

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF PHUBBING BEHAVIOR ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOME

THESIS

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STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOME**

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ABSTRACT

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This study used a mixed-methods approach to explore the impact of phubbing behavior on students' learning outcomes, specifically among English Language Teaching (ELT) students. The study involved thirty-three participants selected through purposive sampling, with data gathered through surveys and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS to generate descriptive data, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that smartphones are valuable learning tools and contribute to significant academic distractions. Survey results indicate that 37.5% of students frequently check social media during lessons, while 31.3% browse unrelated content, reducing their ability to concentrate and retain learning materials. Furthermore, 68.8% of respondents reported that teacher supervision helps them stay focused. Thematic analysis of interview responses supports these findings, highlighting that excessive smartphone use affects academic engagement and disrupts social interactions, leading to feelings of neglect and disconnection among peers. This study highlights the importance of educational institutions enforcing stricter smartphone regulations, enhancing digital literacy, and incorporating interactive teaching methods to reduce distractions and create a more conducive learning environment. By fostering technological awareness and encouraging self-discipline, educators can support students in optimizing their academic performance while minimizing the adverse impact of phubbing behavior.

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Last but not least, I recognize that my thesis is far from perfect and that many mistakes will be made, but I do hope that this thesis of mine can give any benefits for anyone who reads this, especially future researcher in this field.

Banda Aceh, March 25th 2025

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The proliferation of smartphones in recent years has led to the emergence of a phenomenon known as phubbing or phone snubbing. Wolf (2014, p.2) defines phubbing as the “act of snubbing someone in a social environment by looking at his phone instead of paying attention to the person”. Phubbing refers to ignoring one's surroundings or conversation partners in favor of using a smartphone (Roberts & David, 2016). This behavior has become increasingly common in both social and academic settings and has raised concerns about its potential impact on social interactions and learning outcomes.

Phubbing in educational settings may also negatively affect student learning and engagement. Research has shown that using smartphones in class could be disruptive and lead to decreased attention and retention of course material (Ravizza et al., 2014). In addition, students who report higher levels of phubbing behavior may be more likely to report feeling disengaged and overwhelmed by their coursework (Meier et al., 2015).

Given the potential negative consequences of phubbing behavior, it is essential to examine its prevalence and impact on student learning outcomes. This information could inform efforts to address phubbing in educational settings and promote student engagement and academic success.

The research on phubbing behavior and student outcomes has mixed results. Some studies have found that phubbing is significantly related to lower grades and decreased engagement (Meier et al., 2015), while others have found no significant relationship (Chou & Hsiao, 2014). There is also some evidence to suggest that the relationship between phubbing and student outcomes may be moderated by individual differences, such as age or personality (Chou & Hsiao, 2014).

In addition to examining the direct effects of phubbing behavior on student outcomes, researchers have also explored the potential mediating factors that may help explain the relationship between phubbing and student outcomes. For example, some studies have suggested that the negative impact of phubbing on student outcomes may be mediated by factors such as distraction, procrastination, or lack of self-regulation (Meier et al., 2015).

The reason for choosing this topic is due to the increasing reliance on smartphones among students and the observed impact on classroom dynamics. As a student and observer of educational practices, I have noticed the frequent occurrence of phubbing behavior, both in myself and my peers, and its potential implications for academic performance and social interactions. Understanding the nuances of this behavior and its effects is crucial for developing strategies that can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes in an era where technology plays an integral role in daily life.

Given the mixed results and complexity of the relationship between phubbing behavior and student outcomes, it is clear that more research is needed in

this area. Further study is needed to understand the prevalence and impact of phubbing behavior on student outcomes and to identify effective strategies for addressing phubbing in educational settings. By examining the relationship between phubbing behavior and student outcomes, researchers could help educators and policymakers develop evidence-based approaches to promoting student engagement and academic success.

The widespread use of smartphones in recent years has led to the emergence of a phenomenon known as phubbing, or phone snubbing. Wolf (2014, p.2) defines phubbing as the “act of snubbing someone in a social environment by looking at his phone instead of paying attention to the person.” Phubbing refers to ignoring one’s surroundings or conversation partners in favor of using a smartphone (Roberts & David, 2016). This behavior has become increasingly prevalent in both social and academic settings, raising concerns about its potential impact on social interactions and learning outcomes.

In educational settings, particularly among English Language Teaching (ELT) students or Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris (PBI), phubbing may negatively affect learning and engagement. Research has shown that smartphone use in classrooms can disrupt attention and hinder the retention of course material (Ravizza et al., 2014). For ELT students, who are often required to engage actively in listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises, phubbing behavior could further decrease engagement and academic performance. Additionally, students who report higher levels of phubbing behavior may feel more disengaged and overwhelmed with their coursework (Meier et al., 2015).

Given the increasing reliance on smartphones among students and their potential impact on classroom dynamics, it is crucial to explore the prevalence of phubbing behavior among ELT students and its implications on their learning outcomes. This knowledge can help inform strategies to address the disruptive effects of phubbing in educational settings, specifically in the context of language acquisition and classroom interaction.

The research on the effects of phubbing behavior on academic outcomes has yielded mixed results. Some studies suggest a significant relationship between phubbing and lower grades or decreased academic engagement (Meier et al., 2015), while other research indicates no such relationship (Chou & Hsiao, 2014). The impact of phubbing may also vary based on individual differences, such as age, personality, or learning style, which could moderate its effects on student outcomes (Chou & Hsiao, 2014).

In addition to the direct effects of phubbing on student outcomes, other factors may mediate this relationship. For instance, research has shown that phubbing can lead to increased levels of distraction, procrastination, and poor self-regulation (Meier et al., 2015). These factors may help explain why students who engage in phubbing are more likely to experience academic struggles.

The reason for focusing on this issue within the ELT or PBI context is the growing role of smartphones in educational practices, especially among students learning English as a second language. As an ELT student and an observer of

educational environments, I have noticed the frequency of phubbing behaviors in myself and my peers, as well as its potential consequences for academic performance and classroom interactions. Understanding the dynamics of phubbing behavior in language learning environments is essential for developing effective strategies to promote better engagement and improve academic outcomes in the context of English language learning.

Given the complexity and mixed results regarding the relationship between phubbing behavior and student outcomes, further research is needed to fully understand the prevalence of phubbing among ELT students and its impact on their academic performance. Future studies should explore the potential mediating factors, such as distraction, procrastination, and self-regulation, that may explain the relationship between phubbing behavior and learning outcomes. This will help educators and policymakers develop evidence-based approaches to promoting student engagement and academic success within ELT programs.

B. Research Question

In this research, the focus is on : What is the impact of phubbing behavior on PBI students' learning outcomes?

C. The Aim of the Study

Meanwhile, this study aim to investigate whether there is a relationship between phubbing habits and academic performance.

D. Significance of the Study

1. Empirical Contribution

Students could understand more about the impact of the phubbing phenomenon on their learning outcomes. They could reduce the phubbing behavior by knowing the impact of phubbing.

2. Practical Contribution

The results of this study may serve as a reference for future studies to research the topic of phubbing behavior. They might use the same research design to resolve the student academic performance problem.

E. Terminology

The following key terms are defined to ensure clarity and prevent misinterpretation in this study. Here are the following:

1. Phubbing

Phubbing is a term that refers to ignoring someone in a social setting by paying attention to a phone instead of the person. Hence the word ‘phubbing’ derived from the word “telephone” and “snubbing” (Karadag et al., 2015). It is derived from a combination of the words “phone” and “snubbing” and is a way of placating someone without directly engaging with them. A “phubber” could be defined as a person in social interaction.

In this research, “phubbing” refers specifically to the act of smartphone distraction that occurs during academic activities, such as

lectures, study sessions, and group work. This behavior is examined in relation to its impact on students' academic performance and their confidence in speaking English.

2. Behaviour

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, behavior could be described as the actions and responses of an individual or group concerning their surroundings (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). In this study, the behavior that will be examined is phubbing. Habit and behavior are related but different. Behavior is any action or activity that a person engages in, whether it is conscious or unconscious. It could include simple actions like walking or talking to more complex behaviors like problem-solving or socializing. Habits, as defined by psychologist (Wood, 2019), are specific types of behavior that are repeated regularly and often become automatic. Simply, habits are the routines or behaviors that a person repeats constantly, usually performed automatically by the subconscious mind. On the other hand, behavior is repeated repeatedly and turned into a habit over time.

3. Student Learning Outcomes

According to Gogus (2012), in education literature the product or evidence of students' learning experience. The outcome often refers to desired outcomes. Learning outcomes are statements of what a successful learner is expected to be able to do at the end of the process of a learning experience, such as the course unit or the course model. Based on the

explanation, it could be concluded that student learning outcomes are the knowledge, skills, and abilities a student is expected to have acquired or developed as a result of completing a course of study, program, or learning experience.

