



Social Media Trends in Arabic Language Learning at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang and KH. Abdul Chalim

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare social media use trends, student characteristics, and the supporting and inhibiting factors in Arabic language learning at Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) and Universitas Abdul Chalim (UAC) Mojokerto. A mixed-methods approach with a Parallel Convergent Design was employed, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed simultaneously but separately. Quantitative data were obtained through questionnaires administered to 80 students, while qualitative data were gathered through interviews with 10 informants. The findings revealed that students at both universities primarily used YouTube and WhatsApp as the main platforms for Arabic language learning. Students at UMM tended to focus on searching for learning materials and developing independent learning, whereas students at UAC more intensively utilized WhatsApp as a collaborative medium for completing academic assignments, reflecting the collective culture of the pesantren-based environment. Furthermore, the major challenge identified in both institutions was the high level of non-academic social media use, which often distracted students from learning activities. The findings also indicate that differences in institutional culture influence students' preferences and patterns of social media use in the learning process. These findings provide important implications for the development of digital-based Arabic language learning curricula and instructional models that are more adaptive to local social and cultural contexts.

Keywords: Social Media, Arabic Language Learning, Digital Learning, Educational Technology

INDONESIAN ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan tren penggunaan media sosial, karakteristik mahasiswa, serta faktor pendukung dan penghambat dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) dan Universitas Abdul Chalim (UAC) Mojokerto. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods dengan desain Parallel Convergent, di mana data kuantitatif dan kualitatif dikumpulkan dan dianalisis secara bersamaan tetapi terpisah. Data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui angket yang diberikan kepada 80 mahasiswa, sedangkan data kualitatif diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan 10 informan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa di kedua universitas lebih banyak menggunakan YouTube dan WhatsApp sebagai platform utama dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Mahasiswa UMM cenderung memanfaatkan media sosial untuk mencari materi pembelajaran dan mendukung pembelajaran mandiri, sedangkan mahasiswa UAC lebih intensif menggunakan WhatsApp sebagai media kolaboratif dalam menyelesaikan tugas akademik, yang mencerminkan budaya kolektif lingkungan berbasis pesantren. Selain itu, tantangan utama yang ditemukan di kedua institusi adalah tingginya penggunaan media sosial untuk aktivitas non-akademik yang sering mengganggu proses belajar. Temuan penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa perbedaan budaya institusi memengaruhi preferensi dan pola penggunaan media sosial mahasiswa dalam proses pembelajaran. Hasil penelitian ini memberikan implikasi penting bagi pengembangan kurikulum dan model pembelajaran bahasa Arab berbasis digital yang lebih adaptif terhadap konteks sosial dan budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci: *Media Sosial, Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab, Pembelajaran Digital, Teknologi Pembelajaran*

Introduction

The rapid advancement of information technology has fundamentally shifted students' paradigms in accessing and processing information (Syarofah et al., 2024), particularly within the realm of language learning (Cai et al., 2022). Social media, originally utilized for entertainment and personal interaction, is increasingly being integrated into academic activities (Pikhart & Botezat, 2021). As digital platform that facilitate collaborative content creation and exchange (Shadiev & Yang, 2020), Sosial Media has proven effective in enhancing the four core language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Barrot, 2022).

In the context of Arabic language learning, social media serves as a strategic media for speaking practice, vocabulary enrichment, and interaction with native and non-native speakers (Arifin et al., 2021; Takengon & Tengah, 2022). While this integration significantly boosts learning motivation (Di, Ismail, & Zailani, 2020), pedagogical challenges persist regarding the limited depth of material and the risk of cognitive distraction due to the unsystematic nature of content compared to formal curriculum

(Nurul Huda et al., 2023). Furthermore, the efficacy of social media is highly contextual, as each institution possesses distinct characteristics, academic cultures, and digital literacy levels (Roziqi et al., 2025; Purvis et al., 2020). Consequently, conducting a comparative analysis of social media trends across different institutions is imperative to provide a more comprehensive overview of its educational impact (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023).

At the University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM), complete digital facilities and stable internet access support students in using social media for learning. However, the integration of social media into the learning process is still highly dependent on individual initiative and has not been standardized. In contrast, KH. Abdul Chalim (UAC) actively uses social media that is integrated with learning in the dormitory, but faces obstacles with limited devices, as well as the absence of systematic guidelines on the use of social media in learning.

UMM and UAC were chosen to analyze how different social, cultural, and academic contexts affect the use of social media in Arabic language learning. UMM represents universities that are more open to digital technology, while UAC represents pesantren-based institutions that are adapting to technology integration. These differences in context are an important basis for understanding the variation in students' digital behavior and producing more contextual and adaptive learning recommendations.

Thus, this research aims to answer several key questions: (1) What are the trends in the use of Social Media by Arabic Language Education students at UMM and UAC?; (2) What are the patterns and characteristics of Social Media use in the context of Arabic language learning?; (3) What are the supporting and inhibiting factors for the use of Social Media among students on the two campuses?.

Innovation is an effort to address the problems in this study through a comparative approach with Mixed-Methods (quantitative and qualitative), identifying various aspects such as trends, methods and objectives of using social media by Arabic Language Education students at UMM and UAC. This study was also conducted to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media use between students on the two campuses. So far, the analysis of the use of social media in learning Arabic has been

more through an experimental and qualitative descriptive approach on one research subject.

Through a comparative approach across two institutions, this study aims to provide a broad overview of social media usage in Arabic language learning and to understand students' digital behavior. In addition to serving as a reference for developing contextual and adaptive technology-based learning strategies, the findings are expected to generate data-driven recommendations to foster an innovative, collaborative Arabic learning ecosystem that remains relevant to contemporary demands.

Many previous studies have discussed the use of social media in language learning in general, particularly in English (Dashti & Abdulsalam, 2025; Hasumi & Chiu, 2024; Malik & Haidar, 2021; Anwas et al., 2020). However, very few specifically highlight how Arabic Language Education Study Program students in Indonesia use social media in their learning processes. Most prior studies merely explore the platforms used or the frequency of usage (Ilmiani & Miolo, 2021), and examined learners' views on social media Integration in Arabic learning (Ritonga et al., 2025), without delving deeper into practical applications in the context of language skills in Arabic.

Previous research has not conducted a comparative analysis between universities with different geographic profiles, infrastructure, and academic cultures. It is important to understand how institutional context affects Social Media utilization trends (Perez et al., 2023). Most existing studies are more quantitatively descriptive in the form of qualitative observations. Very few employ a Mixed-Method approach that provides a richer and deeper picture of students' experiences and perceptions.

Thus, this study first maps and compares the use of social media for Arabic language learning between two campuses (UMM and UAC) in East Java with different cultures, facilities, and learning approaches. This study not only identifies the platforms used but also explains the concrete ways students utilize social media, which had not been revealed in much detail previously. Another novelty lies in the use of a Mixed-Method approach, producing findings that are not only numerical but also narrative, providing a complete picture from the student's point of view. The research does not stop describing trends but also offers strategic recommendations for lecturers,

institutions, and curriculum developers to integrate social media into formal learning based on real field data.

This research also makes a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of Arabic language learning based on digital technology. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on the effectiveness of social media as a means of learning Arabic through comparative findings from two different institutional contexts. Practically, the research results can be used by lecturers in designing learning strategies that are more adaptive to digital trends, by students as a guide for the targeted use of social media to improve Arabic language competence, and by institutions as the basis for curriculum policy development and digital literacy. Additionally, this research contributes to strengthening academic culture and religious literacy through optimizing the use of social media as a productive and relevant learning medium.

Methods

This study employs a parallel convergent mixed-methods design, which simultaneously integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of social media usage trends in Arabic language learning across two distinct institutions. The quantitative approach is utilized to statistically map the frequency, types, and trends of social media usage patterns among students. Concurrently, the qualitative approach is used to delve deeper into the meanings, perceptions, and subjective experiences of students regarding the effectiveness and challenges of using social media in their learning.

The selection of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) and Universitas KH Abdul Chalim Mojokerto (UAC) as the research sites was based on academic and contextual considerations. UMM represents a university with advanced digital infrastructure and a strong openness to technological innovation. In contrast, UAC provides an interesting comparative context as a pesantren-based educational institution undergoing a digital transition. Both universities have active Arabic Language Education Study Programs, making them relevant settings for examining the use of social media within different social and cultural contexts.

The subjects of this study are active students from the Arabic Language Education Study Program at both UMM and UAC. Quantitative data was obtained

through a questionnaire distributed to 80 students (consisting of 40 students each from UMM and UAC).

The questionnaire instrument used in this study consisted of 17 statement items, including 9 quantitative items and 7 qualitative items. Respondents' answers were measured using a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The validity test of the questionnaire items was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation formula, with the criterion of $r_{\text{count}} > r_{\text{table}}$ at a 5% significance level. Meanwhile, the reliability test of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha formula, with the instrument considered sufficiently reliable if the Alpha coefficient exceeded 0.70.

In addition, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 students selected purposively to explore their experiences and challenges in greater depth. The interviews focused on students' patterns of social media use, learning preferences, and perceptions of the benefits and obstacles of using digital platforms in Arabic language learning. This qualitative data complemented the quantitative findings and provided a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning experiences in different institutional contexts.

Data integration in this study was carried out at two stages, namely the analysis stage and the discussion stage. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics through SPSS, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify emerging patterns in students' perceptions. Both sets of data were then integrated and presented in the form of combined graphs, tables, and descriptive narratives.

Results and Discussion

This study presents comparative data on trends in social media use for learning Arabic, including the duration of use and the most dominant types of social media utilized in Arabic language learning at UMM and UAC. First, this study presents the results of the validity test and the reliability test of the instrument.

Based on the analysis results, all instrument items showed Correlation Coefficients r_{count} ranging from 0.663 to 0.794. These values were significantly higher than the r_{table} value of 0.220. In addition, the significance values (Sig. 2-tailed) for each

questionnaire item were 0.000, which is far below the predetermined significance level of 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that all questionnaire items in this study were declared valid and could be used for further data analysis.

Table 1. Instrument Item Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.890	9

Based on the output in Table 1, the calculation results show that the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained is 0.890 with a total of 9 instruments. The value of this coefficient is much greater than the standard minimum limit of the specified reliability coefficient, which is 0.70 ($0.890 > 0.70$). It can be concluded that all items of instruments in this research questionnaire are declared Reliable.

Trends in Social Media Use of Arabic Language Education Students UMM and UAC

To understand students' digital learning behavior, this study analyzed the trends in social media use among Arabic Language Education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) and Universitas Abdul Chalim (UAC). The analysis focused on the types of social media platforms most frequently used to support Arabic language learning activities. The following figure presents the comparison of social media use trends among students at both universities.

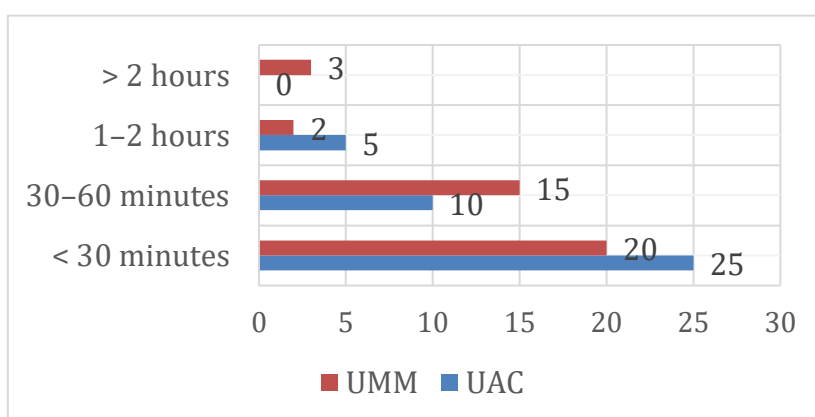


Figure 1. Duration of Social Media Use of UMM and UAC Students

Based on Figure 2, most students at UAC and UMM use social media for Arabic language learning for less than 30 minutes per day, with a higher number of users at

UAC. At the 30–60 minutes duration, UMM was more dominant than UAC. The use of social media for 1–2 hours was more common among UAC students, while usage of more than 2 hours was only found among a small number of students at UMM. Overall, social media use in both institutions can still be categorized as short to moderate in duration.

Analysis of survey data shows that students from both institutions have a high level of use of social media as part of their digital learning ecosystem. As shown in Table 1, the main platforms used include Twitter/X, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and YouTube, with different usage profiles between UMM and UAC.

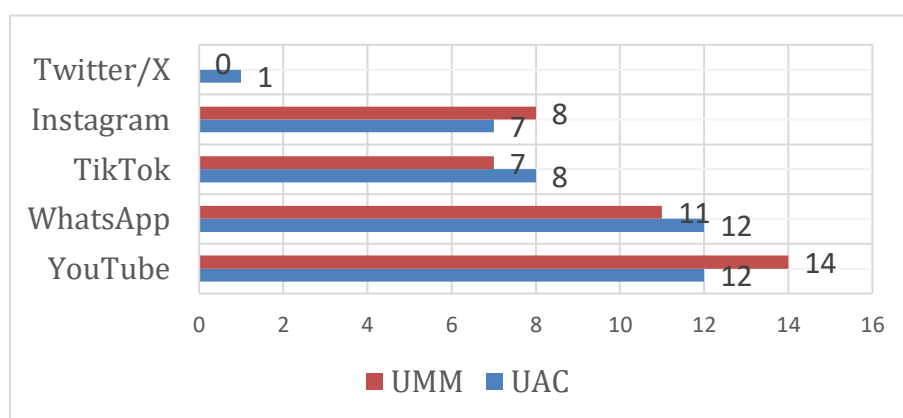


Figure 2. Platforms Used in Learning Arabic

Based on the data in Figure 2, YouTube is the most dominant social media used in Arabic language learning at both universities, with a higher usage rate among UMM students (14 respondents) than UAC (12 respondents). WhatsApp also shows high usage, especially among UAC students (12 respondents) compared to UMM (11 respondents), which shows a tendency to use it for communication and academic discussions supported by the pesantren environment. Meanwhile, TikTok usage is balanced, but slightly higher in UAC (8 respondents) than UMM (7 respondents). On the Instagram platform, UMM students are more active (8 respondents) than UAC (7 respondents), while Twitter/X is the least used platform in both universities. Comparatively, UMM students tend to use audiovisual-based media such as YouTube and Instagram, while UAC students are more dominant in using interactive communication media such as WhatsApp and TikTok in learning Arabic.

Patterns and Characteristics of Social Media Use in Arabic Language Learning

To identify how students utilize social media in the learning process, this study examined the patterns and characteristics of social media use in Arabic language learning. The analysis focused on students' learning purposes, interaction patterns, and the role of digital platforms in supporting academic activities. The following section presents the patterns and characteristics of social media use among Arabic Language Education students.

Table 2. Social Media Use Patterns

University	Social Media Use Patterns %				
	Increasing Motivation	Practice	Searching for Learning Materials	Completing Learning Tasks	Discussion
UAC	80,6	80	82	85	72,4
UMM	84,4	83,6	86	83,6	74

Based on the results of the comparative analysis, as shown in Table 1, UMM students generally show higher response percentage than UAC students in most of the Arabic language learning indicators, especially in the aspect of learning motivation (UMM 84.4%; UAC 80.6%), Arabic language skills training (UMM 83.6%; UAC 80%), and search for additional materials (UMM 86%; UAC 82%). However, in the indicator of completing lecture assignments, UAC students showed slightly higher achievements (85%) than UMM students (83.6%). Meanwhile, the indicator of discussion with lecturers and friends was the aspect with the lowest achievement at both universities, although UMM students still showed a higher percentage (74%) than UAC (72.4%). Overall, these findings show that both universities are in the high achievement category, with UMM tending to excel in the aspects of motivation and learning independence, while UAC is more prominent in the completion of academic tasks.

Characteristics of Social Media Use in Arabic Language Learning

Based on the results of interviews, it was found that there was a difference in the characteristics of Social Media use in learning Arabic, both in terms of the platform used, learning orientation, and pedagogical goals to be achieved.

Table 3. Characteristics of Social Media Use in Arabic Language Learning

Aspects	UMM	UAC
Focus	Depth and effectiveness	Ease and habit
Platform dominan	YouTube, Instagram	WA, TikTok
Learning orientation	Directed, systematic	Relaxed, flexible
Pedagogical awareness	More reflective	General

Based on the interview results presented in Table 2, distinct differences were found in the use of social media for Arabic language learning between UMM and UAC students, reflecting the unique learning culture of each institution. UAC students tend to use social media with a focus on ease of access and daily usage habits through platforms such as WhatsApp and TikTok, thereby fostering a learning orientation that aligns with the collaborative culture of the pesantren (Islamic boarding school). Conversely, UMM students place greater emphasis on the depth of instructional material and learning effectiveness by utilizing YouTube and Instagram in a more targeted and systematic manner. Furthermore, UMM students demonstrate a more reflective pedagogical awareness in selecting and utilizing learning content, whereas UAC students engage with social media at a more general and informal level. These findings indicate that social media integration in Arabic language learning is shaped by academic needs, institutional learning cultures, and the level of students' pedagogical reflection at each university.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Social Media Utilization

This section presents data regarding the supporting and inhibiting factors of social media utilization from both universities.

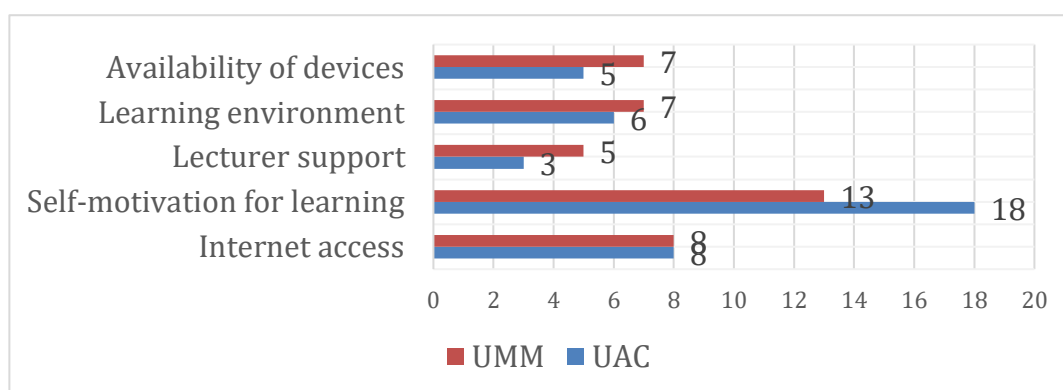


Figure 3. Supporting Factors for Social Media Utilization

Based on the data in Figure 3, it can be concluded that self-motivation to learn is the most dominant factor in both universities, with the number of UAC respondents higher than UMM, which shows the strong internal motivation of students to use social media as a learning medium. Adequate internet access shows the same number in both institutions so that it is not a distinguishing factor, while lecturer support is more felt in UMM than in UAC. Meanwhile, environmental factors that actively use social media and the availability of devices show a not significant difference between UAC and UMM. Overall, these findings confirm that internal student factors, especially learning motivation, are the main supports for the use of social media in Arabic language learning, which is then strengthened by external factors in the form of lecturer support, social environment, and the availability of technological facilities.

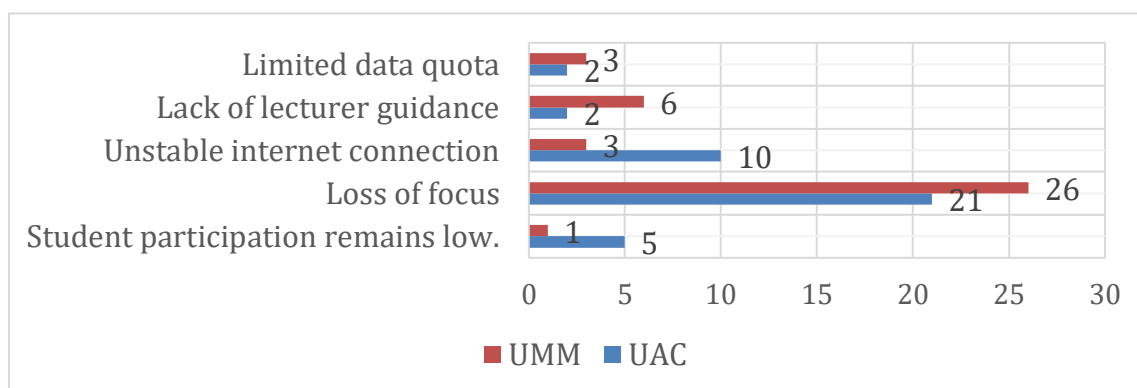


Figure 4. Factors Inhibiting Social Media Utilization

Based on the diagram in Figure 4. Focus disturbances due to entertainment and scrolling activities are the most dominant obstacles in both universities, with the number of UMM respondents being higher than UAC. The unstable internet connection factor is felt more by UAC students than UMM, while the lack of lecturer guidance is more prominent in UMM. Meanwhile, limited data quotas and low participation of some students in online discussions emerged as obstacles with lower intensity in both institutions. Overall, these findings suggest that the main barriers to the use of social media for Arabic language learning stem from aspects of learning concentration and the quality of learning interactions, which are then reinforced by technical constraints and academic support.

This study has presented data on the trend of Social Media use of Arabic language education students UAC and UMM. Patterns of Social Media use in Arabic language learning. In addition, the supporting and inhibiting factors of the use of social media, as well as the effectiveness of social media as a method of learning Arabic.

The researcher first discussed the findings on the trend of Social Media use of Arabic language education students. The results of the study show that students in UMM and UAC have adopted social media intensively in their learning activities, both for material consumption, skill training, and community interaction.

YouTube's dominance as a learning platform at UMM is higher than at UAC. This finding mirrors global trends where video-based platforms are increasingly becoming primary learning resources due to their multimodal characteristics, providing both audiovisual and authentic language input particularly crucial in foreign language acquisition (Rokhani et al., 2024; Shafirova & Sá, 2024). Digital video can strengthen learner engagement through visual context and repetition of input, which is essential for real-time mastery of vocabulary and linguistic structure (Jiang & Zhao, 2025). Furthermore, YouTube enriches comprehensible input laying the groundwork for faster, more contextual development of both receptive and productive skills (Toluzhan et al., 2023; Syarofi & Syuhadak, 2023)

However, the integration of YouTube is not without its challenges. Several studies highlight risks such as distraction from irrelevant content (Yesilada & Lewandowsky, 2022), varying material quality (Colás-Bravo & Quintero-Rodríguez, 2023), and the necessity for precise video curation by instructors acting as content gatekeepers (Shen, Tan, & Pritchard, 2022). This is particularly relevant when YouTube is considered dominant; it requires sound pedagogical strategies to ensure its effectiveness is optimized for Arabic language (Shoufan & Mohamed, 2022).

Next regarding the pattern and character of the use of social media in Arabic language learning. This comparative analysis reveals distinct behavioral patterns between the two institutions. UMM students demonstrate higher levels of intrinsic motivation and self-regulated learning, utilizing social media to explore resources beyond the formal curriculum. This proactive engagement reinforces the role of social media as a catalyst for learners (Hafizah, Kamarudin, & Aziz, 2023). Conversely, UAC students showed that social media is used for communication and coordination of

completing lecture assignments. Social media serves as a small community (Robbani et al., 2021), where students can access, get help, feedback directly (Naghdi-pour & Manca, 2023).

Interestingly, indicators for academic discussion with lecturers and peers were the lowest achievements at both universities. This suggests that while these platforms provide interactive features, students often remain trapped as passive consumers. Without a pedagogical design intentionally crafted to direct deep academic discourse, the potential for high level interaction on social media remains dormant (Ghafar, 2023). Thus, the role of lecturers in designing structured discussion activities based on social media is a key factor in improving the quality of learning interactions.

A clear divergence in learning orientation was found between the two institutions. UAC students tend to utilize social media based on convenience and habits, showing a preference for platforms like WhatsApp, and TikTok for casual interaction and motivational content. In contrast, UMM students demonstrate a more systematic approach, emphasizing the use of YouTube and Instagram for in-depth material mastery. These institutional differences highlight that the utility of social media is highly context-dependent; it can function either as an informal casual learning tool (Alamer & Al Khateeb, 2023) or as a targeted cognitive strategy (Otchie & Pedaste, 2020).

The higher level of pedagogical awareness at UMM suggests that the effectiveness of digital tools depends heavily on the ability of students and indirect instructors to reflect on and integrate these platforms systematically (Siddig & Siddig, 2020). Although informal learning through social media inherently boosts motivation, achieving optimal academic results still requires a planned and structured instructional design (Greenhow & Chapman, 2020).

The supporting and inhibiting factors of the use of social media. The data identifies student learning motivation as the primary internal catalyst for social media integration, a trend more pronounced at UAC. This high intrinsic motivation is a strong predictor of active student engagement with digital platforms, aligning with arguments by Mekheimer (2025); Ma, et al., (2023); and Duha et al., (2026) that motivation not only improves learning outcomes but also determines the selection of sophisticated e-learning strategies. However, a significant paradox emerges while motivation drives

usage, the fundamental nature of social media as an entertainment ecosystem creates substantial barriers.

At both universities, focus disruption, specifically the phenomenon of "loss of focus" was identified as the most dominant inhibiting factor. This finding reinforces the "dual role" theory proposed by Murray et al., (2020), where social media simultaneously functions as a learning facilitator and a source of cognitive distraction. An over-reliance on "light" and quickly consumed content in this study suggests that students tend to succumb to low cognitive effort, which dilutes the effectiveness of foreign language acquisition (Al Sultan et al., 2025). This indicates that high motivation alone is insufficient; without self-regulation mechanisms, passive consumption will only lead to a decline in cognitive engagement (Sagabala et al., 2023).

Conclusion

This study identified YouTube and WhatsApp as the most dominant social media platforms used in Arabic language learning at both universities. Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang tended to utilize audiovisual-based platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, whereas students at Universitas Abdul Chalim more frequently used interactive communication platforms such as WhatsApp and TikTok. The primary supporting factor in both institutions was students' self-motivation to learn, with UMM students showing stronger intrinsic motivation to use social media as a learning medium. On the other hand, the major challenge faced by both institutions was the high level of non-academic digital distraction. In addition, unstable internet connectivity was identified as another inhibiting factor at UAC.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on Computer-Assisted Language Learning, particularly regarding the use of technology in Arabic language learning. Practically, this comparative model offers insights for Arabic language curriculum developers in designing learning materials that are adaptive to students' digital characteristics rather than applying technology in a uniform manner.

Nevertheless, this study remains limited to examining the effectiveness aspect of social media use. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to investigate the empirical effectiveness of social media on speaking proficiency through experimental methods and to expand the geographical scope of the research to a national scale.

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