

Influence of YouTube Referencing on the Academic Performance among Senior High School Students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between YouTube referencing and the academic performance of senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2025–2026. Anchored on the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, Social Learning Theory, and Constructivist Learning Theory, the study investigated students' frequency of YouTube use, perceptions of YouTube as a learning reference, and their academic performance. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed involving 290 senior high school students selected through random sampling from three senior high schools in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi. Data were collected using a validated self-constructed questionnaire-checklist utilizing a Likert Scale. Statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Kruskal-Wallis H Test, and Mann-Whitney U Test were used in the analysis. Findings revealed that students moderately used YouTube as a supplementary learning reference, particularly for subject tutorials, project preparation, and academic support. Students generally perceived YouTube as a useful and effective educational tool that enhanced engagement, understanding, motivation, and access to academic information. Significant relationships were identified between students' frequency of YouTube use and academic performance, as well as between students' perceptions of YouTube and academic performance. The study further found significant differences in academic performance based on age and gender, while no significant differences were observed in terms of grade level and time span of YouTube use. Overall, the study concluded that YouTube positively influenced students' academic performance when used responsibly as a supplementary learning resource. The study recommended the responsible use of YouTube, integration of educational video content into instruction, and guidance in selecting reliable online materials. The study supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on Quality Education by highlighting the role of digital learning platforms in promoting accessible and flexible learning opportunities. It also relates to SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure through the integration of digital technology in education. In terms of sustainability impact, the study contributes to educational and technological sustainability by encouraging the responsible use of digital learning resources to enhance student learning outcomes, particularly in geographically isolated communities such as South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Constructivist Learning, Digital Learning, Multimedia Learning, Online Education, Senior High School Students, Social Learning Theory, YouTube Referencing, YouTube Tutorials

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed educational practices, particularly through the increasing use of online platforms such as YouTube. As a widely accessible video-sharing platform, YouTube provides educational, informational, and interactive content that supports students' academic learning and self-directed study. Its multimedia features enable learners to access lectures, tutorials, demonstrations, and subject-specific materials anytime and anywhere, making it a valuable supplementary learning resource (Portugal et al., 2018; DeWitt et al., 2013; Pratama et al., 2020). During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of YouTube became more prominent as students relied heavily on online learning environments. Despite its educational benefits, concerns remain regarding content reliability, distraction, misinformation, and over-dependence on digital platforms. This study examines the use of YouTube referencing in relation to the academic performance of senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2025–2026.

1.1 Background of YouTube Referencing and Academic Performance among Senior High School Students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi

YouTube has emerged as a transformative educational platform that reshaped how students access and consume knowledge in the digital era. It allows users to upload, stream, share, and interact with various forms of video content, including educational materials, tutorials, documentaries, and instructional videos (Portugal et al., 2018; DeWitt et al., 2013). Its accessibility and wide range of content make it a valuable academic reference tool for students and educators alike (Pratama

et al., 2020). The platform gained increased educational significance during the COVID-19 pandemic when students shifted to online and modular learning environments. As students were expected to learn independently, YouTube became an important source of instructional support and academic reinforcement (Islami, 2022). Educational videos provide visual and auditory learning experiences that simplify complex concepts and encourage student engagement (Sharma & Sharma, 2021; Dughera et al., 2021). Students also use YouTube to review lessons repeatedly, improve comprehension, and access learning materials beyond classroom discussions (Pappas, 2015). Despite these benefits, the educational use of YouTube also presents challenges. Issues related to misinformation, unreliable internet connectivity, distraction, excessive dependence on online content, and reduced engagement with traditional learning materials have been identified as concerns affecting students' learning behaviors (Islami, 2022). Consequently, there remains a need to assess how YouTube referencing influences academic performance, particularly among senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi.

1.2 Themes and Insights on YouTube Referencing as a Learning Tool for Senior High School Students

Studies consistently show that YouTube enhances learning by providing authentic, engaging, and accessible educational content. Authentic video materials improve students' understanding and comprehension through exposure to real-life situations and demonstrations (Maness, 2004). Educational videos also increase motivation, participation, and enjoyment in learning by integrating visual and auditory experiences (Hussaeni et al., 2020; Buzzetto, 2015). Research further indicates that YouTube promotes self-paced and flexible learning. Students can pause, replay, and revisit lessons according to their individual learning preferences, thereby improving retention and comprehension (Boer et al., 2011; Chtouki et al., 2012). Educational videos were also found to support note-taking skills, improve classroom engagement, and simplify difficult subjects (Çelik et al., 2018; Pappas, 2015). YouTube has been widely utilized in language learning, writing instruction, and skill development. Studies revealed that instructional videos significantly improved students' writing and speaking skills through practical demonstrations and repeated exposure to content (Aminah, 2018; Sari & Margana 2019). Moreover, YouTube serves as an effective educational tool for enhancing cross-curricular skills, creativity, and collaborative learning (Orus et al., 2016; Nacak et al., 2020). The platform also functions as a social learning environment where users share educational information and collaborate through digital interaction (Young, 2008; Chintalapati et al., 2017). Instructional videos support independent learning and allow students to explore related concepts through recommended content (Kulgemeyer, 2018). However, some studies caution that online videos may reduce classroom participation, create technical difficulties, and expose students to unreliable information (Fredlinger & Owens 2009; Kay, 2012). Research additionally highlights the influence of demographic factors on online learning outcomes. Variables such as gender and educational level may affect students' persistence, self-regulation, and academic performance in online learning environments (Gašević et al., 2016; Boyte-Eckis et al., 2018; Cai et al., 2017; Diep et al., 2016). While some studies found females to exhibit stronger self-regulation and higher learning outcomes (Richardson & Woodley, 2003; Alghamdi et al., 2020), others reported no significant gender differences in online learning satisfaction and achievement (Nistor, 2013; Harvey et al., 2017).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of YouTube Referencing among Senior High School Students

Globally, YouTube has become one of the most widely used online platforms for educational content delivery. With over two billion regular users and more than one billion hours of videos watched daily, the platform significantly influences learning behaviors among young people (YouTube, 2020). Its widespread use among individuals aged 18–34 highlights its relevance to students in contemporary education. At the national and local levels, the educational reliance on YouTube intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic as schools transitioned to remote and modular learning systems. In South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi, students increasingly utilized YouTube as a learning reference to supplement classroom instruction and support independent learning. The accessibility of educational videos enabled students to acquire additional knowledge related to their lessons and practical studies despite geographical and instructional limitations. However, while YouTube is widely recognized as a supplementary learning tool, limited studies have examined its influence on the academic performance of senior high school students in geographically isolated communities such as South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi. This study addresses that contextual gap by investigating students' frequency of YouTube use, perceptions of the platform, and its relationship with academic performance.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Basis of YouTube Referencing and Academic Performance among Senior High School Students

This study is anchored on the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, Social Learning Theory, and Constructivist Learning Theory. The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2001) explains that learners process information more effectively when presented through both visual and verbal channels. YouTube supports multimedia learning by combining videos, audio, text, and demonstrations, which may improve comprehension and retention of academic content. The Social Learning Theory of Bandura (1977) posits that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling. Through YouTube videos, students observe demonstrations, study techniques, and problem-solving strategies that may influence their own learning behaviors and academic achievement. Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1972) emphasizes that learners construct knowledge through active engagement and prior experiences. YouTube enables students to explore lessons independently, learn at their own pace, and connect new knowledge with existing

understanding, thereby promoting meaningful and self-directed learning. Collectively, these theories explain how YouTube referencing may enhance students' academic performance through multimedia engagement, observational learning, and active knowledge construction.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale on the Use of YouTube Referencing and Academic Performance among Senior High School Students

Although numerous studies have examined the educational benefits of YouTube, limited research has specifically explored its influence on the academic performance of senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi, particularly in the post-pandemic learning environment. Existing literature primarily focuses on the general effectiveness of YouTube as a learning tool, student motivation, and online learning outcomes (Chtouki et al., 2012; Hussaeni et al., 2020; Roy, 2023). Furthermore, previous studies have not adequately addressed how demographic characteristics, frequency of use, and students' perceptions of YouTube referencing relate to academic performance in localized educational settings. The increasing dependence on YouTube following the COVID-19 pandemic necessitates a contextual investigation into its educational implications among senior high school students in remote communities. This study was therefore conducted to determine the relationship between YouTube referencing and academic performance among senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2025–2026.

1.6 Alignment of the Study on YouTube Referencing and Academic Performance with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 – Quality Education and SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. The study supports SDG 4 by examining how digital learning platforms such as YouTube contribute to accessible, flexible, and inclusive educational opportunities for students. Educational videos enhance independent learning, improve comprehension, and provide supplementary instructional materials that support continuous learning regardless of location or learning modality. The study also relates to SDG 9 through its focus on digital technology and online learning platforms as innovative educational tools. YouTube represents a form of technological infrastructure that supports knowledge dissemination, educational innovation, and digital learning practices among students. Additionally, aspects of SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities may be reflected through the platform's ability to provide free educational resources to students in geographically isolated and underserved communities such as South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi.

1.7 Importance of the Study on YouTube Referencing and Academic Performance to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

This study contributes to educational, technological, socioeconomic, and community sustainability. In terms of educational sustainability, the study highlights the role of digital platforms in supporting continuous and accessible learning opportunities for students. Understanding how YouTube influences academic performance may help educators develop more effective and engaging teaching strategies. From a technological sustainability perspective, the study emphasizes the integration of digital media and online learning resources into contemporary educational systems. The findings may encourage responsible and productive use of technology for academic purposes. The study also contributes to socioeconomic and community sustainability by identifying accessible educational tools that may benefit students in remote or resource-limited communities. By improving students' learning experiences and academic performance, the study may support long-term educational development and capacity-building within the local community. Moreover, the study may provide valuable insights for educators, school administrators, policymakers, and researchers regarding the effective use of social media technology in enhancing student learning outcomes and promoting sustainable educational practices.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design to determine the extent of the influence of YouTube referencing on students' academic performance. Descriptive research is appropriate when the objective is to describe characteristics, situations, or phenomena without manipulating variables (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). According to Travers (1978), descriptive design examines the nature of existing situations and explores the occurrence of particular phenomena. It involves describing, recording, analyzing, and interpreting data to establish factual information. Similarly, Blumberg et al. (2005) explained that descriptive research provides a clear picture of situations, individuals, events, and relationships occurring naturally. This design was considered appropriate because the study focused on describing students' perceptions and responses regarding YouTube referencing and academic performance.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi, specifically among the three senior high schools in the area during the School Year 2025–2026. The locale was selected because students in the municipality had access to

YouTube through personal mobile devices and available Piso-WiFi services, which enabled internet connectivity and online access for educational purposes.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were senior high school students officially enrolled in the three senior high schools in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2025–2026. Only legitimate users of YouTube for academic referencing were included in the study, while non-users were excluded. The respondents were considered appropriate because they regularly utilized YouTube as part of their learning activities and had access to internet connectivity through personal cellphones and local Piso-WiFi services.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study involved 290 respondents selected from a total population of 400 senior high school students using the Raosoft Online Calculator to determine the representative sample size. A random sampling method was employed to select the respondents from the three senior high schools. The respondents were proportionally distributed among the schools using the ratio and proportion approach to ensure fair representation.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a validated self-constructed questionnaire-checklist administered to the respondents after securing institutional ethical clearance and approval from the school authorities. The questionnaire was subjected to expert validation before actual administration. The instrument consisted of questions written in English and structured using a Likert Scale adopted from Dancey & Reidy (2002). The questionnaire focused on gathering information related to students' demographic profile, perceptions, extent of YouTube use, and academic performance. Irrelevant and immaterial information were excluded from the instrument to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the collected data.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

After obtaining ethical clearance and approval from the School Director and Principals of the three senior high schools, the researcher prepared the necessary materials and conducted the actual data gathering. The validated questionnaire-checklist was administered personally to the student-respondents. The respondents were given approximately 20–30 minutes to answer the questionnaire at their convenience and free time. After completion, the questionnaires were retrieved immediately for sorting, tallying, analysis, and interpretation of data.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study utilized several statistical tools appropriate to the research questions. Frequency and percentage were used to analyze the demographic profile of the respondents. Weighted mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the level and extent of YouTube referencing and related variables. For testing differences among groups, the Kruskal-Wallis H Test was used for comparisons involving more than two groups, while the Mann-Whitney U Test was utilized for comparisons involving two groups.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of Senior High School Students Using YouTube as a Learning Reference

3.1.1 Age of the Respondents

The findings revealed that most respondents were 18–19 years old, comprising 47.2% of the participants, followed by students aged 16–17 years old with 42.8%, while 10% were 20 years old and above. The results indicate that the majority of the respondents belonged to the legal age bracket. The result suggests that senior high school students within the age of majority actively engage in online learning and YouTube referencing. Learners' demographic backgrounds affect online education outcomes (Gasevic et al., 2016). Age may influence students' maturity, learning behavior, and ability to maximize digital learning platforms effectively.

3.1.2 Gender of the Respondents

The results showed that 50.7% of the respondents were female, while 49.3% were male. This indicates that the respondents were almost equally distributed in terms of gender, minimizing gender bias in the study. The findings imply that both male and female students have equal exposure and access to YouTube as a learning reference. Previous studies showed varying findings regarding gender differences in online learning outcomes. Females were found to demonstrate stronger persistence and self-regulation in online learning (Richardson & Woodley, 2003; Alghamdi et al., 2020), while other studies reported no significant gender disparities in learning outcomes and satisfaction (Nistor, 2013; Harvey et al., 2017).

3.1.3 Grade Level of the Respondents

The findings revealed that 52.8% of the respondents were Grade 12 students, while 47.2% were Grade 11 students. The respondents were proportionately distributed across grade levels. The result indicates that both Grade 11 and Grade 12

students actively use YouTube as a supplementary learning tool. Educational level has been identified as a factor influencing online learning outcomes and engagement (Diep et al., 2016). The nearly equal distribution of respondents strengthens the representativeness of the study findings.

3.1.4 Time Span in Using YouTube as a Learning Reference

The results showed that most students used YouTube for one to two hours, accounting for 49% of the respondents. About 30% used it for less than an hour, while 14.5% used it for three to four hours. Only a few students spent five hours or more using YouTube for learning purposes. The findings imply that students use YouTube moderately as a learning reference, likely influenced by internet data availability and time management. Students may only rely on YouTube when dealing with difficult lessons, school requirements, reports, or presentations. Moderate usage suggests that YouTube functions mainly as a supplementary rather than primary learning resource.

3.1.5 Types of Educational Content Accessed through YouTube

The findings revealed that most students accessed subject tutorials in Mathematics, Science, English, and related subjects, comprising 66.6% of the respondents. This was followed by project ideas and presentations at 55.2%, career guidance and motivation at 34.5%, exam review videos at 26.9%, and study productivity tips at 25.2%. The result indicates that students primarily use YouTube to supplement classroom instruction in core academic subjects. While YouTube helps students learn independently and access additional information, it functions mainly as a supplementary educational tool rather than a replacement for traditional learning resources. The findings support Sari & Margana (2019), who emphasized YouTube's role in developing critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills.

3.2 Students' Frequency and Perceptions in Using YouTube as a Learning Reference

3.2.1 Frequency of Students' Use of YouTube as a Learning Reference

The findings showed that students "sometimes" used YouTube for educational purposes such as watching subject-related videos, understanding difficult lessons, supplementing lectures, preparing for examinations, and sharing content with classmates. The overall interpretation was neutral, indicating moderate usage frequency. The result suggests that students use YouTube selectively for academic support, especially when classroom requirements become challenging. Students appear to utilize YouTube mainly for clarification, academic reinforcement, and deadline-driven tasks rather than continuous daily learning.

3.2.2 Difference in the Frequency of Students' Use of YouTube

The findings revealed a significant difference in the frequency of YouTube usage based on time span of use, with a p-value of 0.020. However, no significant differences were found in terms of age, gender, and grade level. The result implies that students differ in how long and how frequently they use YouTube for learning purposes. Variations may be attributed to internet accessibility, availability of mobile data, and students' individual learning needs. However, demographic factors such as age, gender, and grade level do not significantly influence usage frequency.

3.2.3 Students' Perceptions in Using YouTube as a Learning Reference

The findings showed that students generally had moderate perceptions regarding YouTube as a learning reference. However, several statements received high ratings, including YouTube's ability to provide necessary information, improve engagement, enhance understanding, motivate students, and improve academic performance. Students also viewed YouTube as a helpful educational resource. The results indicate that students recognize YouTube's educational value in improving comprehension, motivation, and engagement. At the same time, moderate ratings on some statements suggest awareness of potential disadvantages such as misinformation, lack of interaction, and excessive dependence on video-based learning. Overall, students perceived YouTube as beneficial but not a complete substitute for classroom instruction and traditional references.

3.2.4 Difference in Students' Perceptions in Using YouTube

The findings revealed no significant differences in students' perceptions of YouTube in terms of age, gender, grade level, and time span of use. The result suggests that students share relatively similar perceptions regarding YouTube regardless of demographic characteristics. Their views on the usefulness and limitations of YouTube appear independent of age, gender, grade level, and duration of use.

3.3 Students' Academic Performance and Relationship with YouTube Referencing

3.3.1 Level of Students' Academic Performance

The findings indicated that students achieved a "Very Satisfactory" level of academic performance with an average standard deviation of 0.927. Most students obtained grades ranging from 80–89, while a smaller number achieved grades between 90–100. The findings imply that YouTube may contribute positively to students' academic achievement by enhancing understanding and engagement in learning. This supports the studies of Orus et al. (2016) and Kay (2012), which emphasized the positive effects of YouTube on academic performance and student satisfaction. Similarly, Sharma &

Sharma (2021) highlighted the effectiveness of YouTube's engaging visual format in learning, while Islami (2022) explained that students use YouTube not only for entertainment but also for academic and intellectual development. Rice et al., (2011) also claimed that internet use significantly enhances students' learning ability.

3.3.2 Difference in the Level of Students' Academic Performance

The findings revealed significant differences in academic performance based on age and gender. However, no significant differences were found in terms of grade level and time span in using YouTube. The result suggests that maturity and gender-related learning behaviors may influence academic achievement. Older students, particularly those in Grade 12, may demonstrate higher academic maturity and responsibility. However, the amount of time spent using YouTube does not necessarily determine academic performance, indicating that effective use may be more important than duration of use.

3.3.3 Relationship Between Frequency of YouTube Use and Academic Performance

The findings showed a significant relationship between the frequency of students' use of YouTube as a learning reference and their academic performance, with a correlation coefficient of 0.169 and a significance value of 0.004. The result implies that increased use of YouTube for academic purposes is associated with improved academic performance. Frequent access to educational videos and tutorials may enhance students' understanding, interest, and learning achievement. This finding is supported by Yahaya & Ahmad (2025), whose study showed that YouTube videos with visual and interactive elements improve students' understanding and learning outcomes.

3.3.4 Relationship Between Students' Perceptions of YouTube and Academic Performance

The findings revealed a significant relationship between students' perceptions of YouTube as a learning reference and their academic performance, with a correlation coefficient of 0.139 and a significance value of 0.017. The result indicates that positive perceptions toward YouTube contribute to better academic performance. Students who perceive YouTube as useful, engaging, and educational are more likely to benefit academically from its use. The finding is consistent with Maziriri (2020), who emphasized the importance of students' attitudes and perceptions toward YouTube as a learning platform.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that YouTube positively influenced the academic performance of senior high school students in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi. Students generally perceived YouTube as a useful, convenient, and effective learning resource that enhanced understanding, motivation, engagement, and access to additional academic information. The findings revealed that students moderately used YouTube as a supplementary learning reference, particularly for subject tutorials, project preparation, and academic support. Significant relationships were found between students' frequency of YouTube use, their perceptions toward YouTube, and their academic performance, indicating that positive and frequent educational use of YouTube contributed to better learning outcomes. Although YouTube was recognized as an effective educational tool, students still valued the collaborative and interactive learning environment provided by traditional classroom instruction.

It is recommended that students continue using YouTube responsibly as a supplementary learning reference to improve understanding and academic performance. Teachers and school administrators may integrate appropriate YouTube educational content into classroom instruction to enhance student engagement, motivation, and learning experiences. Students should also be guided in selecting reliable and accurate educational videos to maximize the benefits of YouTube while avoiding misinformation and excessive dependence on online content. Furthermore, future researchers may conduct related studies involving wider coverage, additional variables, and different educational settings to further examine the educational effectiveness of YouTube as a learning reference.

The study was limited to senior high school students from the three selected schools in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi during the School Year 2025–2026. It focused only on students who were legitimate users of YouTube as a learning reference and relied primarily on self-reported responses gathered through questionnaires. The study also concentrated on selected demographic variables, frequency of YouTube use, students' perceptions, and academic performance, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts and populations.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study complied with the necessary institutional protocols prior to data gathering. Ethical clearance and approval from the School Director and Principals of the three senior high schools in South Ubian, Tawi-Tawi were secured before the conduct of the study. The respondents were senior high school students who voluntarily participated in answering the validated questionnaire-checklist administered by the researcher.

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