



The effects of social media, language attitudes, and group identity on students' abbreviation use

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Abstract. The growth of digital communication has encouraged the widespread use of abbreviations on social media. However, the factors influencing students' abbreviation use remain underexplored. This study examined how social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity affect abbreviation use among IKIP Saraswati students. Using an explanatory quantitative design, the study collected data from 133 students in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education and English Language Education Study Programs through a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed them using multiple linear regression. The findings revealed that social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity positively and significantly influenced abbreviation use, both individually and simultaneously. The model explained 48.4% of the variance in abbreviation use behavior. These results suggest that students' abbreviation use is shaped not only by linguistic factors but also by digital interaction, language attitudes, and social identity. The

findings support the need for higher education institutions to strengthen digital language literacy by promoting context-appropriate abbreviation use. Future research should investigate additional factors, including digital literacy, communication context, and cultural influences, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of abbreviation use in digital communication.

Introduction

The development of information and communication technology has significantly changed how people communicate and use language. The internet now functions not only as a means of obtaining information, but also as a primary space for social interaction, academic activities, and professional communication. Based on the Indonesian Internet Penetration Survey published by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the national internet penetration rate in 2026 reached 81.72%, with Generation Z (14–29 years old) as the largest user group at 38.51% (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia, 2026). These data indicate that students, most of whom belong to Generation Z, are highly active users of digital media, leading to faster changes in language practices in this environment. This high penetration of digital technology is also evident in education. Research findings reveal that digital media has been widely utilized in Indonesian language learning, although the effectiveness of its implementation still requires strengthening in several aspects (Suaka et al., 2025; Arvianto & Rahma, 2026; Yahya et al., 2023).

Abbreviated forms have become a common feature of university students' communication across social media, messaging applications, and online learning platforms. Their use in both informal and academic settings reflects the growing influence of digital communication on language practices (Crystal, 2008; Veszelszki, 2017). As abbreviation use has become an integral part of digital communication, understanding the factors that shape this behavior is increasingly important for fostering appropriate digital language use, promoting responsible digital communication, and strengthening digital literacy among university students (Ng, 2012; Plester et al., 2009; Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008).

These changes in communication patterns also influence the development of language as a dynamic system that constantly adapts to social change and technological advancements (Chaer, 2014). One emerging form of language adaptation is the use of abbreviation, the process of forming words by shortening a single lexeme or combination of lexemes without losing their basic meaning (Kridalaksana, 2010). In digital communication, abbreviation is no longer viewed solely as a morphological phenomenon, but also as a communication strategy that enables faster, more concise, and more efficient message delivery.

Recent studies have shown that social media promotes communication patterns characterized by speed, creativity, and efficiency, encouraging various linguistic innovations in digital interaction (Veszelszki, 2017; Zappavigna, 2015). As a digital communication ecosystem, social media shapes language use through users' interactions and platform characteristics (Barton & Lee, 2025; Bayer et al., 2020; Herring, 2018). Consequently, abbreviation use can be understood not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a communication behavior shaped by digital environments, interaction patterns, and communication purposes. Social media usage intensity refers to the degree of an individual's engagement with social media, reflected in the frequency and duration of use as well as participation in digital activities (Bayer et al., 2020; Jenkins-Guarnieri et al., 2013). Greater usage intensity increases exposure to digital communication practices, including abbreviations, and contributes to the formation of online communication habits (Laitinen & Sivunen, 2021; Verduyn et al., 2017). Individuals who use social media more intensively are therefore more likely to adopt communication norms that develop within digital environments (Al-Rahmi et al., 2022; Meier & Reinecke, 2021). Accordingly, social media usage intensity is expected to influence students' use of abbreviations.

Attitudes toward digital language are an individual's evaluation of language use in digital communication, encompassing cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions (Garrett, 2010). From the perspective of Language Attitude Theory, language attitudes influence how individuals choose and use language variations in specific communication contexts (Dragojevic et al., 2016). In a digital communication environment, positive attitudes toward digital language encourage individuals to accept various forms of linguistic innovation more readily, including abbreviations as an effective communication strategy aligned with the characteristics of social media (Herring, 2018; Veszelszki, 2017). In addition, communication practices on social media show that users' attitudes toward language also influence the choice of language forms used in online interactions (Androutsopoulos, 2015). Therefore, attitudes toward digital language are suspected to be one of the factors influencing students' abbreviation use behavior.

In addition to social media use and attitudes toward digital language, group identity also influences individual communication behavior. Group identity is part of an individual's self-concept, formed through membership in a social group and the values and norms inherent in that group (Tajfel et al., 2001). In digital communication, group identity is reflected in community members' tendency to adopt communication patterns, vocabulary, symbols, and language variations that develop within the group as a form of solidarity and affirmation of social identity. Thus, abbreviations not only

function as an efficient communication strategy but also as a symbol of membership in a particular digital community. Group norms and social interactions in digital spaces help shape community members' language behavior. Individuals with a stronger sense of identification with their social groups are more likely to adopt language forms that characterize those groups, including using various abbreviations in digital communication (Fadlilah et al., 2023; Postmes, 2014; Zappavigna, 2015).

Previous studies have shown that social media shapes communication behavior and digital language variation, while language attitudes and group identity influence individuals' language choices and communication patterns (Postmes et al., 2013; Tajfel et al., 2001; Zappavigna, 2015). In Indonesia, abbreviation research has mainly focused on morphological aspects, including forms, classifications, and word-formation processes (Cenderamata, 2018; Musawwir & Aryanti, 2022; Sutarma et al., 2025). International studies, meanwhile, have emphasized digital language innovation and online communication practices (Jones, 2023; Veszelszki, 2017; Zappavigna, 2015). Although abbreviations are widely used in digital communication, research has largely focused on their structure and morphology (Cenderamata, 2018; Musawwir & Aryanti, 2022; Sutarma et al., 2025). Meanwhile, studies on digital communication have typically examined social media use, language attitudes, and group identity separately (Postmes et al., 2013; Tajfel et al., 2001; Zappavigna, 2015). As a result, evidence explaining how these factors jointly influence students' abbreviation use, particularly in Indonesia, remains scarce. This gap calls for an integrated model combining morphology, sociolinguistics, digital communication, and social psychology.

To address this gap, this study develops an integrated empirical model that simultaneously examines how social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity influence students' abbreviation use. Unlike previous studies, which have primarily focused on the structural aspects of abbreviations or examined these variables independently, this study integrates perspectives from morphology, sociolinguistics, digital communication, and social psychology. This integrated approach is the study's novelty and provides empirical evidence on the factors influencing abbreviation use among Indonesian university students.

Drawing on the identified research gap and the proposed novelty, this study seeks to answer four research questions about how social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity influence IKIP Saraswati students' abbreviation use behavior, both individually and collectively. Accordingly, the study examines the individual and combined effects of these three factors on students' abbreviation use behavior. Based on the theoretical framework and previous empirical findings, it is hypothesized that social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity each positively and significantly influence abbreviation use behavior, and that their combined influence is also positive and significant.

Method

Research Methods and Design

This study used a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to analyze how social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity influence the abbreviation use behavior of IKIP Saraswati students. The quantitative approach was chosen because this study aimed to test causal relationships between variables through inferential statistical analysis, while the explanatory research design was used to explain the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables based on the formulated hypotheses (Levitt et al., 2018). The study tested the hypotheses using multiple linear regression analysis.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study was conducted at IKIP Saraswati, Bali, and involved active students in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education (PBSI) and English Language Education (PBI) Study Programs in the 2025/2026 academic year. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in 133 respondents. The study used proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure a balanced and representative sample for each study program (Sugiyono, 2022). The research team conducted all stages, from instrument development to data analysis, between May and June 2026.

Research Procedure

The research followed several stages: literature review, instrument development based on indicators from previous research, instrument validation, data collection, and data analysis. Data collection used a survey technique by distributing an online, self-administered questionnaire via Google Forms. Before completing the questionnaire, all respondents received an explanation of the research objectives, data confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. All data were analyzed anonymously and used solely for research purposes.

Data Collection Techniques and Research Instruments

Data collection used a survey technique, distributing an online questionnaire to students who met the criteria for research respondents. The research instrument consisted of 34 items measuring four variables: intensity of social media use (10 items), attitudes toward digital language (8 items), group identity (8 items), and abbreviation use behavior (8 items). The social media use intensity construct was operationalized into four dimensions: frequency, duration, engagement, and dependency, using indicators adapted from previous studies (Ellison et al., 2007; Jenkins-Guarnieri et al., 2013). Attitudes toward digital language were measured using the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions, while group identity was measured using the dimensions of sense of belonging, conformity, and identification. Abbreviation use behavior was measured using the dimensions of frequency, preference, consistency, and variety of abbreviation use. We adapted the measurement indicators for these constructs from previous studies (Garrett, 2010; Tajfel et al., 2001; Veszelszki, 2017). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 1 summarizes the operationalization of the variables and the research instrument outline.

Table 1. Research Instrument Outline

Variable	Dimensions	Indicators	Item Code	Number of Items	Scale	Source
Intensity of Social Media Use (X1)	Frequency	Frequency of social media access	X1.1–X1.3	3	Likert (1–5)	Ellison et al. (2007); Jenkins-Guarnieri et al. (2013)
	Duration	Duration of daily social media use	X1.4–X1.5	2	Likert (1–5)	
	Engagement	Active participation in various social media activities	X1.6–X1.8	3	Likert (1–5)	
	Dependency	Dependence on social media as a means of communication	X1.9–X1.10	2	Likert (1–5)	

Variable	Dimensions	Indicators	Item Code	Number of Items	Scale	Source
		and information				
Attitudes toward Digital Language (X2)	Cognitive	Beliefs regarding the benefits and appropriateness of using digital language	X2.1–X2.3	3	Likert (1–5)	Garrett (2010)
	Affective	Feelings toward using digital language	X2.4–X2.6	3	Likert (1–5)	
	Conative	Tendency to use digital language in communication	X2.7–X2.8	2	Likert (1–5)	
Group Identity (X3)	Sense of Belonging	Sense of belonging to a social group	X3.1–X3.3	3	Likert (1–5)	Tajfel & Turner (1979)
	Conformity	Willingness to follow group communication norms	X3.4–X3.6	3	Likert (1–5)	
	Identification	Self-identification as part of a group	X3.7–X3.8	2	Likert (1–5)	
Abbreviation Usage Behavior (Y)	Frequency	Frequency of abbreviation use in digital communication	Y1.1–Y1.2	2	Likert (1–5)	Adapted from Crystal (2008) and Veszelszki (2023)
	Preference	Preference for using abbreviations over standard forms	Y1.3–Y1.4	2	Likert (1–5)	
	Consistency	Consistency of abbreviation use across communication contexts	Y1.5–Y1.6	2	Likert (1–5)	
	Variety	Variety of abbreviation forms used in digital communication	Y1.7–Y1.8	2	Likert (1–5)	

Source: Research Data (2026)

Instrument Validity and Reliability Test

Before data collection, experts content-validated the instrument to ensure each item aligns with the construct being measured. Next, we tested empirical validity using Corrected Item–total correlations greater than 0.30. Instrument reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient with an α value > 0.70 as an indicator of good internal consistency (Hair et al., 2019).

Data Analysis Techniques and Testing Criteria

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics. The initial stage included descriptive statistical analysis to obtain the N value, minimum, maximum, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation for each research variable. Next, prerequisite analysis tests were conducted, including a normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, a homogeneity test using Levene's Test, a multicollinearity test based on Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, and a heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test. After meeting all assumptions, hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis, using the t-test to test partial effects, the F-test to test simultaneous effects, and the Adjusted R² value to determine the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Results and Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 133 IKIP Saraswati students from the Indonesian Language and Literature Education (PBSI) and English Language Education (PBI) Study Programs. All respondents were active students in their second, fourth, and sixth semesters who used social media as part of their daily communication activities. Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents by study program and semester.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Study Program and Semester

Study Programs	Sem. 2	Sem. 4	Sem. 6	Total (%)
PBSI	29	18	23	70 (52.6)
PBI	29	18	16	63 (47.4)
Total	58 (43.6)	36 (27.1)	39 (29.3)	133 (100)

Source: Research Data (2026)

According to Table 2, 70 respondents (52.6%) were from the PBSI Study Program, while 63 respondents (47.4%) were from the PBI Study Program. This composition indicates a relatively balanced number of respondents from both study programs, thus representing the characteristics of IKIP Saraswati students.

By semester level, respondents were dominated by second-semester students (58 students) (43.6%), followed by sixth-semester students (39 students) (29.3%), and fourth-semester students (36 students) (27.1%). The distribution of respondents across these three semester levels provides sufficient variation in academic experience and social media use intensity to analyze the relationship between social media use intensity, attitudes toward digital language, group identity, and abbreviation use behavior.

Before hypothesis testing, the data met all regression analysis assumptions, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. Therefore, the regression model met the requirements for use in testing the influence of independent variables on students' abbreviation use behavior.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics Results

Variables	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Social Media Use Intensity (X1)	133	31.42	30.00	29	9.000

Variables	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Attitudes Toward Digital Language (X2)	133	24.40	24.00	23	7.532
Group Identity (X3)	133	26.75	26.00	24	6.629
Abbreviation Use Behavior (Y)	133	25.68	25.00	24	4.898

Source: Research Data (2026)

Descriptive statistics show that all data came from 133 respondents. The variable intensity of social media use had a mean value of 31.42 (SD = 9.000), attitude toward digital language 24.40 (SD = 7.532), group identity 26.75 (SD = 6.629), and abbreviation use 25.68 (SD = 4.898). The median values, which are relatively close to the mean values for all variables, indicate that the data distribution tends to be balanced with no significant differences between the measures of central tendency.

Validity Test

Table 4. Validity Test Results

Variables	Number of Items	Range Corrected Item–Total Correlation	Sig.	Information
Social Media Use Intensity (X1)	10	0.785-0.855	<0.001	Valid
Attitudes Toward Digital Language (X2)	8	0.814-0.879	<0.001	Valid
Group Identity (X3)	8	0.809-0.853	<0.001	Valid
Abbreviation Use Behavior (Y)	8	0.667-0.782	<0.001	Valid

Source: Research Data (2026)

The validity test results show that all items in the variables of social media use intensity, attitudes toward digital language, group identity, and abbreviation use behavior have Corrected Item-Total Correlation values above the minimum threshold and significance values below 0.001. These findings indicate that all instrument items meet validity criteria and are suitable for use in the research data collection process.

Reliability Test

Table 5. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Social Media Use Intensity (X1)	0.951	Reliabel
Attitudes Toward Digital Language (X2)	0.947	Reliabel
Group Identity (X3)	0.936	Reliabel
Abbreviation Use Behavior (Y)	0.871	Reliabel

Source: Research Data (2026)

Based on the reliability test results, all research variables achieved Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70. This value indicates that the instrument has a very good level of internal consistency, thus producing reliable data for further analysis.

Prerequisite Analysis Test
Normality Test

Table 6. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
			Unstandardized Residual
N			133
Normal Parameters	Mean		
	Std. Deviation		
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		
	Positive		
	Negative		
Test Statistic			.071
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			.096
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig.		
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.091
		Upper Bound	.107

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

Source: Research Data (2026)

The normality test used the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test. The test results showed a significance value of 0.096 (>0.05), indicating that the regression residuals were normally distributed. Therefore, the normality assumption in multiple linear regression has been met.

Homogeneity Test

Table 7. Results of the Homogeneity Test

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Tot_Y	Based on Mean	3.414	1	131	.067
	Based on Median	2.407	1	131	.123
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2.407	1	130.782	.123
	Based on trimmed mean	3.506	1	131	.063

Source: Research Data (2026)

The homogeneity test using Levene's Test showed a significance value of 0.067, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that variance across study programs is homogeneous, meeting one of the assumptions of parametric analysis. Therefore, the data is suitable for multiple linear regression analysis.

Linearity Test

Table 8. Linearity Test

Connection	Deviation from Linearity (Sig.)	Conclusion
$X_1 \rightarrow Y$	0.263	Linear
$X_2 \rightarrow Y$	0.497	Linear
$X_3 \rightarrow Y$	0.264	Linear

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 8 shows that all variables meet the linearity assumption, indicated by a Deviation from Linearity significance value greater than 0.05. Thus, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is linear.

Multicollinearity Test

Table 9. Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	2.925	2.096		1.396	.165		
	Tot_X1	.255	.034	.468	7.399	<.001	.978	1.022
	Tot_X2	.281	.041	.433	6.870	<.001	.987	1.013
	Tot_X3	.295	.047	.399	6.279	<.001	.969	1.032

Source: Research Data (2026)

The multicollinearity test results indicate that all independent variables have a Tolerance value greater than 0.10 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value less than 10. Thus, the regression model does not exhibit multicollinearity.

Heteroscedasticity Test

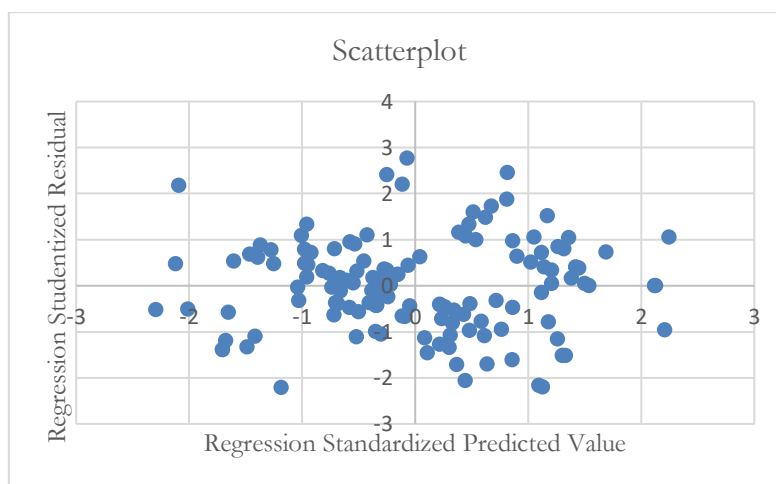


Image 1. Heteroscedasticity Test

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 10. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	2.925	2.096		1.396	.165		

Tot_X1	.255	.034	.468	7.399	<.001	.978	1.022
Tot_X2	.281	.041	.433	6.870	<.001	.987	1.013
Tot_X3	.295	.047	.399	6.279	<.001	.969	1.032

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis yield the following equation:

$$Y = 2.925 + 0.255X_1 + 0.281X_2 + 0.295X_3$$

This equation indicates that all independent variables have positive regression coefficients. This means that increased social media use intensity, more positive attitudes toward digital language, and stronger group identity tend to be followed by increased student abbreviation use.

The partial test results show that all three independent variables have a positive and significant influence on the dependent variable, with significance values of less than 0.001 for each. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1), the second hypothesis (H2), and the third hypothesis (H3) are accepted.

Partial Hypothesis Test

Table 11. Hypothesis Test Results

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.925	2.096		1.396	.165
	Tot_X1	.255	.034	.468	7.399	<.001
	Tot_X2	.281	.041	.433	6.870	<.001
	Tot_X3	.295	.047	.399	6.279	<.001

Source: Research Data (2026)

Based on Table 11, intensity of social media use, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity each positively and significantly influence students' abbreviation use behavior. This is indicated by t-values of 7.399, 6.870, and 6.279, with all significance values < 0.001. Thus, the research results support the three partial hypotheses.

Simultaneous Hypothesis Testing

Table 12. Simultaneous Test Results

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1568.485	3	522.828	42.190	<.001 ^b
1 Residual	1598.613	129	12.392		
Total	3167.098	132			

a. Dependent Variable: Tot_Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_X3, Tot_X2, Tot_X1

Source: Research Data (2026)

The F-value of 42.190 with a significance level of <0.001 in Table 12 indicates that intensity of social media use, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity simultaneously have a significant influence on students' abbreviation use behavior. Thus, the analysis results support the study's simultaneous hypothesis.

Coefficient of Determination

Table 13. Results of the Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.704 ^a	.495	.484	3.520

a. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_X3, Tot_X2, Tot_X1

Source: Research Data (2026)

In this table, the Adjusted R^2 value of 0.484 indicates that 48.4% of the variation in students' abbreviation use behavior can be explained by the intensity of social media use, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity. The remaining 51.6% is influenced by other factors not analyzed in this study.

The Effect of Social Media Use Intensity on Abbreviation Use Behavior

The results show that the intensity of social media use has a positive and significant effect on students' abbreviation use behavior. This finding indicates that the more intensely students use social media, the more likely they are to use abbreviations in digital communication. This condition indicates that social media is not only a means of communication but also acts as an environment that encourages the formation of new language habits.

This finding aligns with research by [Muttaqin et al. \(2024\)](#), which states that social media provides a space for the development of various forms of abbreviation in response to the need for fast and efficient communication. These findings are further supported by research [Afifah & Ginanjar. \(2026\)](#), which found that word shortening on social media is a form of language simplification aimed at increasing communication efficiency. Therefore, the more frequently students interact on social media, the more likely they are to adopt various forms of abbreviations in everyday communication.

This phenomenon can be explained by the characteristics of digital communication, which prioritizes speed, efficiency, and immediate response. Continuous exposure to abbreviations, acronyms, and shortened forms encourages new language habits. The Uses and Gratifications Theory perspective explains that individuals utilize media to meet their communication needs. In this context, abbreviations are a strategy for conveying messages effectively without diminishing the intended meaning.

The results of this study are also consistent with findings [Al-Rahmi et al. \(2022\)](#), which show that intense social media use increases the frequency of digital interactions. Furthermore, [\(Veszelszki 2017\)](#) explains that social media provides a space for the development of linguistic innovation through the use of more concise and flexible language forms. [Verduyn et al. \(2017\)](#) also emphasize that repeated interactions on social media shape users' communication habits, including choosing language forms that are considered more practical. Therefore, the more intensely students use social media, the more likely they are to use abbreviations in their daily communication.

The findings of this study expand previous abbreviation research, which has primarily viewed abbreviations as a morphological phenomenon ([Cenderamata, 2018](#); [Musawwir & Aryanti, 2022](#);

[Sutarma et al., 2025](#)). These findings demonstrate that abbreviation use is also shaped by the intensity of digital interactions, indicating that it should be understood not only as a linguistic form but also as communication behavior influenced by media characteristics.

The Influence of Attitudes Toward Digital Language on Abbreviation Use

This study shows that attitudes toward digital language positively and significantly influence students' abbreviation use. Students with positive attitudes toward digital language are more likely to accept and use various forms of abbreviations in their daily communication activities. These findings suggest that abbreviation use is influenced not only by the intensity of social media use but also by how individuals perceive digital language as an effective and relevant means of communication.

The results of this study can be explained through Language Attitude Theory [Garrett \(2010\)](#), which states that language attitudes consist of cognitive, affective, and conative aspects that collectively influence a person's language behavior. Students who view digital language as a practical form of communication, have a positive assessment of its use, and tend to use it in everyday communication will more readily accept abbreviations as part of their digital communication practices. The findings support previous evidence that language attitudes influence language behavior. Specifically, students with more positive attitudes toward digital language demonstrated a greater tendency to use abbreviations in digital communication ([Li & Wei, 2025](#)).

These findings align with previous studies showing that language attitudes play an important role in shaping individuals' choices of linguistic forms across different communication contexts. Positive attitudes toward digital language also facilitate the acceptance of various forms of linguistic innovation, including the use of abbreviations in online communication. Furthermore, platform characteristics and users' attitudes toward digital communication practices influence linguistic choices on social media ([Androutsopoulos, 2015](#); [Dragojevic et al., 2016](#); [Herring, 2018](#); [Veszelszki, 2017](#)). This finding strengthens previous evidence by demonstrating that the relationship also applies to university students in the context of abbreviation use.

Unlike previous research that generally links attitudes toward digital language with technology acceptance, this study shows that these attitudes also influence actual abbreviation use. These findings contribute to sociolinguistic studies by demonstrating that language attitudes play a significant role in explaining students' communication behavior in digital spaces.

The Influence of Group Identity on Abbreviation Use

The results indicate that group identity has a positive and significant effect on students' abbreviation use. This finding supports Social Identity Theory, which states that individuals tend to adapt their communication behavior to the prevailing norms of the social groups they interact with ([Reicher et al., 2010](#)). In digital communication, group identity not only strengthens a sense of belonging but also influences the use of language variations as symbols of group membership and solidarity ([Spears, 2021](#)). Thus, abbreviations can be understood as an adaptation to communication norms developing in digital communities. This study's results reinforce previous findings regarding the relationship between social identity and communication behavior. These findings indicate that the stronger a sense of belonging to a social group or digital community, the higher the tendency for students to use various forms of abbreviations in their communication. The use of abbreviations not only conveys messages efficiently but also signals membership and closeness within a particular community.

These findings align with the view [Fadlilah et al. \(2023\)](#) that language choice is a marker of a group's social identity. These findings extend the application of Social Identity Theory to college students'

digital communication, where group identity not only influences their sense of belonging but also shapes the language choices used in online interactions (Postmes et al., 2013).

Repeated interactions within digital communities shape communication behavior, while peer influence and group norms encourage individuals to adopt similar communication patterns as expressions of solidarity and social identification. Consequently, abbreviation use can be understood as a form of linguistic conformity that emerges within digital communities (Postmes, 2014; Zappavigna, 2015).

The main contribution of this study is demonstrating that abbreviation use is influenced not only by individual factors but also by the social dynamics that develop within groups. These findings reinforce the sociolinguistic perspective that social identification processes and interactions between users shape language choice.

The Simultaneous Effect of Social Media Use Intensity, Attitudes Toward Digital Language, and Group Identity on Abbreviation Use Behavior

The analysis shows that social media use intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity simultaneously significantly influence students' abbreviation use behavior. These findings indicate that abbreviation use behavior results from the interaction of various factors, namely the characteristics of digital media, individual attitudes toward language, and social influences that develop within groups. Social media provides a communication space that keeps students continuously exposed to various forms of digital language. This exposure encourages habits of using more concise and efficient language. However, these habits are not solely influenced by high levels of social media use. Positive attitudes toward digital language also shape students' acceptance of abbreviation use, while group identity reinforces this tendency by adapting to prevailing communication norms within the digital community. Thus, these three variables complement each other in shaping abbreviation use behavior.

The findings of this study align with studies showing that social media increases the intensity of digital interactions (Al-Rahmi et al., 2022; Veszelszki, 2017; Widana et al., 2020). In this context, new media also shape increasingly dynamic communication practices and language variations, encouraging the emergence of linguistic innovations, including the use of abbreviations in everyday communication. Language attitudes influence individuals' selection of language varieties, while social identity and conformity to group norms shape communication behavior (Garrett, 2010; Tajfel et al., 2001). Unlike previous research, which generally examined these factors separately, this study demonstrates that abbreviation use behavior is shaped by the interaction of technological, linguistic, and social factors. This interpretation aligns with the argument that effective digital communication depends on integrating digital literacy and language awareness, as abbreviation use is influenced not only by media exposure but also by students' language attitudes and social interactions (Yeyendra et al., 2026).

Novelty/Contribution

The primary novelty of this study is the development of an integrated empirical model showing that students' abbreviation use behavior is jointly influenced by social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity. This study contributes to digital sociolinguistics by showing that students' abbreviation use is shaped by the interaction of social media usage intensity, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity. Previous studies have primarily examined abbreviations from structural and morphological perspectives Cenderamata (2018); Musawwir & Aryanti (2022); Sutarma et al. (2025) or investigated social media use, language attitudes, and group identity as separate factors influencing communication behavior (Postmes, 2014; Tajfel et al., 2001; Zappavigna, 2015). In contrast, this study integrates these three variables

into a single empirical model, providing a more comprehensive explanation of abbreviation use behavior in digital communication. Furthermore, applying Social Identity Theory enriches understanding of how social identification interacts with digital communication practices to shape students' language behavior. This integrated perspective extends current knowledge of digital language behavior in higher education.

This study offers important theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the findings broaden understanding of abbreviation use by showing that it is not merely a matter of morphological word formation but also a form of digital communication behavior shaped by the interplay of technological, linguistic, and social influences. Furthermore, the integrated empirical model proposed in this study advances digital sociolinguistic research by bringing together perspectives from morphology, digital communication, language attitude theory, and social identity theory within a single analytical framework. From a practical perspective, these findings provide evidence that may help higher education institutions and educators develop learning strategies that enhance students' digital language literacy, encourage context-appropriate use of abbreviations, and promote responsible communication practices across academic and everyday digital environments.

Limitations

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the respondents were drawn only from two study programs at IKIP Saraswati, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other higher education institutions. Second, the study relied on a self-reported questionnaire, making the results susceptible to response bias. Third, the adjusted R^2 value of 0.484 indicates that other factors beyond the proposed model may also influence students' abbreviation use behavior. These limitations provide opportunities for future studies to validate and extend the proposed model in different institutional and sociocultural contexts.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the intensity of social media use, attitudes toward digital language, and group identity each positively influence students' abbreviation use behavior. Furthermore, these three variables together help explain abbreviation use behavior in digital communication. These findings indicate that abbreviation use behavior is influenced not only by the intensity of interaction on social media, but also by an individual's attitude toward digital language and the group identity formed within their social environment. Thus, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' language behavior in the digital communication era. Based on the findings, higher education institutions are encouraged to strengthen students' digital language literacy by integrating context-appropriate digital communication into language learning. Lecturers should guide students to use abbreviations appropriately for the communication context while maintaining standard language use in formal academic settings. Future research should involve participants from multiple universities, include additional variables such as digital literacy, online communication habits, communication context, and social media platform characteristics, and use mixed methods or authentic digital communication data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of abbreviation use behavior.

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