

A Descriptive Study of Social Media Addiction Among Senior High School Students

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to describe the level of social media addiction among high school students and to categorize their addiction levels based on a standardized measurement instrument. The study focused on patterns of social media use among adolescents in formal education settings. A descriptive quantitative research design was employed, involving 408 randomly selected students from SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. Data were collected using the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS), which consists of 11 items measuring six dimensions of social media addiction; salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict and relapse. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to calculate the total scores and classify the levels of addictions. The finding revealed that 4% of students demonstrated high addiction levels, 64% moderate levels and 32% low levels. These results suggest that while most students exhibit moderate social media use, a small group shows symptoms of high dependency that warrant targeted interventions. The study concludes that social media plays a significant role in students' daily lives, yet it also poses potential risks when used excessively. Therefore, digital literacy programs and school-based counseling focusing on time management, self-control, and awareness of psychological impacts are strongly recommended to promote healthy and responsible social media use.

Keywords: Addiction levels; Adolescents; Digital literacy; Social media addictions

Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology has transformed the aspect of human life. This transformation began in the early 21st century, marked by the emergence of the internet and its evolution from a simple communication platform into a complex digital ecosystem. The increasing accessibility of the internet, coupled with the widespread use of mobile devices, has facilitated the extensive penetration of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok across all age groups, including adolescents. Furthermore, innovations such as personalization algorithms, the integration of artificial intelligence, and mobile accessibility have made social media an inseparable part of everyday life. On the other hand, this rapid growth also poses new challenges, particularly the risk of excessive dependence on social media, which constitutes the focus of this study.

In Indonesia, the distribution of social media users has shown a consistent increasing trend, particularly among adolescents. We Are Social and Hootsuite (2023) reports that Indonesia recorded the highest number of internet users in Southeast Asia, with approximately 204 million active social media users as of January 2023. Among these users, individuals aged 13–19 years constitute the largest proportion. Similarly, data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2022) indicate that more than 70% of social media users in Indonesia are under the age of 30, with high school students aged 15–18 years representing the most dominant group. This trend is further supported by GoodStats.id, which reports significant growth in social media usage, predicting an

increase of approximately four million new users by 2025. Moreover, DataReportal – Global Digital Insights (2025) identifies YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram as the four most frequently used social media platforms in Indonesia, each exceeding 100 million users. These statistics indicate the high accessibility of digital technology in Indonesia, driven by increased device ownership and the expansion of internet infrastructure across nearly all regions of the country.

This development is closely linked to the digitalization of education following the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, actively promoted the use of digital platforms to facilitate distance learning. Among these platforms, Instagram and TikTok were frequently utilized for sharing educational content, conducting class discussions, and fostering student collaboration. Participation in online learning activities required students to engage extensively with digital devices and the internet, thereby increasing their exposure to and familiarity with social media platforms. Consequently, this integration of learning and digital engagement may also present potential risks, as high school students accustomed to digital environments are more likely to develop excessive dependence on social media. Such dependence can disrupt the balance between academic responsibilities and recreational online activities.

Dependence or addiction is generally defined as an uncontrollable urge accompanied by a diminished ability to regulate one's behavior (Alvira, 2021). In the context of social media use among adolescents, this condition manifests as difficulty disengaging from social media or persistent preoccupation with online interactions. Notifications and updates can easily distract students, leading to reduced focus and potential interference with academic performance.

According to Andreassen and Pallesen, as cited in (Jamaludin et al., 2022), the duration of social media use can serve as an indicator for categorizing individuals according to their level of dependence. Users who spend between one and three hours per day on social media are generally classified as recreational users, engaging with these platforms primarily for entertainment, information seeking, and social interaction. Those at risk of addiction typically access social media for four to six hours per day, while people who spend more than six hours daily are considered to exhibit addictive use patterns.

However, the duration of use alone does not fully capture the complexity of social media dependence. (Griffiths, 2005) identified six key components that characterize social media addiction, namely salience (social media dominating an individual's thoughts and daily activities), mood modification (using social media to regulate or alter mood), tolerance (a growing need for increased use to achieve the same satisfaction), withdrawal (experiencing discomfort or distress when unable to use social media), conflict (interpersonal or intrapersonal problems resulting from excessive use), and relapse (a return to excessive use following attempts to reduce or control usage).

Social media offers a wide range of benefits, including expanded access to information and learning resources, increased social connectivity, and the development of digital competencies. Despite these advantages, excessive use has been shown to contribute to maladaptive behavioral patterns characterized by diminished self-control, difficulty disengaging from online activity, and negative psychological and academic consequences. At more severe levels, these usage

patterns may progress into social media addiction, particularly among adolescents who are still developing emotional regulation and self-management skills.

Previous studies have reinforced this phenomenon. For example, (Santoso et al., 2023) reported that higher social media use is associated with increased social anxiety among adolescents. (Ngamo et al., 2023) found that social media addiction negatively correlates with emotional stability among adolescents in Kupang City, indicating that higher levels of dependency are linked to lower emotional stability. Miller and Tucker, as cited in (Ardhini & Tondok, 2023), revealed that excessive social media engagement may result in serious problems such as dishonesty, reduced concentration, lower academic achievement, and mental health issues. (Ayaz-Alkaya & Kulakçı-Altıntaş, 2025) identified more than half of the adolescents (62.8 %) had moderate to extreme levels of nomophobia behaviors, one in three adolescents was addicted to social media (32 %), and the level of social anxiety perceived by the majority was medium (mean = 43.40). (Zhou, 2024) identified a positive correlation between social media use among Chinese adolescents and increased risk of depression, anxiety, and psychological distress. Furthermore, research conducted by (Fadhlih & Marsinun, 2023) and (Maslukha et al., 2024) highlights that the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) may also intensify social media addiction. And (Gökçay et al., 2024) identified that social media addiction has an impact on healthy lifestyle beliefs in adolescents.

Although the literature on social media addiction continues to grow, most studies have focused on examining relationships among variables—such as addiction and mental health or addiction and academic performance. However, there remains limited empirical work that provides population-based profiling of addiction levels within school settings, particularly in the context of Melawi Regency.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the local school context and generate empirical insights that may serve as a foundation for developing school policies, designing counseling interventions, and strengthening digital literacy programs. The findings are expected to contribute to a richer understanding of the importance of promoting healthy digital behavior among students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. This study employed a quantitative survey approach. Data were analyzed by calculating total and average scores, followed by the classification of respondents according to their level of social media dependence. Primary data were collected directly from students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh, with a total of 408 respondents selected through random sampling techniques.

Methods

This quantitative research used a survey approach. Data were analyzed by calculating total scores, average scores, and classifying levels of dependency. Primary data were collected at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh, involving 408 randomly selected students as respondents.

The instrument used in this study was an adapted version of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS). This questionnaire consisted of 11 items that assess six dimensions of social media dependency, namely salience (the dominance of social media-related thoughts), mood modification (the use of social media to alter or regulate mood), tolerance (the increased need for prolonged or frequent use), withdrawal (feelings of discomfort or loss when unable to access social media), conflict (interference with other activities or relationships), and relapse (a return to

excessive use following attempts to reduce engagement). The instrument employed a five-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Table 1. Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS)

No.	Aspect	Item	Total
1	Salience (the dominance of social media-related thoughts)	1. 2	2
2	Mood Modification (the use of social media to alter or regulate mood)	3. 4	4
3	Tolerance (the increased need for prolonged or frequent use)	5. 6	2
4	Withdrawal (feelings of discomfort or loss when unable to access social media)	7. 8	2
5	Conflict (interference with other activities or relationships)	9	1
6	Relapse (a return to excessive use following attempts to reduce engagement)	10 . 11	2
Total			11

The instrument passed a systematic development process, including the collection of validity evidence and a pilot test to assess reliability and ensure alignment with the BSMAS construct of social media addiction. The reliability test obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 1.00, indicating excellent internal consistency. The validity analysis confirmed that 11 items met the required standards, with corrected item–total correlation values ranging from 0.446 to 0.795, while one item was removed due to insufficient validity.

Results and Discussion

Results

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. A total of 408 students participated, consisting of 150 males and 258 females.

Table 2. Respondent's Demographic Data

No.	Description	Number	Percentage
1	Respondent		
	Male	150	36. 765
	Female	258	63. 235
	Total	408	100.000
2	Duration of Social Media Usage		
	Less than 1 hour	70	17. 157
	1 – 2 hours	147	36. 029
	2 – 3 hours	86	21. 078
	More than 3 hours	105	25. 735
	Total	408	100.000
3	Types of Social Media Used		
	Facebook	46	11. 275
	TikTok	325	79. 657
	Instagram	378	92. 647
4	Number of Social Media Owned		

1 Social media	102	25.000
2 Social media	267	65.441
3 Social media	39	9.559
Total	408	100,000

The demographic distribution indicates that the majority of respondents were female (63.24%). In general, most students reported spending 1–2 hours per day on social media (36.03%) and using two types of social media platforms (65.44%). The most frequently used platform was Instagram (92.65%), followed by TikTok (79.66%).

Furthermore, the average scores of high school students' social media dependence across the six BSMAS dimensions are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Average Score of Students' Dependence on Social Media

No.	Aspect	Female	Male	Average
1	Salience (the dominance of social media-related thoughts)	2.213	2.193	2.203
2	Mood Modification (the use of social media to alter or regulate mood)	3.767	3.513	3.640
3	Tolerance (the increased need for prolonged or frequent use)	2.419	2.447	2.433
4	Withdrawal (feelings of discomfort or loss when unable to access social media)	2.422	2.460	2.441
5	Conflict (interference with other activities or relationships)	2.795	2.740	2.767
6	Relapse (a return to excessive use following attempts to reduce engagement)	2.659	2.587	2.623

Table 3 indicates that the Mood Modification dimension had the highest average score (3.640), suggesting that students perceive social media as a tool for regulating their emotions. Students reported turning to social media when feeling sad or bored and experiencing improved mood and enjoyment after using these platforms. The Conflict dimension had the second-highest average score (2.767), indicating that social media use can interfere with students' daily activities and responsibilities.

The overall level of students' social media dependence is presented in Tables 4 to 6, categorized into three levels, namely mild, moderate, and high. These categories were determined based on respondents' total questionnaire scores, with the score intervals for each category calculated as follows:

$$\text{Interval} = \frac{\text{maximum score} - \text{minimum score}}{3}$$

$$\text{Interval} = \frac{55 - 11}{3} = 14.667$$

The classification obtained:

11 – 26 = mild

27 – 40 = moderate

41 – 55 = high

Table 4. Results of Categorization of Male Students' Dependence on Social Media

No.	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
1	Mild	49	32.667
2	Moderate	94	62.667
3	High	7	4.667
		150	100

Table 4 presents the levels of social media dependence among male students. The majority of male students are categorized in the moderate dependence category (62.67%), while the high dependence category accounts for the lowest proportion (4.67%).

Table 5. Results of Categorization of Female Students' Dependence on Social Media

No	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
1	Mild	81	31.395
2	Moderate	167	64.729
3	High	10	3.876
		258	100

Table 5 shows the categorization of female students' social media dependence. Similar to males, most female students exhibit moderate dependence (64.73%). The high dependence category among female students represents only 3.88% of respondents, corresponding to 10 out of 258 participants.

Table 6. Results of Categorization of Student Dependence on Social Media

No.	Category	Jumlah			Percentage (%)
		Male	Female	Total	
1	Mild	49	81	130	32
2	Moderate	94	167	261	64
3	High	7	10	17	4
Total		150	258	408	100

Table 6 presents the overall levels of social media dependence among all respondents. The majority of students are categorized within the **moderate dependence** category, comprising **261 students (64%)**, while the **high dependence** category includes only **17 students (4%)**. It's interesting that the number of male students classified as highly dependent on social media exceeds that of female students.

Discussion

This study aims to investigate the extent of social media dependence among students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. Social media are defined as the use of web-based and mobile technologies that enable communication to evolve into interactive dialogue (Hasgimianti et al., 2022). For the purposes of this study, the focus is limited to the three most widely used platforms, namely Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Analysis of the demographic data indicates that the study included 408 respondents, comprising 258 female students (63.24%) and 150 male students (36.76%). The higher proportion of female respondents suggests either greater

participation of female students in the study or that female students may be more active users of social media.

Regarding daily duration of social media use, most students reported using social media for 1–2 hours per day (36.03%), suggesting that their engagement is primarily recreational. A total of 25.74% of students accessed social media for more than 3 hours per day, indicating a higher risk of developing addictive behaviors. Only a small proportion of students (17.16%) used social media for less than 1 hour per day. These findings suggest that social media has become an inseparable part of daily life for most students, with substantial time dedicated to online activities.

In terms of platform preferences, Instagram emerged as the most widely used platform (92.65%), followed by TikTok (79.66%) and Facebook (11.28%). This indicates that visually oriented and entertainment-based platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, are particularly popular among teenagers, reflecting global trends in social media usage among younger generations. These results are consistent with (Hasgimianti et al., 2022), who reported that 86% of teenagers watch TikTok videos, while 56% engage with Instagram stories, WhatsApp statuses, or Facebook Live.

Regarding the number of social media accounts, the majority of students have two accounts (65.44%), indicating a tendency to engage with multiple platforms for their online activities. Only 9.56% of students reported having three accounts. The social media dependency scores, based on the six constructs of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS, Table 3), show that the Mood Modification dimension recorded the highest average score (3.640) for both male and female students. This indicates that most students use social media as a means of regulating or improving their mood, particularly when experiencing boredom, sadness, or stress. Female students scored slightly higher (3.767), suggesting a greater tendency to use social media as an emotional escape. These findings are consistent with (Shalahuddin et al., 2023), who reported that avoiding personal problems is a common reason for prolonged social media use. Similarly (Jamaludin et al., 2022) noted that factors such as loneliness and academic stress can contribute to social media addiction.

The Conflict dimension with an average score of 2.767, ranked second highest. This suggests that social media use can occasionally interfere with other activities, such as studying or face-to-face social interactions, highlighting potential negative effects that warrant attention. The lowest average score was observed in the Salience dimension (2.203), indicating that most students had not experienced excessive cognitive preoccupation with social media and were generally able to maintain focus on activities outside the virtual environment.

Overall, the average scores across the six BSMAS dimensions showed no substantial differences between male and female students. However, female students scored slightly higher on the Mood Modification dimension, reflecting a greater tendency to use social media for emotional regulation, while male students scored slightly higher on the Withdrawal dimension. Based on the analysis and categorization of social media dependency, the majority of male students (62.67%) at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh is classified in the moderate dependency category, while only a small proportion (4.67%) are classified as having high dependency. This indicates that although male students are active social media users, most remain within relatively moderate limits. A similar pattern is observed among female

students, with the majority (64.73%) in the moderate category and only 3.88% exhibiting high dependency. Overall, both genders show relatively similar dependency patterns, with the moderate level predominating.

Despite the smaller number of male students compared to female students, a slightly higher proportion of males fall into the high dependency category (4.67% vs. 3.88%). This indicates potential gender differences in social media use: females may engage more frequently for emotional and social purposes, whereas males may be more prone to compulsive use and experience greater difficulty in self-regulation when addicted. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing students' self-regulation, a behavior shown to mitigate social media addiction (Awalia & Rifandi, 2022). Moreover, (Maya & Zaini, 2024) noted that individuals with low self-control are more susceptible to developing social media addiction.

Among the 408 respondents, the majority of students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh exhibited a moderate level of social media dependence (64%), indicating that while social media plays an important role in their daily lives, most students have not reached the stage of severe addiction. Thirty-two percent of students demonstrated a mild level of dependence, and only 4% exhibited a high level of dependence.

These findings are consistent with several descriptive studies conducted in different regions of Indonesia. (Awalia & Rifandi, 2022) reported that 86% of university students in Banjarmasin aged 18–23 were categorized as having a moderate level of social media addiction. Similarly, (Hasgimianti et al., 2022) found that 37% of junior high school students in Pekanbaru were classified at a high addiction level. (Siburian & Ricky, 2024) also identified that 1.7% of adolescents at SMAN 1 Parongpong were in the very low addiction category, while 82% of students at SMAN 14 Bekasi were identified as experiencing social media addiction (Humaira et al., 2025). Collectively, these comparisons demonstrate that social media addiction among adolescents occurs across regions and appears to follow similar patterns, particularly within secondary education settings.

The results of this study further indicate the need for deeper analysis of psychosocial factors that may reinforce digital dependency. Parental support, social norms, peer influence, and the school environment likely play important roles in shaping students' capacity to regulate or lose control over their social media use. (Jia-Yuan et al., 2025) showed that parental neglect was significantly positively correlated with adolescent social media addiction. (Topan et al., 2025), indicates that parents who do not exhibit symptoms of social media addiction have a higher level of awareness regarding their children's social media accounts and demonstrate a more structured approach in limiting their children's access to social media, such as directing them toward sports activities (71.7%) and fostering peer interaction (37.2 %).

From a practical perspective, the high proportion of students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh categorized as having a moderate level of dependency carries direct implications for school counselors, homeroom teachers, and educators. Preventive and intervention efforts should focus on improving self-regulation, time management, digital literacy, and offline social engagement. In addition, schools may implement counseling services for students with high addiction scores, establish policies regulating device use during instructional hours, and provide workshops on digital ethics, critical awareness of algorithmic influence, and emotional regulation in digital

contexts. Parental involvement also remains essential through outreach programs that promote effective supervision and guidance regarding technology use at home.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, most students at SMA Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh use social media for approximately 1–2 hours per day and typically maintain two primary accounts, with Instagram being the most frequently used platform. Female students scored slightly higher on the emotional aspect (Mood Modification), whereas male students tended to score higher on the Withdrawal and Tolerance dimensions.

Regarding overall social media dependency, 32% of students (130 respondents) fell into the low dependency category, 64% (261 respondents) were classified as moderate, and only 4% (17 respondents) exhibited high dependency. Interestingly, despite the smaller number of male respondents, a higher proportion of males fell into the high dependency category compared to females.

Overall, social media have become a primary psychological and social resource for adolescents. When used responsibly, they offer benefits such as social connection and information access, but uncontrolled use has the potential to develop into addictive behaviors, highlighting the importance of promoting self-regulation and digital literacy among students.

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