

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW: AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

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Abstract: The increasingly intensive use of social media among college students has given rise to various implications for mental health and academic aspects. This study aims to identify, analyze, and synthesize the impact of social media use on students' mental health and academic performance through the *Systematic Literature Review (SLR)* approach. Literature search in a scientific database that yielded 200 articles, then selected until 13 relevant articles were published in the range of 2020–2025. The results of the analysis showed that the mental health aspect was the dominant focus of research with a proportion of 62%, including anxiety, stress, depression, mental fatigue, psychological well-being, and self-esteem. Furthermore, 23% of articles discussed the impact of social media use on academic productivity and achievement, especially in the form of decreased study concentration, time management disruptions, and academic procrastination. Meanwhile, 15% of articles highlighted the role of moderation factors, such as digital literacy, online social support, and time management, which have been shown to weaken the negative impact of social media use. In addition to negative impacts, several studies have also revealed the positive potential of social media as a means of academic collaboration and social support if used in a targeted and adaptive manner. The findings of this study are expected to be the basis for the development of educational strategies and institutional policies in encouraging the healthy, productive, and sustainable use of social media among students.

Keywords: Social Media, Mental Health, Students, Self-Regulation.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and the internet has encouraged the massive use of social media among students. Social media not only functions as a means of communication and entertainment, but is also used to share information, learn online, and build social networks. The high intensity of social media use makes students a vulnerable group to various psychological and academic impacts, especially if their use is not carried out in a controlled and wise manner.

Along with the development of the digital era, social media has become a very influential means of communication and has brought significant changes in the pattern of social relations, information exchange, and forms of interaction between individuals. *Platform* such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter allow users to connect globally while building an online identity. This condition causes social media not only to play a role as a communication medium, but also as a space for the formation of public opinion, social behavior, and increasing social awareness among students (Khairunnisa et al., 2024).

The increasing intensity of social media use among students has also raised various problems in the aspect of mental health. Various studies in the last five years have shown that excessive use of social media correlates with an increased risk of anxiety, depression, stress, mental fatigue, sleep disturbances, and decreased concentration. This condition is triggered by several factors, including social media addiction, excessive social comparison, online social pressure, and

excessive exposure to information (*information overload*) That can affect the psychological balance of the students. (Adora et al., 2025).

In addition to having an impact on mental health, the use of social media by students also shows a more dominant tendency towards social activities and entertainment compared to academic goals. In practice, most students use social media to communicate, socialize, and fill their free time, while their use as a means of supporting learning is still relatively limited. *Platform* the most commonly used are generally informal and content-sharing-based, such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and *Snapchat*, which emphasizes social interaction and entertainment consumption more than educational functions (Singhania, 2025).

Although a number of studies have examined the influence of social media on students' mental health, the findings are still partial and spread across different contexts, research methods, and different types of *platforms*. In addition, there have not been many studies that comprehensively and systematically summarize the patterns of student social media use while associating it with psychological and academic impacts based on the latest literature. Therefore, this research was conducted through the *Systematic Literature Review* approach to identify, analyze, and synthesize research findings in the last five years related to the use of social media by students and their implications on mental health and academic aspects, so that it is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture and become the basis for developing a healthier and more productive social media use strategy.

METHOD

In this study, the *Systematic Literature Review (SLR)* to examine the potential and impact of social media use on students' mental health. This method is considered the most suitable because it is able to identify, classify, and analyze the potential and impact of social media use in a measurable and systematic manner. Research-based approach *Systematic Literature Review* It includes several main stages, namely: (1)*Identification*, (2) *Screening*, (3)*Eligibility*, and (4)*Included* (Simamora, 2024). The flow scheme of the research stages is presented in the following figure:

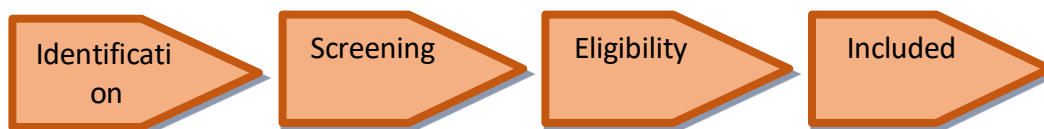


Figure 1. Research Steps with *Systematic Literature Review*

Identification

Stages carried out according to quotation (Page et al., 2021) includes identifying various relevant literature by utilizing predetermined keywords and conducting a search for selected articles with the help of the Publish or Perish application. The researcher searched for articles with one keyword first. Then 200 articles were found.

Screening

After the stage *identification*, the next step is to do *sreening*. In this stage, the literature that has been obtained will be selected to find out if each article meets the predetermined criteria for inclusion and exclusion. This process includes checking the title and abstract of each article to ensure relevance and suitability to the research focus(Polanin et al., 2022).

Eligibility

At this stage, articles that have passed the selection will be analyzed in more detail through an overall content check. The purpose of this stage is to evaluate the relevance of each article more thoroughly, so that it can be ensured that all articles meet the methodological criteria that have been set. The methodological criteria set are in the first table. (Page et al., 2021)

Included

Selected articles from the level *eligibility* Furthermore, it was analyzed to identify patterns, similarities, and differences in research findings related to the impact of social media use on students' mental health. The researcher established 6 criteria for taking and excluding related articles. The results of this stage are the basis for the preparation of the results and research discussions(Tanto & Handayani, 2022).

The eligibility criteria for articles included in this study are presented in Table 1 below, which contains details about the inclusion and exclusion criteria for articles:

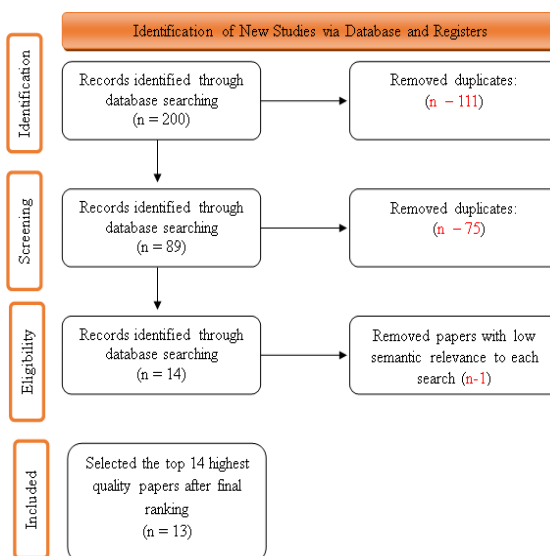
Table 1. Article Recruitment and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusions	Exclusion
Year of Publication	Articles published in the last 5 years (2020-2025)	Articles published before 2020
Publication Type	Journal articles, proceedings, conferences, and research reports that have been academically reviewed	An opinion piece, general review, or editorial
Language	Articles in English or Indonesian	Articles written in languages other than English and Indonesian
Research Subject	Focus on students (college)	Focus on non-students
Research Results	An article that discusses the impact of social media use on student mental health in the university environment.	An article that discusses the use of social media for mental health in primary, junior and senior secondary education environments.
Accessibility	Articles with full access	Articles that have only abstracts or are not available in full text

RESULT

After identifying the literature through the use of certain keywords with the Publish or Perish application, 200 articles were found. Then, an initial screening was carried out based on title, summary, and education level with the help of Microsoft Excel, so that 111 articles were

eliminated because they were not eligible. From this process, there are 89 articles that are considered relevant. However, as many as 75 of them were reissued because they did not meet the eligibility criteria. 14 articles were obtained, but 1 article was reissued because it did not meet the criteria. In the final stage, a review of 13 articles in the form of a complete text was conducted, which was then determined as the final article for analysis. Graphical visualization of the literature selection flow is presented through a flowchart in Figure 2 below.



Gambar 2. Flowchart Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

A total of 13 articles that have been selected are then thoroughly studied to answer this research question. The results of the analysis of the 13 articles can be seen in the following Table 2:

Table 2. Article Analysis Results

No.	Author Name & Year Publication	Method of	Levels	Measured aspects	Research Results
1.	Princess & goddess (2025)	Quantitative (survey)	Students	Social media use intensity, stress anxiety,	Excessive use of social media has a significant effect on the increase in anxiety and stress of students.

2.	Dung & Duyen (2024)	Quantitative correlational	Students	Duration of social media use, depression	High duration of social media use increases the risk of depression and mental fatigue.
3.	Adhikari et al. (2025)	Mixed methods	Students	Mental fatigue, concentration of learning	Social media has a negative impact on learning focus, but it helps academic communication if used in a directed manner.
4.	Deepa & Priya (2020)	Quantitative	Students	Social media addiction, psychological well-being	Social media addiction is negatively correlated with students' psychological well-being.
5.	Osman (2025)	Qualitative	Students	Academic stress, online social pressure	Social pressure on social media increases academic stress and student insecurity.
6.	Al-Shahrani (2020)	Quantitative	Students	Social comparison, self-esteem	Social comparison on social media lowers the price of diir and increases anxiety.
7.	Feng et al. (2025)	Quantitative	Students	Social media intensity, mental fatigue	Intensive social media use leads to mental fatigue and decreased concentration.
8.	Wulandari et al. (2025)	Quantitative	Students	Learning productivity, distraction	Social media is the main factor of distraction that reduces students' academic productivity.

9.	Shrestha & AMP; Officer (2024)	Mixed methods	Students	Digital literacy, time management	Digital literacy and time management moderate the negative impact of social media on mental health.
10.	Bhushan (2025)	Quantitative	Students	Learning motivation, educational social media use	Social media used for learning increases motivation and academic engagement.
11.	Hasan & Akter (2025)	Quantitative	Students	Online support, mental wellbeing	Social support through social media contributes positively to the mental well-being of students.
12.	Iskajyan (2024)	Quantitative	Students	Social media dependence, stress	Social media dependence is stressful and reduces student self-control.
13.	Khoso (2023)	Quantitative	Students	Social media addiction, academic performance	Social media addiction has a negative impact on academic performance and mental well-being.

The presentation of the percentage data of the results of the article analysis was carried out through a pie chart to provide an overview of the proportion of findings of the research aspect

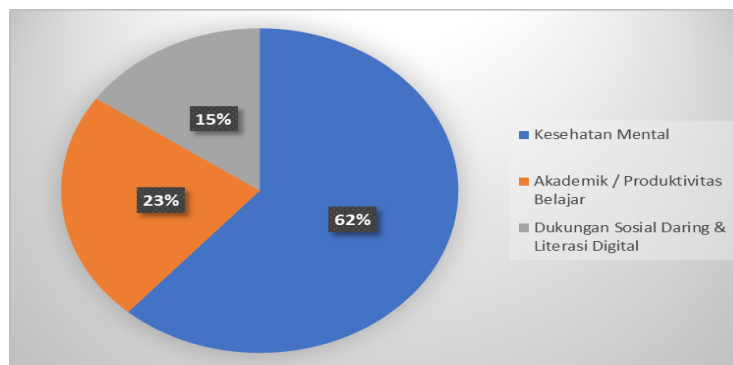


Figure 3. Article Review Results Pie Chart

Viewed from the measured aspects, most of the articles focus on student mental health, which includes anxiety, stress, depression, mental fatigue, psychological well-being, and self-esteem. Based on the results of the analysis, the mental health aspect dominated the study with a proportion of 62% of all articles reviewed. These findings consistently show that increased intensity and duration of social media use is significantly correlated with worsening students' psychological conditions. Several studies explain that the dominant factor that aggravates mental health disorders is the phenomenon of social comparison and online social pressure.

In addition, a number of studies also highlight the impact of social media use on academic productivity and performance, with a proportion of 23% of the total articles analyzed. The results of the study show that social media plays a major source of distraction that reduces study concentration, triggers academic procrastination, and interferes with student time management. However, some articles reveal that when social media is used in a targeted way for academic purposes, such as group discussions and sharing learning materials, these platforms are actually able to increase students' learning motivation and academic engagement.

The results of the review also identified moderation factors, such as digital literacy, time management, and online social support, which accounted for 15% of the overall articles. These factors have been proven to be able to weaken the negative impact of social media use. Students with good digital literacy levels tend to have stronger self-control in limiting the use of social media, so the risk of mental health disorders and decreased academic productivity can be minimized. Thus, Table 2 not only illustrates the dominance pattern of negative impacts of social media, but also confirms the existence of adaptive potential if the use of social media is managed wisely and in a directed manner.

The results of the article analysis show that the findings of the research can be classified into four main points, namely negative impacts on mental health, impact on productivity and academic achievement, positive impacts and adaptive use, as well as moderation and intervention factors:

A. Negative Impact on Mental Health

The majority of existing studies show important results that excessive use of social media is closely related to an increase in various mental health problems. The study found that social media can lead to increased levels of anxiety and stress. These results explain that the pressure to be continuously connected and responsive on social media often leads to anxiety. So that the impact felt by students is very threatening to their mental health (Adhikari et al., 2025).

One of the most striking things is the phenomenon of information overload, where students who are exposed to a lot of information from social media platforms can feel confusion and pressure. Anxiety is one of the impacts felt when students receive information that *overload*. This state is often caused by large social influences, such as comparisons to other people's seemingly more ideal lives on social media, which increases anxiety and stress (Al-Shahrani, 2025).

In addition, dependence on social media also contributes to strengthening these negative relationships. Research shows that the higher the level of students' dependence on social media, the lower the quality of their mental health. This dependency is often manifested by an inability to limit time spent on such platforms, which ultimately reduces participation in real social activities, exacerbates feelings of isolation, and adds to mental fatigue (Iskajyan, 2024).

With a deeper understanding of the influence of social media use, it is crucial for students to be wiser in managing their interactions with these platforms. Facing these challenges requires awareness of time and usage limitations, as well as the development of strategies to mitigate the negative impacts that may arise from poorly managed use of social media. As a solution, students need to implement strong self-regulation through effective time management, selective use of social media for academic purposes, and increased digital literacy to create a healthier and more sustainable pattern of social media use.

B. Impact on Productivity and Academic Achievement

Using social media platforms for fun or without a specific purpose has been shown to cause a number of serious problems, such as distractions, procrastination, decreased focus, and even academic fatigue. When college students spend excessive time on social media without a clear purpose, they often get caught up in a pattern of bad habits that interfere with their concentration and learning productivity (Wulandari et al., 2025). This condition is in line with research Deepa & Priya (2020), that there is a negative correlation with students' psychological well-being, including impaired concentration and increased mental fatigue. It can be seen that the majority of students report impaired study focus and decreased study habits when their involvement on social media is very high. A significant relationship between the intensity of social media use and disruption in time management and academic focus was found in this study (Ashari et al., 2025).

The distractions caused by social media can increase students' procrastination, where they prefer to postpone completing academic assignments in order to have fun with less productive social media activities. As a result, their concentration often decreases, which impacts the quality of learning and academic achievement. Furthermore, a lack of efficient management of time and resources can lead to academic burnout, which is a condition in which students feel depleted of energy both emotionally and physically due to academic pressure and demands that are not balanced with time to rest and relax. Therefore, many students have to deal with the impact of dissatisfaction on their academic achievement, which further adds to the burden of stress and anxiety.

This situation shows the need for increased awareness among students about the importance of using social media wisely. Building a time management strategy as well as setting clear boundaries in social media use can be an important step to improving their mental health and

academic success. With a directed approach, students are expected to be able to balance the use of social media with academic demands optimally.

C. Positive Impact and Adaptive Use

Several studies have shown that the use of social media for educational purposes, such as sharing materials, discussing in groups, and working together, can have a significant positive influence on students' learning motivation, engagement, and academic achievement (Hasan & Akter, 2025). Furthermore, social media also plays a role as a source of social support that is no less important. In an often challenging academic context, emotional support from peers can make a significant contribution to a student's mental well-being. Recent research shows that emotional support through social media can reduce the impact of academic stress and contribute to improving students' mental well-being (Yang et al., 2022).

The use of social media in an academic environment allows for faster and easier access to various learning resources. For example, students can simply share lecture materials, research articles, or reading summaries through the application of their choice. Collaboration in group projects is also increasingly possible, where students can easily interact, exchange ideas, and discuss difficult concepts through group chat or forums. This situation not only increases their participation, but also creates a more interactive and dynamic learning atmosphere.

From this perspective, the use of social media not only affects the academic field, but also in building a supportive community. Therefore, developing an understanding of effective and strategic ways to use social media can be an important step for students to use this platform as a means to support their academic and personal success. Thus, this approach places social media as a support, not an obstacle, in the process of students' academic and social development.

D. Moderation and Intervention Factors

Factors such as digital literacy skills, time management, and assistance from institutions play an important role in reducing the adverse impact caused by the use of social media (Osman, 2025). Digital literacy, which includes the ability to use technology well and think critically, can help students understand and organize the information they receive from social media. With these skills, students will be wiser when choosing content, thereby reducing the potential negative impact of information overload on their mental health.

In addition, skills in good time management allow students to better manage their time between activities on social media and academic tasks. Students who are good at managing time are usually better able to limit the time they use social media, so they can avoid excessive distractions and improve academic performance. Support from educational institutions is also very important in dealing with this issue. Institutions that provide mental health-related programs and digital literacy training can provide students with the tools and resources they need to deal with the challenges that arise from social media use. Research shows that approaches such as education on digital literacy and mental health programs have proven effective in reducing the risk of social media addiction and other negative impacts that students may experience (Iskajyan, 2024).

With a holistic approach that includes digital literacy improvement, effective time management, and institutional support, students can learn to use social media more productively. Therefore, it is important for all parties to collaborate to create a learning environment that supports and educates students about the healthy use of social media. So that the negative effects can be minimized and the positive benefits can be maximized.

DISCUSSION

An analysis of the literature revealed that students' current social media use is dominated by entertainment motives and informal social interactions, rather than academic goals. The intensity of use of visual platforms such as Instagram and Tiktok creates a sustainable space of social comparison where students evaluate themselves based on the ideal standards of others. According to Meier & Reinecke (2021) Communication through social media often results in social comparisons that are closely related to decreased mental health and an increased risk of psychological disorders among young users.

The inability of students to apply these digital techniques often depends on the concept of self-regulation (*self-regulation*). Referring back to the topic of discussion, consistent use of social media negatively impacts mental health and productivity, especially if done without clear control or goals. According to Valkenburg et al., (2022), social media has a significant impact on an individual's ability to regulate their own use. This failure in self-regulation, which often manifests as social media addiction, is a major risk factor that leads to negative effects such as depression and anxiety. These findings are reinforced by research Dung & Duyen (2024) which shows that there is a positive correlation between the high duration of social media use and the increase in the level of depression and mental fatigue in students, thus emphasizing the importance of self-regulation skills in minimizing the negative impact of social media use.

Through the phenomenon of procrastination and concentration disorders, the impact of self-regulation dependence penetrates significantly on academic performance. Cognitively, uncontrolled smartphone integration creates cognitive deficits that distract students from important tasks. According to Kushlev & Leita (2020), this digital distraction reduces productivity because it reduces academic attention. Without effective control, students engage in use that lowers their overall performance.

Nevertheless, if used appropriately, social media can also be a useful tool for learning, teamwork, and social interaction. The use of the platform for group discussions and educational materials increases students' motivation and academic achievement. As explained by Tanto & Handayani (2022), the use of systematic literature methods to analyze this phenomenon is essential to objectively identify impact patterns so that appropriate interventions can be implemented. Through a systematic understanding, it was found that online social support obtained through healthy interactions can actually be a protective factor (*protective factor*) for the mental well-being of students in the midst of lecture pressure.

As a mitigation strategy, the integration between strengthening self-regulation, integrating digital literacy, and institutional support is essential in overcoming the challenges of the digital era. Educational interventions and institutional policies are indispensable to help students understand the benefits and risks of social media. With strong self-regulation skills and effective time management, students can minimize negative risks while maximizing the positive potential of social media to support academic success and personal growth.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the use of social media among college students is a two-sided phenomenon that is significantly influenced by the capacity of individual self-regulation. As mentioned in the introduction, uncontrolled intensity use has been shown to be a major catalyst for the emergence of mental health disorders, such as anxiety and mental fatigue, as well as decreased academic productivity due to procrastination. The substance of the meaning of this topic shows that real convenience is not limited to social media technology itself, but rather to the efforts of individuals to manage and overcome their digital challenges in order to achieve their goals.

There is a strong correlation between the research objectives and the results obtained by social media, which was originally developed as a means of communication and information sharing, is now often used for informal interactions and entertainment that highlight destructive social relationships. However, the study also shows that when self-regulation is strengthened and social media is used to achieve adaptive goals such as academic collaboration, these platforms can significantly increase student motivation and engagement.

The findings of this study create an opportunity to develop a model of mental health interventions that use digital literacy in college. In the future, educational institutions should not only focus on providing technology facilities, but also implement a time management curriculum and digital coping strategies so that students are better prepared to face the flood of information. In addition, future research could investigate how effective artificial intelligence (AI) features in social media applications can be to provide early signals against excessive usage behavior, to build a healthier digital ecosystem and support academic success in a sustainable manner.

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