



The Influence of Social Media and Anxiety on Students' Understanding of Learning: A Case Study

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Abstract : The rapid development of information and communication technology has increased the intensity of social media use, especially among students. Although social media provides various benefits, excessive use can have negative psychological impacts such as anxiety and student learning comprehension. This study aims to analyze the influence of social media use and social anxiety on the learning comprehension of students majoring in Business Administration at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, Palembang. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. Data were collected from students through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. Data analysis will use the multiple linear regression method. The sample of this study was 103 students of Sriwijaya State Polytechnic Bukit class. This research method used regression. Social media, anxiety, and learning comprehension were measured and collected using a questionnaire with a Lickert scale. Then, the data were analyzed using SPSS software. The results and conclusions show that social media and anxiety have an influence on student learning comprehension. The regression analysis found that social media contributed to learning comprehension ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.05$) and anxiety also contributed to learning comprehension ($\beta = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$). The findings of this study are expected to provide students with insight into using social media more wisely.

Keywords : Social Media; Social Anxiety; Learning Comprehension; College Students.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, wherever we are, we're sure to see people holding gadgets, whether cell phones, tablets, or laptops. And generally, those holding gadgets are browsing social media. This trend has even spread to the youngest generations. It's not uncommon for elementary school students to hold their own phones. Even among college students, almost all of them will access social media in their free time. The development of information and communication technology has indeed brought significant changes to the way individuals interact, communicate, and build social relationships. Social media is one of the most prominent products of this technological development and has become an essential part of everyday life. In this section, we will specifically discuss the impact on college students. Social media is a medium on the web that allows clients to introduce themselves and socialize, participate, share, and talk with other clients, and create virtual social securities (Hanafi, 2016). Earlier on, (Brogan, 2010) characterized web-based media as follows: "Social media is a new set of communication and collaboration tools that enable many types of interactions that were previously unavailable to the average person.". Social media is widely used as a platform for obtaining information, expressing oneself, sharing certain things, and can also support academic activities if used wisely. The ease of access and diverse interactive features available on social media platforms have led to increased usage among college students. (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017) stated that

academically oriented young people have grown up in an environment heavily reliant on digital technology, making social media use an integral part of their lives. (Marlina & Nadirah, 2024) demonstrate that social media not only serves as a means of sharing knowledge, but also as a tool for building character by applying religious values in everyday interactions. In his research (Parombean, Novita, & Abidin, 2025) found that one of the social media has an influence on the psychology of teenagers, where in this research anxiety is part of the psychology and students who are also teenagers.

While social media offers many benefits and positive aspects, excessive use can also have negative consequences that can affect psychological well-being and learning comprehension. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2023 showed that approximately 68% of Generation Z checked their social media accounts more than ten times per hour. Furthermore, 72% of respondents reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety when they were unable to access social media for a period of time. This is often referred to as FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), or missing out on the latest information. These findings indicate a tendency toward social media dependency among the younger generation. This dependency is thought to be linked to various psychological issues, one of which is social anxiety.

Furthermore, due to their dependence on social media, students often forget their primary duties and responsibilities as students. Instead of using social media to support and enhance their learning, they waste their time on social media for unproductive activities. Psychological conditions such as social anxiety are characterized by excessive fear, worry, or discomfort when individuals are in social situations or are required to interact with others face-to-face. In the context of college students, this social anxiety can also impact communication skills, self-confidence, academic participation, and the quality of interpersonal relationships. In their research, (O'Day & Heimberg, 2021) explained that individuals with high levels of social anxiety tend to seek support through social media rather than through direct social interactions. This situation can cause individuals to become increasingly focused on online social media environments and potentially reduce their engagement in face-to-face social interactions. Social media can also function as a space that generates social pressures, such as the pressure to project the most ideal self-image, fear of negative evaluation or comments, and a tendency to compare oneself to others in order to appear superior. High levels of social media use can increase an individual's sensitivity to others' responses or comments, which can be linked to an increased fear of social judgment. Furthermore, excessive social media use can reduce the frequency of in-person social interactions, ultimately affecting an individual's comfort in engaging in real-life social situations.

Previous research explains that the relationship between social media use and anxiety is often mediated by psychological factors such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), indicating that social media usage intensity alone is insufficient to explain the emergence of social anxiety (Li, Zhang, & Wang, 2023). So many people find it difficult to let go of social media because they are afraid or worried about missing out on the latest information. The term anxiety comes from the Latin *angustus*, meaning stiff, and *angos* or *anci*, meaning to strangle. Problems faced by adolescents are inseparable from the problems that many other students experience in the learning process, which sometimes also make them anxious, such as when faced with problems that are difficult for them to absorb and think about (Fadli, 2021). Anxiety and fear also come due to feelings of helplessness or individual inability when facing problems (Dina & Iyan, 2022). In the book "Applied Psychology Across Disciplines," it is written that learning anxiety is an unclear and unpleasant feeling of worry triggered by uncertainty about one's ability to successfully complete academic tasks (Prawitasari, 2012). From this, we can also develop the view that anxiety doesn't only have negative impacts. If

anxiety is managed and directed in a positive way, such as encouraging more active study, even though social media. In consideration, if students face anxiety when they cannot complete their learning assignments, we as teachers can help students to direct this anxiety into a driving force so that students strive better to be able to complete their learning assignments. (Syafruddin, 2019) on previous research also discussed anxiety as a factor in learning. Students at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, as part of the vocational education system, have unique learning characteristics that emphasize practical activities, group work, and direct interpersonal interactions. These characteristics can result in different social experiences than students in purely academic programs. Therefore, it is important to re-examine the relationship between the intensity of social media use and social anxiety on learning comprehension in the context of vocational higher education students.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to analyze the influence of the intensity of social media use and social anxiety on learning comprehension among the Diploma 4 Business Management Study Program at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of research on social media use and student mental health, as well as serve as a reference for educational institutions in designing mentoring programs and digital literacy initiatives that encourage healthier social media use. In terms of measuring social media use as an independent variable (X1), this study used a measuring instrument created by (Topaloglu, Caldibi, & Oge, 2016) in the "Scale for Individual and Social Impact of College Students." Higher scores indicate that individuals prefer social media, find it useful and prefer online communication. Meanwhile, for social anxiety as an independent variable (X2), the LSAS-SR measurement instrument was used, which is a self-report version of the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale, originally developed (Liebowitz, 1987). This scale contains questions that describe situations they rarely or never experience. Respondents are asked to imagine how they would react if faced with such a situation, so all answers are based on how the situation affects the respondent. This measurement instrument is often used by mental health professionals to detect and evaluate the level of social anxiety or social phobia in individuals. While student Learning understanding is defined as the dependent variable (Y), (Nickerson, 1985) explains that students understand something if:

1. They can see the characteristics of a concept in depth.
2. They quickly search for specific information about a situation.
3. They are able to represent the situation and view it using a schematic model.
4. He also emphasizes the importance of knowledge and the ability to connect knowledge.

METHOD

An online survey was used to test the hypotheses. Data were collected from students. Questionnaires were distributed using the online platform gform. Participants were 103 students from the Business Administration Department at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. The sample used in this study was purposive sampling of 103 students from the Business Administration Department at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique based on certain considerations according to (Sugiyono, 2018). This sample was used in the hypothesis testing. The research was conducted starting in January 2026 at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic, Business Administration Department. This study employed quantitative research methods. The quantitative approach was used because this study aimed to objectively measure the influence of social media and social anxiety on students' learning comprehension, expressed numerically on a scale of 1-4 and analyzed statistically. The subjects were 103 business administration students at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic from five different classes. 65% were female and 35% were male. The instrument used in this study was a social media and social anxiety questionnaire, constructed on a Likert scale. This

questionnaire was used to measure students' levels of social media (X1) and social anxiety (X2). The social media and social anxiety questionnaire were constructed based on several indicators. Social Media usage variable has two indicators, which is:

- 1) Purpose of Use, defined as an individual's motivation for utilizing social media.
- 2) Online Communication Preference, defined as an individual's tendency to prefer using social media as a means of communication over face-to-face communication, as well as the intensity of social media use.

This measurement was conducted using a social media usage measurement tool created by (Topaloglu, Caldibi, & Oge, 2016) in "The Scale for the Individual and Social Impact of Student." A higher score indicates that the individual prefers social media, considering it beneficial and preferring online communication. The following is a blueprint illustrating the social media usage variables.

Table 1. Item Statement Social Media

Factor	Item Statement Number	Total
Intensity of social media use	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	7
Social media use and communication preferences	8,9,10,11,12,13	6

On the other hand, Social Anxiety measurement tool used in this study was the LSAS-SR, which is a self-report version of the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale, originally developed (Liebowitz, 1987). This scale contains questions describing situations they rarely or never experience. Respondents are asked to imagine how they would react if faced with such a situation, so all answers are based on how the situation affects the respondent. This measurement tool is often used by mental health professionals to detect and evaluate levels of social anxiety or social phobia in individuals. The Indonesian version of the LSAS demonstrated high reliability, with scores of 0.88 for the fear domain and 0.86 for the avoidance domain. The LSAS is a valid and reliable tool for measuring anxiety (Heimberg, 1999). The following is a blueprint that describes the social anxiety variable.

Table 2. Item Statement Social Anxiety

Factor	Item Statement	Total
Social Anxiety	14-24	11

To assess the intensity of social media use and the level of students' social anxiety, respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale, as follows: Never, Occasionally, Sometimes, Often.

In evaluating statements related to social media use intensity and anxiety levels, a score of 4 (Very Often) indicates a high level of social media use intensity or a high level of anxiety. Research data were collected through questionnaires distributed to students and analysed using statistical methods in accordance with the research objectives. Next, student Learning understanding was defined as the dependent variable (Y), while social media intensity and social anxiety were defined as the independent variables (X). These indicators were then operationalized into questionnaire items and administered to respondents. The research data were analyzed using regression analysis with the aid of SPSS software. All statistical analyses were conducted at a significance level of 0.05.

The regression equation employed in this study is as follows:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

Note:

Y = Student Learning understanding

b_0 = Intercept

b_1 = Regression coefficient 1

b_2 = Regression coefficient 2

X_1 = social media

X_2 = social anxiety

Based on the results of the analysis, this study aims to explain the relationship between the social media intensity and social anxiety on student Learning understanding.

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using multiple linear regression. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS to determine whether there was a significant influence between social media and social anxiety on student Learning understanding. The results of the analysis were used to determine whether to accept or reject the research hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research result

Usable questionnaires were received from 65 respondents. From 65 respondents, 27.7% were male whereas 72.3% were female. This implies that respondents more female as compared to the male. This is because the business administration class tends to be more popular with female. Regarding the class of the respondents:

Tabel 3. Responden Demograph

Respondents	Male	Female
Students	36	35
Percentage	67	65

Before conducting multiple regression, several tests must be performed. These tests are known as classical assumption tests, which include normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

1. Normality Test, to ensure that the residuals (error remainders) of the regression model are normally distributed. If the residuals are not normal, then the regression results may not be valid and interpretable. Basis for making decisions for normality testing: P-Plot chart: If the data distribution is normal, then the line that describes the actual data will follow the diagonal line, (Ghozali, 2018).

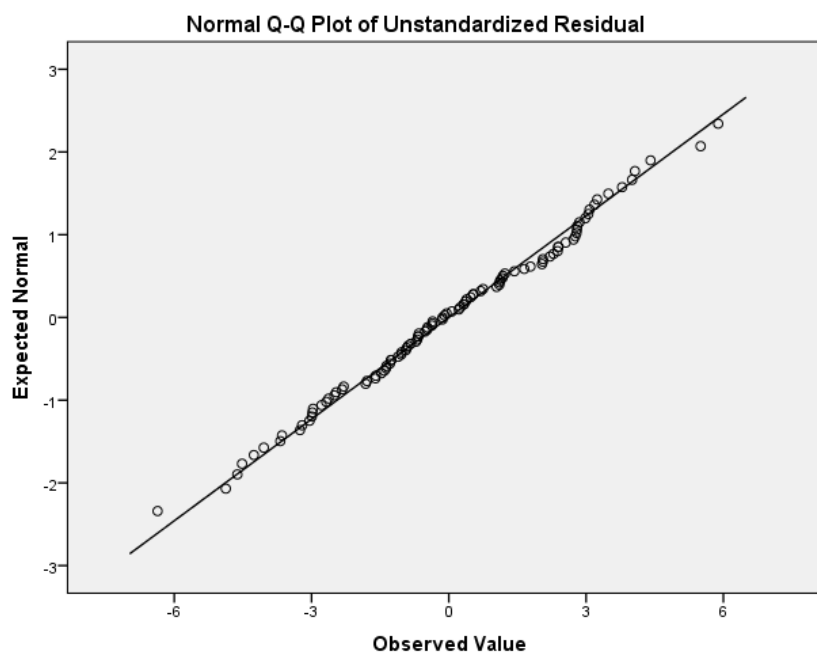


Figure 1. P Plot
Source: Primary data

Based on the test results graph above, the line that describes the data follows the diagonal line, so the data is normally distributed.

2. Linearity Test, verifies that the relationship between your independent and dependent variables follows a straight line, which is a core assumption for accurate statistical models like linear regression. You can test this using visual methods, formal statistical tests, or residual plots. The ANOVA test divides variance into linear and deviation-from-linear components. If the p-value for deviation from linearity is greater than 0.05, the linear relationship assumption holds because deviations from linearity are not significant with a sig. $0.627 > 0.05$.

Tabel 4. Anova Linierity Media social and Learning understanding

			Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
			Squares		Square		
Learning Understanding * Media Social	Between Groups	(Combined)	331.521	25	13.261	1.814	.025
		Linearity	177.284	1	177.284	24.251	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	154.237	24	6.427	.879	.627
	Within Groups		562.906	77	7.310		
	Total		894.427	102			

Based on the ANOVA table above, it can be verified that the relationship between the independent variables of social media and the dependent variable of Learning understanding has a deviation value from linearity greater than 0.05, namely 0.627, so the assumption of a linear relationship applies because the deviation from linearity is not significant.

Tabel 5. Anova Linierity Anxiety and Learning understanding

			Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
			Squares		Square		
Learning Understanding * Anxiety	Between Groups	(Combined)	385.284	23	16.751	2.599	.001
		Linearity	201.260	1	201.260	31.228	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	184.024	22	8.365	1.298	.200
	Within Groups		509.143	79	6.445		
	Total		894.427	102			

Based on the ANOVA table above, it can be verified that the relationship between the independent variables of social anxiety and the dependent variable of Learning understanding has a deviation value from linearity greater than 0.05, namely 0.200, so the assumption of a linear relationship applies because the deviation from linearity is not significant.

3. Multicollinearity tests, to ensure that there is no high correlation between the independent variables (predictors) in the regression model. Multicollinearity can interfere with the accuracy and interpretation of the regression coefficients. Basis for making decisions for Multicollinearity tests, if the tolerance value > 0.1 or $VIF < 10$, then multicollinearity does not occur, (Ghozali, 2018).

Tabel 6. Correlation

		Media Social	Anxiety
Media Social	Pearson Correlation	1	.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	103	103
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	103	103

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the table above, the tolerance value is $0.321 > 0.1$ or $VIF < 10$, so we can conclude that multicollinearity does not occur.

4. The heteroscedasticity test uses the Glejser test and based on the table 7 below, the sig. value is $0.606 > 0.05$, so it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity.

Tabel 7. Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.069	2	1.034	.503	.606 ^b
	Residual	205.441	100	2.054		
	Total	207.510	102			

a. Dependent Variable: ABS_RES

b. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety, Media Social

After the classical assumption test was conducted and fulfilled, the results of the multiple regression test will be discussed below. Adjusted R Square value is 0.321, this indicates that social media and social anxiety have a 32% influence on students learning understanding and the remaining 68% is explained by other variables.

Tabel 8. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.566 ^a	.321	.307	2.465

a. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety, Media Social

b. Dependent Variable: Learning Understanding

Furthermore, based on the results of data analysis that found in the table 9 the Sig value obtained was $0.000 < 0.05$, with an F value of 23.594, so the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted, namely that social media and social anxiety had a simultaneous effect on students Learning understanding.

Tabel 9. Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	286.755	2	143.377	23.594	.000 ^b
	Residual	607.673	100	6.077		
	Total	894.427	102			

a. Dependent Variable: Learning understanding

b. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety, Media Social

And finally, the regression model can be constructed as follows based on table 10 below:

Tabel 10. Regression Model

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<u>Coefficients</u>		<u>Coefficients</u>		
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	9.261	1.659		5.581	.000
1 Media Social	.159	.042	.326	3.751	.000
2 Anxiety	.213	.050	.369	4.244	.000

R = .566 *R*² = .321 Adjusted *R*² = .307

a. Dependent Variable: Learning understanding

Source: Primary Data

The results of the Regression Analysis show that social media has a contribution to the results of Learning understanding ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.05$), which means that social media is a predictor of Learning understanding and social anxiety has a contribution to the results of Learning understanding ($\beta = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$), which means that social anxiety is a predictor of Learning understanding. From the results above, a one-unit change in social media will result in a 0.159 change in Learning understanding and a one-unit change in Social Anxiety will result in a 0.213 change in Learning understanding. See Table 1 for a more detailed description of the regression results:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

$$IPK = 9.261 + 0.159 X_1 + 0.213 X_2 + e$$

Note:

Y = Students Learning understanding

*b*₀ = Intercept

*b*₁ = Regression coefficient 1

*b*₂ = Regression coefficient 2

*X*₁ = social media

*X*₂ = Ssocial anxiety

Based on the regression above, it means that if the social media and social anxiety values are constant, the Learning understanding value is 9.261. If the social media value increases by 1 unit, the Learning understanding value increases by 0.159, and if the social anxiety value increases by 1 unit, the Learning understanding value also increases by 0.213.

Discussion

Social media is an internet-based communication platform that enables users to interact, share information, and build social relationships online (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media is interactive, participatory, and collaborative, where users are not only recipients of information but also content producers (Cahyono, 2016). Over time, social media has become a space for individuals to construct their self-identity, expand social networks, and obtain social support online. With the increasing use of social media, the concept of usage intensity has become important to examine. Social media usage intensity refers to the level of an individual's engagement, including frequency of use, duration of access, as well as the depth of emotional involvement and social interaction (Ardani & Istiqomah, 2020). Therefore, social media usage intensity is not only quantitative but also reflects the quality of user engagement.

On the other hand, several studies indicate that social anxiety affects the quality of interpersonal relationships and social engagement among university students. Social media is frequently used as an alternative form of interaction for individuals with social anxiety. However,

excessive reliance on online interaction may reinforce avoidance of face-to-face communication (Lee & Stapinski, 2012) (Caplan, 2007). (Valkenburg, Meier, & Beyens, 2022) state that the impact of social media on mental health depends on usage patterns and individual characteristics rather than intensity alone. In addition, (Li, Zhang, & Wang, 2023) explains that the relationship between social media use and anxiety is often mediated by psychological factors such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), indicating that social media usage intensity alone is insufficient to explain the emergence of social anxiety.

Social anxiety is a psychological condition characterized by excessive fear and discomfort in social situations due to concerns about negative evaluation, rejection, or embarrassment (Butler, 2008). This anxiety can manifest in emotional, physiological, and behavioral responses, including avoidance of social situations (Durand & Barlow, 2006). According to the American Psychiatric Association, social anxiety can disrupt an individual's social, academic, and occupational functioning.

Individuals with communication apprehension tend to display shyness, low self-confidence, and social withdrawal (Geçer & Gümüş, 2010). Several studies have shown that social anxiety affects the quality of interpersonal relationships and social engagement among students. Social media is often used as an alternative means of interaction for socially anxious individuals; however, excessive reliance on online interaction may reinforce avoidance of face-to-face interactions (Lee & Stapinski, 2012) (Caplan, 2007). Therefore, the relationship between social media usage intensity and social anxiety is complex and not necessarily linear. Empirical research is needed to examine this relationship more contextually among students at Sriwijaya state Polytechnic.

After all, media social and social anxiety are used as independent variables. Learning Understanding as a dependent variable is obtained through a questionnaire that is also distributed to students and they fill in the Learning Understanding column. According to the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Regulation No. 53 of 2023, Article 28 paragraph 5, Learning Understanding is the result of learning achievements (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2023). Based on the literature review above, it can be concluded that this state-of-the-art research aims to find the effect of social media usage intensity and social anxiety on students' Learning Understanding. The novelty of this research lies in testing a multiple linear regression model of social media usage intensity and social anxiety on Learning Understanding, which is explicitly recommended by a systematic literature review but has never been operationalized in an empirical study in a polytechnic environment. Building on five years of previous studies (2021–2026), which still showed inconsistencies in the role of social media usage intensity and social anxiety, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the pathway "social media usage intensity and social anxiety → student Learning Understanding" in the polytechnic context. Going forward, this research roadmap will continue with model expansion through moderator variables (2027), cross-polytechnic studies (2028), and insights for students to be more prudent in using social media to support sustainable, superior human resources (2030). Furthermore, from the results obtained above, the author provides several suggestions, including:

Students:

1. Be wiser in using social media.
2. Be more mindful of your social media usage time.
3. Limit what you watch on social media.
4. Stop looking at things on social media that make you anxious.
5. Increase your in-person social activities.
6. Have more discussions with friends and professors.

Lecture:

1. Helping students become wiser in their use of social media.
2. Being firm with students who use social media during class.
3. Guiding them towards more beneficial social media use.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to determine the contribution of social media and anxiety to student learning comprehension using evidence from questionnaires distributed to students majoring in Business Administration at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. This was achieved through a questionnaire survey distributed to 103 students majoring in Business Administration at Sriwijaya State Polytechnic. Of the 103 respondents, 35% were male and 65% were female. The results of the regression analysis showed that social media contributed to learning comprehension ($\beta = 0.159$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that social media was a predictor of student learning comprehension, and anxiety also contributed to learning comprehension ($\beta = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that anxiety was a predictor of student learning comprehension. From the results above, a one-unit change in social media will result in a 0.159 change in student learning comprehension, and a one-unit change in anxiety will result in a 0.213 change in student learning comprehension. Through this study, the author hopes that implementing these recommendations will enable students to focus more on things that support the learning process. The implications include the impact on students in terms of improved academic achievement and, therefore, a significant impact on class grades. Like any research, this study certainly has limitations. This study was cross-sectional, and the student questionnaire used closed-ended questions. Closed-ended questions limit respondents' freedom to express their opinions. The results may also yield different outcomes in different university settings and cultures. Further research could include more variables that support student Learning understanding, such as student engagement, classroom culture, and student behavior, among many others.

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