact on academic performance, particularly in English.

Keywords: smartphones, browsing, social media, English

Introduction

Over the past five decades, there has been an increasing willingness to develop individual communication in world. The competition among telecommunication companies has had a positive effect on providing the best service to users. The idea of connecting people across the world has had a significant impact on human settlements and widened the gap between individuals. However, this has also led to the development of communication tools to make it easier and quicker for people to interact with each other. The advancement of communication technology has made it possible for people to communicate through mobile phones, which allow users to send messages, files, and documents. Mobile phones are not only cheap, but also provide convenience to users as they can be taken anywhere. This communication tool is accessible to almost all groups, including individuals with disabilities and children.

The long queues in telephone shops and the use of fax and telegram communication devices have almost disappeared with the widespread use of mobile phones. The speed and ease of accessing information have revolutionized the way people stay connected, and the competition among telecommunication companies is expected to continue to provide users with the best service.

As technology advances, mobile phones are becoming more sophisticated and feature-packed, and are now commonly known as smartphones (Liany, Tulung, and Lasut 2021). These devices offer much more than just direct communication, unlike traditional telephone devices. Along with their multimedia capabilities, they allow users to access the internet, browse websites, check their email, and use social media platforms. They also come equipped with cameras that enable users to capture and send clear images, depending on the device's resolution. The purpose of smartphones is to make it easier for users to complete various tasks and access information efficiently. For instance, students can use their smartphones to find books or references for their final or thesis tasks. They no longer need to go to libraries since social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram can provide all the information they require.

The use of smartphones has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, especially in Indonesia. According to survey data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), there were 215.63 million internet users in Indonesia between 2022 and 2023. This is a significant number, given that Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world with a population of 277 million as of August 8, 2023. Among those users, 73 million are smartphone users, with the majority age between 18 to 25 years old. This data also shows that the majority of users, around 85% prefer using smartphones to access the internet, while 87.4% use social networks. This indicates that students are one of the most active internet users, and they rely heavily on their smartphones to access the internet.

The development of mobile phones has brought about several challenges for everyone. From basic educational institutions to tertiary institutions, people are beginning to pay serious attention to the impact of using this communication technology (Matsumoto 2021). Since the outbreak of Covid-19, smartphones have become new learning strategies for work and study (Amri et al. 2023). Even elementary school children who were previously prohibited from using smartphones are now using them to access materials sent via social media. Some parents have even bought new smartphones for their children. The situation is not much different in universities where students attend lectures and discussions using the internet, through social media applications like WhatsApp video calls and Zoom. This has led to a significant increase in smartphone usage, especially as places like drink and snack shops on campus are facilitated by WIFI or hotspots, making it easy for students to use cheap internet while enjoying their food. However, the use of mobile phones on campus is considered a nuisance, and educational institutions are increasingly banning their use. As a result, some universities have begun making policies regarding the use of smartphones on campus (Esechie et al. 2022). This is the focus of this research. There are debates about the effects of smartphones on students, with some arguing that it leads to internet addiction and a lack of critical thinking. The past two decades have witnessed controversy over whether the use of digital technology has damaged or enhanced adolescents' social relationships, which influences their development. (Huang et al. 2022) addressed this debate by specifying the effect of different types of smartphone use content on social relationships, rather than simply relying on screen time spent on digital media. Some universities have even banned the use of smartphones in classrooms, fearing that students may rely too heavily on them to access information (Selwyn and Aagaard 2021). However, others argue that smartphones can have a positive influence on students (Uğur and Koç 2015). For example, smartphones can provide easy access to information, which is especially useful when books are not available in the library. Additionally, social media can also be used by lecturers and students to facilitate learning interactions and discussions, even when face-to-face meetings are not possible. While some researchers suggest that over-reliance on smartphones may hinder cognitive skills such as brainstorming and recalling, others believe that smartphones can enhance student learning. It is important to further research the impact of browsing and social media on students' academic achievement, particularly in English.

Research Methodology

A survey was conducted using questionnaires to collect data from students at Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic. This descriptive research method was used to gather opinions and solve population problems, test hypotheses, and answer research-related questions (Bhushan and Alok 2019). The author also did field observation to understand the process of student learning and the students' state during classroom lectures. The data collected was cross-sectional and came from different subjects. Causal analysis was used to measure the relationship between the variables, including the dependent variable, Student Cumulative Index (Y), and the independent variables, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. The author took a random sample of 100 students, using a stratified sampling formula. The questionnaire consisted of 30 questions, divided

into two parts: the first part included the respondents' characteristics, and the second part dealt with the factors that influence the value of English students. The Likert scale was used to present the Student's Cumulative Index (Y) in quantitative form. The questionnaire only took 45 minutes to answer. The data collected was analyzed using multiple regression analysis with the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) simple equatio. Preliminary tests such as normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation were performed to ensure the validity of the data (Astivia and Zumbo 2019) . The SPSS program was used to process the data. Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the accuracy and consistency of research data.

Result and discussion

This research provides an illustration that the majority of students at Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic use the internet, with both computers and smartphones being common devices for searching information. This can be seen in the table below:

Characteristics of Internet use with Computers

No.	Internet Users with Computers	Total	Percentage(%)
1.	User	78	78,00
2.	Non user	2	2,00
Total		80	80,00

Characteristics of Internet use with Smartphone

No.	Internet Users with smartphones	To tal	Percentage(%)
1.	User	74	74,00
2.	Non user	6	6,00
Total		80	80,00

A research conducted on the students of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic revealed that almost all of them are active internet users. Out of 80 students who participated in the research, 78 of them use computers or laptops to access the internet. Only two percent of the students did not use the internet at all. Similarly, 74 out of 80 students used smartphones to browse the web, while only six students did not use smartphones for internet use. This indicates that the students of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic rely heavily on the internet for their academic and personal needs. A research conducted on the students of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic revealed that almost all of them are active internet users. Out of 80 students who participated in the research, 78 of them use computers or laptops to access the internet. Only two percent of the students did not use the internet at all. Similarly, 74 out of 80 students used smartphones to browse the web, while only six students did not use smartphones for internet use. This indicates that the students of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic rely heavily on the internet for their academic and personal needs.

Students' Browsing Time

Time of used	F	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Use 5 to 15 minutes a day	9	11.3	11.3	11.3
Use 20 to 30 minutes a day	24	30.0	30.0	41.3
Use 20 to 1 hours or 60 minutes a day	20	25.0	25.0	66.3
Use 2 to 4 hours a day	19	23.8	23.8	90.0
More than 5 hours a day	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Meanwhile, the use of time by Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic students for social media using smartphones is as shown in the following table:

	Time of used	Frequency	percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	Use 5 to 15 minutes a day	13	16.3	16.3
	Use 20 to 30 minutes a day	21	26.3	26.3
	Use 20 to 1 hours or 60 minutes a day	16	20.0	20.0
	Use 2 to 4 hours a day	19	23.8	23.8
	More than 5 hours a day	11	13.8	13.8
	Total	80	100.0	100.0

The data presented in the table above demonstrates the usage of smartphones for social media among Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic students. Out of the total respondents, 21 students spend 20 to 30 minutes a day on social media, accounting for 26.3 percent of the total. 19 students used smartphones for social media for about 2 to 4 hours. While Surprisingly, 11 students were willing to spend more than 5 hours a day on social media. The findings reveal that most students at Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic are more inclined towards social media rather than browsing the internet. Hence, it can be inferred that these students are more likely to spend more time on their smartphones engaging in social media activities.

The Impact of Browsing And Social Media on English Language Proficiency

Hypothesis testing was conducted to determine if a hypothesis was accepted or rejected. The following are the results.

Simultaneous Test (F Test)

The purpose of conducting a simultaneous test is to determine if Browsing (X_1) and Social media (X_2) variables combined have an impact on English proficiency (Y). The test results are as follows:

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.384	20	.119	1.030	.000 ^a
	Residual	6.827	59	.116		
	Total	9.211	79			

a. Predictors: (Constant), J10, B2, B7, B9, J3, B5, B10, B1, B3, J2, B4, B8, J8, B6, J5, J9, J7, J6, J1, J4

b. Dependent Variable: English proficiency

According to the table presented above, the calculated F-value is 1.030 with a significant value of 0.444. On the other hand, the F-table value is 2.76 with a level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Comparing both values, we can see that the calculated F-value is less than the F-table value, i.e., $1.030 < 2.76$. Therefore, we can conclude that the browsing variable and the social media variable together have an influence on the English proficiency of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic students. As a result, we can accept the null hypothesis (H_0).

Partial Test (t Test)

The partial test results in this research are as shown in table below:

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.410	.363		9.405	.000
B1	-.027	.056	-.065	-.479	.634
B2	.034	.041	.110	.823	.414
B3	-.046	.050	-.129	-.907	.368
B4	.019	.045	.059	.436	.665
B5	.027	.052	.075	.515	.609
B6	-.044	.047	-.132	-.936	.353
B7	-.003	.043	-.010	-.073	.942
B8	.031	.043	.101	.736	.465
B9	-.066	.040	-.225	-1.645	.105
B10	-.029	.047	-.096	-.619	.539
J1	.030	.049	.106	.609	.545
J2	.017	.048	.052	.350	.728
J3	-.015	.055	-.044	-.275	.784
J4	.063	.071	.159	.889	.377
J5	.006	.051	.021	.123	.902
J6	.083	.057	.248	1.449	.153
J7	-.067	.037	-.283	-1.801	.077
J8	-.058	.035	-.244	-1.663	.102
J9	.022	.041	.082	.541	.590
J10	-.038	.037	-.134	-1.016	.314

Based on the data presented in Table 4.5, the t count is 9,405 and the significant value is 0.00. In the meantime, the t table obtained is 2,358 at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. When comparing the t- count with the t table, we can see that 9,405 is greater than 2,358. Thus, we can conclude that the use of browsing and social media variables such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter have a significant impact on the English proficiency of Lhokseumawe State Polytechnic students. This study's results indicate that browsing and social media have a considerable influence on the student's English proficiency . Using a smartphone on campus can have several advantages for students who are looking to improve their English proficiency. Firstly, it is a free tool that they can use anytime. Secondly, students feel more comfortable using English when communicating with their peers through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. While there are other applications available, they are less commonly used. Through social media, students can interact with each other and correct each other's mistakes. Lecturers can also monitor their students' activities, correct their mistakes, and guide them in the right direction. With the use of English becoming more commonplace,

students feel more motivated to use the language and less embarrassed about making mistakes. However, this use of technology on campus must be monitored by campus authorities, especially the lecturers, who can guide students to use it responsibly. By browsing and social networking, many students are able to connect with friends, exchange information in English, and access lecture materials and references. This helps them become more active in studying English and independent learners. It is essential that students learn by using media, but it is equally important that they are guided by their lecturers.

Conclusion

The use of smartphones for browsing and accessing social mediasites on campus is advantageous for students of Lhokseumawe State Poleytehnic. It helps them connect with friends, find information related to their studies, and become more active in their English learning. However, it is essential for English lecturers to provide proper control and guidance to ensure that students use these tools responsibly. Mutual sharing of information can also help students deepen their understanding of English materials. Overall, browsing and using social media sites can have a positive impact on students' academic performance, particularly in English. Using a smartphone on campus can have advantages for students who are looking to improve their English proficiency. Firstly, it is a free tool that they can use anytime. Secondly, students feel more comfortable using English when communicating with their peers through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook.

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