

YouTube as a Digital Learning Medium for Fostering Learning Interest among Lower Secondary Students

Nur Fadilla*, Syamsuria, Hamka

Economic Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Bone, Watampone, Indonesia

Abstract

This study examines the effect of using the YouTube platform as learning media on students' learning interest at MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana. The study employed a quantitative approach with an ex post facto design because the use of YouTube as a learning medium had occurred before the data were collected. The research population consisted of all eighth-grade students of MTs Mursyidul Awwam, and saturated sampling was used to involve 28 students from classes VIII A and VIII B. Data were collected through closed questionnaires and documentation, then analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, prerequisite tests, and simple linear regression with SPSS version 25. The results show that all questionnaire items were valid, with the reliability coefficients of the YouTube variable and learning interest variable reaching 0.844 and 0.826, respectively. The regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 17.464 + 0.609X$, with a significance value of 0.001 and an R Square value of 0.340. These findings indicate that YouTube has a positive and significant effect on students' learning interest and explains 34.0% of the variance in students' learning interest.

Keywords: YouTube; Learning Media; Learning Interest; Educational Technology; Ex Post Facto

1. Introduction/Pendahuluan

Education is a conscious and planned process to develop students' potential, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and social skills needed in society. In learning practice, educational success is determined not only by content but also by the teacher's ability to select strategies and media appropriate to the students' characteristics. Changes in student learning patterns in the digital era make technology-based learning media increasingly important to support a more engaging and relevant learning process.

Advances in information and communication technology have transformed the way students acquire knowledge. Learning no longer relies solely on textbooks and verbal explanations from teachers, but can also be enhanced through digital media that combine text, sound, images, animation, and video. Audiovisual media has the potential to help students understand material more concretely because learning messages are delivered through more than one information channel. This situation aligns with the needs of modern learning, which requires teachers to provide varied, interactive, and life-like learning experiences for students.

One digital platform widely used in learning is YouTube. It offers a variety of educational videos that can be accessed flexibly, both in and out of school. Through videos, students can see illustrations, examples, demonstrations, and explanations that aren't always available in the classroom. Using YouTube as a learning medium also allows students to review material as needed, allowing for a more independent and gradual learning process.

Interest in learning is one of the psychological factors that determines student success. Students with a strong interest in learning tend to show enjoyment, attention, interest, and activeness during the learning process. Conversely, students with low interest in learning easily become bored, lack focus, and tend to be passive when receiving material. Therefore, selecting learning media that can capture students' attention is crucial for improving the quality of the learning process. Based on observations at MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana, conventional learning still makes some students less focused and less active. Teachers have used YouTube as a learning medium in several meetings, but its utilization has not been fully optimized. This phenomenon indicates the need for empirical studies on the effect of YouTube use as a learning medium on student learning interest. This study aims to determine whether the use of the YouTube platform as a learning medium influences the learning interest of eighth-grade students at MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana.

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: - (Nur Fadilla)

2. Literature Review

2.1. Learning interest

Interest in learning is a psychological tendency that drives students to participate, pay attention, and understand learning activities seriously. Interest is not only evident in liking a subject but also in consistent attention, a drive to seek information, and active involvement in the learning process. Renninger, (Yulistian, 2023) explain that interest is related to cognitive and affective engagement that can develop through meaningful learning experiences.

In the classroom context, indicators of learning interest can be observed through feelings of enjoyment, interest in the material, attention during the learning process, and student engagement. (Nazirun, 2021); emphasize that these indicators can be used to gauge student engagement in learning activities. When students feel happy and engaged, they are more likely to focus and participate more willingly in discussions and other learning activities.

2.2. YouTube as learning media

Learning media is a tool used to convey learning messages from teachers to students, making the material easier to understand. (Puspita Tutiasri, 2021) explain that learning media acts as a link between the message source and the message recipient. In digital learning, media serves not only as a tool but also as a learning space that allows students to access materials flexibly.

YouTube has audiovisual characteristics that allow it to present material in the form of video, audio, illustrations, and animation. (Mustika, 2021) stated that YouTube can be used as a learning medium because it provides diverse and easily accessible content. Video presentations can help students understand abstract concepts more concretely, especially when the material is accompanied by examples or demonstrations.

YouTube's use also has limitations that need to be considered. Not all available content is of equal academic quality, so teachers need to select relevant and valid videos. Furthermore, using YouTube requires an adequate internet connection and supervision to ensure students remain focused on the learning material. With proper management, YouTube can be an effective learning tool, but its use still requires teacher guidance.

2.3. YouTube and students learning interest

Several previous studies have shown that learning videos and YouTube are linked to increased student learning interest. (Ajizah, 2022) found that using YouTube in learning models can increase learning interest because students gain a more engaging learning experience. (Komariyah, 2022) also demonstrated that YouTube helps make learning more varied and easier to understand.

Video media can capture students' attention through a combination of moving images and sound. (Suardi, 2021) stated that using YouTube can help students understand material because the audiovisual presentation is more engaging than conventional media. Research by (Ardhianti, 2022); (Anisa, 2023); and (Suhermanto, 2024); (Saifulloh & Hariyanto, 2024). reinforces the view that video and YouTube can increase student interest, motivation, and engagement in the learning process.

Based on theoretical explanations and previous research, the use of YouTube as a learning medium is suspected to have a positive effect on students' learning interest. In this study, YouTube use was understood through indicators such as ease of understanding the material, interest in learning videos, and increased attention and focus on learning. Meanwhile, student learning interest was assessed through feelings of enjoyment, interest in the material, attention during learning, and active participation in learning activities.

3. Research Method and Materials

This study employed a quantitative approach with an *ex post facto* design. This design was used because the independent variable, the use of YouTube as a learning medium, existed prior to the study's implementation. The researchers did not provide any special treatment to the respondents, but instead examined the effect of YouTube use on students' learning interests based on existing conditions.

The study was conducted at MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana, Cenrana District, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi Province, in the 2025/2026 academic year. The study population was all eighth-grade students, consisting of classes VIII A and VIII B, with a total of 28 students. Due to the relatively small population, this study used a saturated sampling technique, so that all members of the population were used as research samples.

The data collection technique used a closed-ended questionnaire and documentation. The questionnaire was compiled based on indicators of YouTube use as a learning medium and student learning interest. Each questionnaire

item used a Likert scale with five response options: strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Documentation was used to supplement the research data, including school data, student lists, and evidence of research activities.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 25. The analysis stages included validity testing, reliability testing, descriptive analysis, Shapiro-Wilk normality testing, linearity testing, homogeneity testing, and simple linear regression analysis. Decision-making in the hypothesis test was based on a significance value of 0.05. If the significance value is less than 0.05, then YouTube usage is declared to have an effect on students' learning interest.

Table 1. Distribution of research respondents

Class	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
VIII A	7	7	14	50%
VIII B	5	9	14	50%
Total	12	16	28	100%

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Instrument testing and prerequisite analysis

The instrument testing showed that the questionnaire items were suitable for use in the research. The validity test of the ten items measuring the use of YouTube and the ten items measuring learning interest indicated that all item correlation values were higher than the r table value of 0.3739. Therefore, all items were declared valid and could represent their respective indicators.

The reliability test also showed consistent results. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the YouTube variable was 0.844, while the Cronbach's Alpha value for the learning interest variable was 0.826. Both values were above the minimum reliability criterion of 0.60. This means that the questionnaire had good internal consistency and could be used as a reliable data collection instrument.

Before testing the hypothesis, prerequisite tests were conducted. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test produced significance values of 0.172 for the YouTube variable and 0.471 for the learning interest variable. Both values were higher than 0.05, which means that the data were normally distributed. The linearity test showed a Deviation from Linearity significance value of 0.538, indicating that the relationship between YouTube use and learning interest was linear. The homogeneity test produced a significance value of 0.625, so the data variance was homogeneous.

Table 2. Summary of instrument and prerequisite tests

Test	Result	Decision
Validity of YouTube variable	All r count > 0.3739	Valid
Validity of learning interest variable	All r count > 0.3739	Valid
Reliability of YouTube variable	Cronbach Alpha = 0.844	Reliable
Reliability of learning interest variable	Cronbach Alpha = 0.826	Reliable
Normality	Sig. YouTube = 0.172; Sig. interest = 0.471	Normal
Linearity	Deviation from Linearity Sig. = 0.538	Linear
Homogeneity	Levene Sig. = 0.625	Homogeneous

4.2. Descriptive findings

The descriptive analysis showed that students gave positive responses to the use of YouTube as learning media. Most respondents selected strongly agree or agree on the questionnaire items. For example, 64.2% of students strongly agreed that they used YouTube to watch learning videos according to school material, while 60.7% strongly agreed that they often searched for learning material on YouTube. This indicates that YouTube was not only used as entertainment but also as a source of learning materials.

Students also reported that YouTube helped them understand lesson content. A total of 50% of respondents strongly agreed and 39.2% agreed that videos on YouTube helped them understand learning materials. The use of audio and visual elements was also considered helpful by most students. This result supports the idea that audiovisual media can make learning content easier to understand because students can see and hear explanations at the same time.

The descriptive findings on students' learning interest also showed a positive pattern. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were interested in learning after using YouTube. Students also reported that learning became

more enjoyable, they could focus better, and they had a stronger desire to continue learning through YouTube. These results indicate that YouTube can create a learning atmosphere that is more attractive and closer to students' digital learning habits.

Table 3. Selected descriptive responses from questionnaire results

Indicator	Dominant response	Interpretation
Using YouTube to watch learning videos	64.2% strongly agree; 35.7% agree	Students commonly use YouTube for learning
Searching for learning materials on YouTube	60.7% strongly agree; 39.2% agree	Students actively seek learning content
Videos help students understand material	50.0% strongly agree; 39.2% agree	YouTube supports comprehension
Interest in learning after using YouTube	46.4% strongly agree; 53.6% agree	Learning interest increases
Learning becomes more enjoyable	57.1% strongly agree; 42.8% agree	YouTube creates enjoyable learning
Students focus better when using YouTube	64.2% strongly agree; 35.7% agree	YouTube supports attention

4.3. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using simple linear regression. The regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 17.464 + 0.609X$. The constant value of 17.464 indicates that when the use of YouTube is considered zero, the predicted score of students' learning interest is 17.464. The regression coefficient of 0.609 indicates a positive direction of influence. Thus, each one-unit increase in the use of YouTube as learning media is followed by an estimated increase of 0.609 in students' learning interest.

The t test showed a significance value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05. Therefore, H0 was rejected and H1 was accepted. This means that the use of the YouTube platform as learning media has a positive and significant effect on students' learning interest. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.583 indicates a moderate relationship between the two variables. Meanwhile, the R Square value of 0.340 means that YouTube use explains 34.0% of the variance in students' learning interest, while the remaining 66.0% is influenced by other factors outside this study.

Table 4. Simple linear regression result

Component	Value	Meaning
Regression equation	$Y = 17.464 + 0.609X$	Positive regression direction
Regression coefficient	0.609	Each increase in YouTube use increases learning interest
Significance	0.001	Significant effect because < 0.05
R	0.583	Moderate relationship
R Square	0.340	YouTube explains 34.0% of learning interest variance

4.4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that YouTube can function as a relevant learning medium for students in the digital era. Students in grade VIII at MTs Mursyidul Awwam responded positively to YouTube because the platform presents learning material through visual and audio elements. This combination helps students follow explanations more easily and reduces the monotony that often occurs in conventional learning. The results are consistent with the argument of (Mustika, 2021) stated that YouTube can support learning through accessible and varied audiovisual content.

The positive effect of YouTube on learning interest can be explained through the characteristics of video-based learning. Video allows students to observe examples, illustrations, and explanations repeatedly. This feature is important because students have different learning speeds. When students can pause or replay content, they gain more control over the learning process. This flexibility can increase comfort and confidence, which then supports the development of learning interest.

The research results also align with previous studies. (Ajizah, 2022) found that YouTube media could increase students' learning interest when integrated into learning activities. Similarly, (Komariyah, 2022) found that YouTube made learning more interesting and easier to understand. The results of this study strengthen those findings by showing statistical evidence that YouTube has a significant effect on students' learning interest in the context of MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana.

Although the effect is significant, the R Square value of 0.340 also shows that YouTube is not the only factor influencing learning interest. Other factors, such as teacher teaching style, peer environment, family support, classroom atmosphere, learning motivation, and the use of other digital media may also contribute to students' learning interest. Therefore, YouTube should not be used as a stand-alone solution, but as part of a broader learning strategy designed by the teacher.

The practical meaning of these findings is that teachers need to select YouTube videos carefully, align them with learning objectives, and integrate them with discussion, questioning, assignments, or reflection. Without teacher guidance, students may be distracted by unrelated content or use YouTube only for entertainment. Therefore, effective use of YouTube requires planning, content selection, time management, and classroom control so that the platform truly supports the learning process.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research results, the use of the YouTube platform as learning media has a positive and significant effect on students' learning interest at MTs Mursyidul Awwam Cenrana. The regression equation $Y = 17.464 + 0.609X$ indicates that higher use of YouTube as learning media is followed by higher students' learning interest. The significance value of 0.001 confirms that the effect is statistically significant, while the R Square value of 0.340 shows that YouTube contributes 34.0% to the variance in learning interest. These findings suggest that YouTube can support students' interest in learning when used appropriately as part of classroom instruction. However, teachers still need to guide the selection and use of videos so that students remain focused on learning objectives.

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