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Motivation in the Digital Age: The Role and Impact of SWM Videos in University Student Learning

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Abstract

Educational videos, in this age of digital technology, have become a valuable tool for enhancing student learning and motivation. This study explores the role of Study with Me (SWM) videos in university student learning, focusing on gender differences in perception and their overall impact on learning motivation. The study employed descriptive statistics, Chi-Square, and Cramér's V for analysis. A survey was conducted among 144 students from the Faculty of Mass Communication at a local university using purposive sampling. The findings indicate that most respondents perceive SWM videos as beneficial to their learning motivation. Gender differences also play a role in shaping how students engage with SWM videos, particularly in aspects such as study ambiance ($\chi^2 = 8.765$, $p = 0.003$, V = 0.247), real-time studying ($\chi^2 = 5.502$, $p = 0.019$, V = 0.195) and the perception of SWM videos as a virtual study buddy ($\chi^2 = 5.324$, $p = 0.021$, V = 0.192). Additionally, the study shows that SWM videos have a positive impact on students' learning motivation, with the mean scores for all survey items ranging from 3.79 to 4.24, indicating that respondents generally agree on the positive impact of SWM videos on their study habits and academic performance. The negative skewness values across all survey items indicate that responses are skewed toward higher agreement, meaning that more respondents selected "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" rather than lower agreement levels regarding the impact of SWM on learning motivation. These insights highlight the importance of leveraging SWM videos to support diverse learning needs and preferences in higher education.

Keywords: Educational Videos, Study with Me (SWM), Motivation, Virtual Buddy, Learning Needs

Introduction

In recent years, the emergence of digital platforms has revolutionized how students approach their learning and personal development. Technology in higher education has sparked a growing interest among researchers exploring the benefits and challenges of incorporating digital tools into the learning process and, one such approach is the use of video-based learning, which has been found to enhance student learning (Bahja et al., 2021). In the context

of Study with Me (SWM) videos, this medium can shape learner motivation and eventually academic performance. University students have often faced challenges maintaining their motivation to study, significantly affecting their academic performance. The challenges became more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, as students had to adapt to remote and online learning (Wahyuddin et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the study patterns of university students. Remote and online learning has led to changes in the time spent on online classes and self-study, as well as the mediums used for learning. The pandemic has affected students' sleeping habits, daily fitness routines, and social life, all of which can be detrimental to their overall well-being (Chaturvedi et al., 2020).

According to Wahyuddin et al. (2020), motivation is important for students to improve the quality of their learning outcomes, as high learning motivation can intensify learning activities and student attitudes. Deterioration of learning motivation can lead to less time spent studying, inconsistent class attendance, low academic achievement, and a decrease in academic performance. As such, one possible solution that has become popular among students is the SWM videos, which feature individuals studying alongside viewers in a shared virtual environment.

SWM videos are a creative approach, developed through internet platforms, to help students develop effective study habits through technology. These videos, which feature individuals studying alongside viewers in a shared virtual environment, can mitigate the sense of isolation or lack of structure that many students experience during the pandemic. Even when students are studying alone, the structure promotes a sense of community and responsibility by offering virtual study partners. Moreover, students who watched these videos have been reported to be more motivated, more focused, and better at managing their time (Yunianto & Putridinanti, 2022).

Lee et al. (2021) found that social learning through SWM videos enhanced memory and motivation. It was found that viewers who used the SWM videos were able to regulate peer pressure, create a personalized learning environment, and receive emotional support for their studies. Similarly, Ibtasar et al. (2022) found that these videos helped viewers overcome emotions of loneliness by providing a platform for social interaction and establishing a virtual presence that mimicked learning with friends. The study also found that support from the virtual community assisted in eliminating nervousness and anxiety before a big test or writing project. Students who used the videos demonstrated longer study sessions, more productivity, and improved academic performance. These studies, therefore, testify to the active impact the 'SWM' videos had on the viewers' study habits and academic performance rather than merely being passive content. The usefulness of the SWM videos has been attributed to firstly, the use of the Pomodoro technique, which breaks down study time into smaller portions thus, lessening stress and fatigue. Secondly, the virtual community lessens feelings of loneliness and fosters a sense of social obligation. And thirdly, the videos highlight productive study spaces and practices, giving viewers real-world examples that they can incorporate into their daily schedules.

This study's exploration of SWM videos is significant, particularly in this digital era where students must self-regulate their learning without direct teacher oversight. Understanding this is critical for students' progress and educational experiences. Therefore,

this research will focus on how SWM videos affect university students' learning motivation and academic performance in the digital age, adding to the understanding of how digital resources can improve education. Consequently, the following research questions have been formulated:

(1) What is the role of SWM videos in student learning?
(2) How do gender differences influence the role of SWM videos in student learning?
(3) How do the SWM videos impact students' learning motivation?

This study of student learning motivation through the SWM videos can provide valuable insights to students, educators, and content creators in achieving the desired learning outcomes. However, this study uses purposive sampling in a particular faculty in a local public university and therefore cannot be generalized to the broader student population. This highlights the need for future research to consider a wider range of samples, different forms of measurement instruments for data collection and analysis, and sampling techniques. It opens the door for future research on how other types of online content can support students in their studies.

Literature Review

SWM Videos

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, alternative forms of learning through technology have thrived and this includes the growing popularity of SWM videos. SWM videos are a genre of video content usually on platforms like YouTube where individuals film themselves studying in real-time. The aim is to create a virtual study environment and foster a sense of community among viewers. Lee et al. (2021) stated that users play the SWM videos to substitute physical companions in accompanying their independent learning. Ibtasar et al. (2022) and Jin (2022) further assert that the videos are cost-effective and facilitate companionship with manageable pressure from others.

Desai and Kulkarni (2022) found that by observing others actively engaged in the learning process on SWM videos, students may feel more inspired and encouraged to emulate similar behaviors which can lead to positive outcomes. Furthermore, the shared experience of studying alongside others can foster a sense of camaraderie and support, which can contribute to increased motivation towards their learning. Similarly, Ren et al. (2025) found that the videos simulate physical companionship, motivate their learning with manageable pressure, and enhance their learning performance with minimal cost.

Nonetheless, there are some potential drawbacks to the effectiveness of these videos. Some researchers have cautioned that the effectiveness of the videos depended on the individual viewer's ability to observe and adapt the behaviors they viewed to their study routines. Overreliance on the SWM videos as a learning tool can also cause a lack of human interaction (Brame, 2016; Sharifuddin & Hashim, 2024; Alharbi & Khalil, 2023). Li and Craig (2023) exerted that despite the growing popularity of SWM videos, there is a lack of research on the advantages of the learning environment that the videos provide. Turk et al. (2022) further stated that literature on virtual and physical classrooms suggested that SWM videos provide less social presence and emotional support, which could lead to learning impairment.

Li and Craig (2023) however, retained that users of the videos may become more engaged by modeling the virtual learners or more distracted by the virtual learners.

The Pomodoro Technique

Pomodoro Technique was first introduced in the early 1900s by Francesco Cirillo to manage time and self-regulate (Cirillo, 2013). The methodology is to break down a large task into smaller ones with a short break between the tasks. Burton (2016) describes the technique as deceptively simple yet extremely powerful. Pomodoro is an Italian word for tomato. Cirillo used a kitchen timer the shape of a tomato for his time management strategy and from then on, the technique became known as the Pomodoro Technique. This technique according to Almalki et al. (2020), is especially useful to decrease procrastination among graduate students.

Burton (2016) explained that the basic concept behind the Pomodoro Technique is the creation of focused, timed work sessions during which the focus is on a single task. The technique requires listing tasks that need to be completed, and the estimated amount of time required to complete the tasks. Prioritize the tasks and decide on the length of each Pomodoro session to complete the tasks. Set the timer to 25 minutes and each time the 25 minutes are up, a 5-minute break is taken.

SWM videos normally incorporate the Pomodoro Technique where study sessions are structured into focused intervals. A typical Pomodoro session is usually 25 minutes of focused studying, followed by a 5-minute break. This cycle is normally repeated four times, culminating in a longer break. Szpunar et al., (2013) explained that this structured approach is beneficial for time management and maintaining focus.

Kisno (2020) conducted a study on the Pomodoro Technique for improving students' reading ability during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found that the implementation of the Pomodoro Technique improved the students' reading performance and is recommended for solving self-motivation during both online and offline learning.

Zahariades (2015) asserted that the effectiveness of the Pomodoro Technique is due to four principles: (1) it limits the amount of time the brain has to focus; (2) it demolishes the tendency to procrastinate; (3) it reduces distraction born of multitasking; and (4) it pushes the individual toward completing tasks rather than just working on them. In the present study on learning motivation through SWM videos using this technique, it would be interesting to see if learning performance is improved.

The Impact of SWM Videos on Learning Motivation

Various factors can impact the effectiveness of SWM videos in enhancing learning motivation such as the individual's learning preferences, the quality and authenticity of the content, and the level of engagement and interactivity within the video. In terms of an individual's learning preference, several studies suggest that personalized learning, where students have the opportunity to discover their interests and learn at their own pace, can lead to increased motivation to learn (Ali, 2023; Maghsudi et al., 2021). Furthermore, learners who had control over their study time were found to outperform those who did not thus attest to making learning more meaningful and relevant for students. The key factor to learning motivation is

an individual's belief in his capabilities to achieve a desired learning outcome. Hence, observing the study habits and routines of other students in the SWM videos may inspire learners to invest in their own learning.

The quality and authenticity of the content may also impact students' learning motivation. A video with distracting visuals can hinder the learning process. Martin and Martin (2015) attested that genuine and relatable content can foster trust and connection with viewers. They emphasized high-quality content for effective learning and motivation. Desai and Kulkarni (2022) also emphasized engagement and interactivity for video effectiveness. Merkt et al. (2011) found that interactive features in videos enhance the learning experience.

In sum, to better understand the impact of SWM videos on learning motivation, more research is needed. The present study looks at the impact of SWM videos on university students' learning motivation. The studies discussed above show that there are potential avenues to investigate student's learning styles and motivation in the digital world and how SWM videos can best be suited for different types of learners as visual elements might not resonate with learners who prefer auditory or kinesthetic learning experiences for future research.

Methodology

A survey was applied to the study, and a total of 144 respondents were from the faculty of mass communication at a local university. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the respondents picked for the study were students who were familiar with the SWM videos. Purposive sampling is a powerful tool for researchers seeking to select respondents who can provide valuable insight into their research. The survey was designed in an online format using the Google Form platform. There was a total of 25 questions to gather information about students' views on the role of SWM videos in their learning process and the impact of the videos on their learning motivation. The question items were adapted from the study by Liu et al. (2024). Cronbach's alpha was calculated to evaluate the reliability and internal consistency of the survey items, resulting in a value of 0.922. This high coefficient signifies excellent internal consistency. The survey was conducted online to students who had access to WhatsApp, which was the distribution tool used to which the survey links were attached. In 4 weeks, the responses were collected, and the Google Form access was closed. The collected data were descriptively analyzed using SPSS software to help address the research questions.

Data Analysis

The study aimed to determine the role of SWM videos in student learning and assess their impact on learning motivation. Prior to that, Table 1 provides an overview of the frequency of video viewing and awareness of SWM videos.

Table 1
Frequency of Video Viewing and Awareness of SWM Videos

		Percentage
Frequency of watching online video content	Daily	31.9
	Weekly	32.6
	Monthly	8.3
	Rarely	27.1
Knowledge about SWM videos	Social media	72.2
	Friends/peers	9.0
	Online recommendation	18.8

Regarding frequency of watching online videos, the majority of students reported watching videos either daily (31.9%) or weekly (32.6%), indicating a high engagement with online video content. A smaller portion of students watch videos monthly (8.3%), while 27.1% rarely engage with online videos. This suggests that most students regularly consume video content, which could influence their familiarity and engagement with educational videos like SWM.

The awareness of SWM videos, the most common source was social media (72.2%), highlighting the significant role of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube in spreading information about these videos. Online recommendations (18.8%) also contributed to students' awareness, while only a small percentage (9.0%) learned about SWM videos through friends or peers. This suggests that social media plays a dominant role in introducing students to SWM videos.

Overall, the findings indicate that students frequently watch online video content, and social media is the primary channel through which they become aware of SWM videos. This emphasizes the potential of leveraging social media for promoting SWM videos as a learning tool.

The Role of SWM Videos

Table 2
The Role of SWM Videos

Survey Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
Is the SWM video a video of a content creator studying in front of a camera?	88.9	11.1
Does the SWM video allow students to feel the same ambiance as studying in a library?	73.6	26.4
Does the SWM video allow the viewer to have a virtual study buddy?	93.8	6.3
Does the SWM video allow the viewer to get a study ambiance anywhere in the world?	97.2	2.8
Does the SWM video include any interaction between the viewer and the content creator?	56.3	43.8
Can the SWM video motivate the viewer to study?	100	0
Is the SWM video a real-time studying video of the creator?	92.4	7.6

Table 2 shows the role of SWM videos in student learning. The table shows that most of the respondents recognized the SWM videos as content that featured creators studying in front of the camera (88.9%), indicating that they have a basic understanding of the role of the videos and the genre. Most of the respondents also felt that the videos provided the same ambiance as studying in a library (73.6%). Almost all identified with having a virtual study buddy (93.8%), while an overwhelming majority (97.2%) thought that the SWM videos provided viewers with a study ambiance suited for anywhere in the world.

The role of the SWM videos in terms of interaction and presence, however, appears to have a mediocre response, as only 56.3 percent of the respondents said that the SWM videos include interaction between viewers and content creators. All the respondents unanimously agreed that the SWM videos motivated the viewers to study (100%). This highlights the SWM videos able to serves as a motivational tool for learning and supporting academic achievement. Lastly, the respondents agreed that the SWM videos are a real-time study session of the content creator (92.4%), indicating authenticity in recordings of actual study sessions and perceived authenticity of the content.

The Role of SWM Videos Perspective Based on Gender

Overall, the findings found that most respondents agreed that SWM videos play a positive role in their learning motivation. This study further explores perspectives on the role of SWM videos based on gender differences utilizing Chi-Square and Cramér's V for analysis.

Table 3
The Role of SWM Videos Perspective Based on Gender

Survey Items	Chi Square test	Cramer's V
Is the SWM video a video of a content creator studying in front of a camera?	$\chi^2 = 3.130$, $p = 0.077$	0.147
Does the SWM video allow students to feel the same ambiance as studying in a library?	$\chi^2 = 0.752$, $p = 0.386$	0.072
Does the SWM video allow the viewer to have a virtual study buddy?	**$\chi^2 = 5.324$, $p = 0.021$**	**0.192**
Does the SWM video allow the viewer to get a study ambiance anywhere in the world?	**$\chi^2 = 8.765$, $p = 0.003$**	**0.247**
Does the SWM video include any interaction between the viewer and the content creator?	$\chi^2 = 3.409$, $p = 0.065$	0.154
Can the SWM video motivate the viewer to study?	NA	NA
Is the SWM video a real-time studying video of the creator?	**$\chi^2 = 5.502$, $p = 0.019$**	**0.195**

Table 3 presents the results of the Chi-Square test and Cramér's V, measuring the relationship between gender and perceptions of SWM videos. The analysis reveals statistically significant gender differences ($p < 0.05$) in how SWM videos are perceived. Notably, there is a moderate association (V = 0.192) between gender and the perception of SWM videos as a virtual study buddy ($\chi^2 = 5.324$, $p = 0.021$), indicating that males and females may experience this aspect differently. Additionally, the strongest gender-based association (V = 0.247) is found in the belief that SWM videos provide a study ambiance anywhere in the world ($\chi^2 = 8.765$, $p = 0.003$), suggesting that gender plays a significant role in this perception. Next, a

moderate association (V = 0.195) is observed in whether SWM videos are seen as real-time studying sessions ($\chi^2 = 5.502$, $p = 0.019$), indicating that gender may influence the perception of whether SWM videos involve real-time studying. These findings highlight that while both genders engage with SWM videos, their perceived benefits differ in meaningful ways.

However, the analysis indicates no statistically significant gender differences ($p > 0.05$) in certain aspects of SWM videos. The perception of SWM videos as a recording of a content creator studying shows a weak association with gender ($\chi^2 = 3.130$, $p = 0.077$, V = 0.147), suggesting that both males and females generally agree on this. Similarly, the idea that SWM videos create a library-like ambiance does not significantly vary by gender ($\chi^2 = 0.752$, $p = 0.386$, V = 0.072), indicating that both groups perceive this aspect similarly. Additionally, the belief that SWM videos facilitate interaction with the creator shows no strong gender-based differences ($\chi^2 = 3.409$, $p = 0.065$, V = 0.154).

Table 4 shows that a higher proportion of females (96.9%) perceive SWM videos as providing a virtual study buddy compared to males (87.0%). Meanwhile, more males (13.0%) disagreed with this statement compared to females (3.1%). This difference highlights a potential variation in how males and females engage from SWM videos.

Table 4
Percentage Distribution of Gender on Perceiving SWM Videos as a Virtual Study Buddy

Gender	No	Yes	Total
Male	13.0	87.0	100.0
Female	3.1	96.9	100.0

Table 5 indicates a notable gender difference in perceiving SWM videos as a way to create a study ambiance anywhere. While 100% of females believe that SWM videos provide a flexible study environment, a slightly lower 91.3% of males share the same view. Additionally, 8.7% of males do not see SWM videos as offering a study ambiance, whereas no females expressed this perspective. This suggests that females may be more inclined to utilize SWM videos for their ambient benefits.

Table 5
Percentage Distribution of Gender on Perceiving SWM Videos as Providing a Study Ambiance Anywhere

Gender	No	Yes	Total
Male	8.7	91.3	100.0
Female	0.0	100.0	100.0

The results in Table 6 reveals that a higher percentage of females (95.9%) perceive SWM videos as real-time studying videos compared to males (84.8%). Additionally, 15.2% of males do not consider these videos as real-time studying, whereas only 4.1% of females share this view. This suggests that females may be more likely to interpret SWM videos as live study sessions.

Table 6
Percentage Distribution of Gender on Perceiving SWM Video A Real-Time Studying

Gender	No	Yes	Total
Male	15.2	84.8	100.0
Female	4.1	95.9	100.0

Effect Size of Cramer's V
Cramér's V is a measure of effect size for chi-square tests of independence. It quantifies the strength of association between two categorical variables. The value of Cramér's V ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates no association and 1 indicates a perfect association. This study, which corresponds to a 2 × 2 table, the values can be interpreted a small effect size is approximately 0.10, a medium effect size is around 0.30, and a large effect size is about 0.50.

Figure 1 shows the Cramer's V effect sizes for statistically significant differences in perceptions of SWM videos. The strongest effect is observed for perceiving SWM videos as providing a study ambiance anywhere (V = 0.247), indicating a moderate to strong association between gender and this perception. Both real-time studying (V = 0.195) and viewing SWM videos as a virtual study buddy (V = 0.192) show moderate gender-based differences. These findings suggest that gender plays a role in shaping how SWM videos are perceived in these aspects.

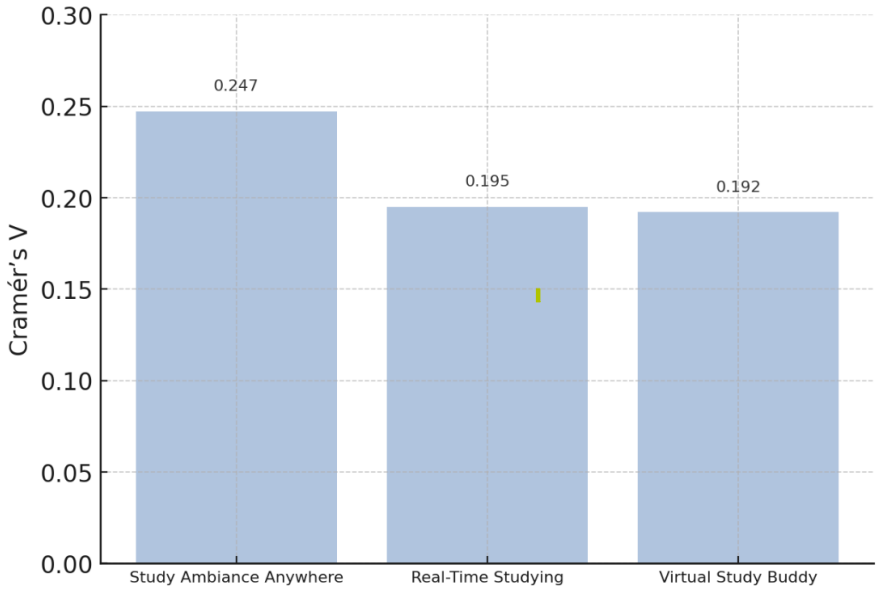

Figure 1. Cramer's V Effect Sizes

The Impact of the SWM Videos on Students' Learning Motivation
Table 7 presents the impact of the SWM videos on students' learning motivation.

Table 7
Learning Motivation Impacted by SWM Videos

Survey Items	Percentage					MOCT	MOP
Survey Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Skewness
The SWM videos helped me develop a consistent study routine.	3.5	19.4	2.8	43.1	31.3	3.79	–0.824
The SWM videos helped reduce procrastination during my study sessions.	3.5	12.5	4.2	42.4	37.5	3.98	–1.133
I feel more productive after studying with the SWM videos.	3.5	11.8	2.1	41.0	41.7	4.06	–1.268
SWM videos have influenced my academic performance positively.	3.5	14.6	4.2	51.4	26.4	3.83	–1.010
I would recommend SWM videos to others as a study aid.	0.0	6.9	5.6	44.4	43.1	4.24	–1.179
I complete tasks more efficiently during study sessions with these videos.	3.5	16.7	3.5	35.4	41.0	3.94	–0.973
My time management has improved when studying with SWM videos.	0.0	25.2	0.0	39.2	35.7	3.85	–0.691
I perform better on exams or assignments after using the SWM videos.	3.5	15.4	0.0	53.1	28.0	3.87	–1.101
I can study for longer periods when using SWM videos.	6.3	16.1	6.3	29.4	42.0	3.85	–0.870

MOCT=Measures of central tendency, MOP=Measures of position

Table 7 describes the students' learning motivation impacted by the SWM videos. From the table, 43.1 percent of respondents agree that the SWM videos helped them develop a consistent study routine. Furthermore, 42.4 percent of the respondents agree that the SWM videos helped reduce procrastination during their study sessions. Most of the respondents also felt more productive after studying with the SWM videos (agree =41.0%; strongly agree=41.7%). Most of the respondents believed (51.4%) that the videos influenced their academic performance positively. Besides that, 44.4 percent agreed that they would recommend the SWM videos to others as a study aid. In addition, 41.0 percent strongly agreed that they can complete tasks more efficiently with the videos. Furthermore, 39.2 percent agreed that the videos have helped improve their time management. Also, 53.1 percent agreed that they are able to perform better on exams or assignments after using the videos. Finally, 42 percent agreed that they can study for longer periods when using the videos.

The mean scores for all survey items range from 3.79 to 4.24, indicating that respondents generally agree on the positive impact of SWM videos on their study habits and academic performance. This suggests that students perceive these videos as a valuable tool for enhancing their learning experience. Among the survey items, the highest-rated statement, "I would recommend SWM videos to others as a study aid" (mean = 4.24), highlights the strong approval of these videos. This finding implies that students not only benefit from using SWM videos but also recognize their effectiveness enough to suggest them

to peers. Additionally, responses indicate that SWM videos contribute to increased study efficiency and reduced procrastination, as shown by high mean scores for "I feel more productive after studying with the SWM videos" (mean = 4.06) and "The SWM videos helped reduce procrastination during my study sessions" (mean = 3.98).

Furthermore, aspects related to study routines, time management, and academic performance also received relatively high agreement. The negative skewness values across all survey items indicate that responses are skewed toward higher agreement, meaning that more respondents selected "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" than lower agreement levels. The strongest skewness values were observed for "I feel more productive after studying with the SWM videos" (–1.268) and "I would recommend SWM videos to others" (–1.179). These findings strengthen the highly positive perception of SWM videos, further highlighting their effectiveness as a valuable learning aid that enhances student learning motivation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The current study analyzed the role of SWM videos in university student learning motivation and how it is perceived across genders. The findings demonstrate that most students perceive SWM videos as beneficial to their learning motivation. It should also be noted that students in this study believe SWM videos can offer virtual companionship as one of the motivational tools in learning. These results closely align with previous studies (Lee et al., 2021; Ibtasar et al., 2022; Ren et al., 2025), indicating that SWM videos can provide emotional support in terms of companionship that foster students' motivation while engaging in independent learning. Notably, gender differences significantly emerged in perceptions related to the ambiance offered by the SWM videos and experiences with virtual buddies. This asserts that gender significantly shapes how users engage with the digital learning assisting tool. Most of the findings reinforce the existing literature, confirming SWM videos as a valuable educational and motivational learning tool. Based on the results, it is recommended that educators should consider varying their teaching techniques and approaches by integrating the use of SWM videos. Literature indicated that SWM videos have a positive capacity as promising motivational and digital learning assisting tools. Given the fact that students will have independent learning sessions, integrating SWM videos to enhance their learning outcomes should be considered. Additionally, educators should also consider the distinct learning preferences across genders, especially when it comes to engaging with digital learning assisting tools. Educators need to choose or design the SWM videos that can complement the needs for both male and female learners. Moreover, to enhance the effectiveness of future SWM videos, the integration of personalized elements such as a customizable Pomodoro technique session can also be an advantage. Finally, future research could involve larger and more diverse groups of participants and long-term studies to provide better insight into how SWM videos can influence learning or productivity outcomes and how they could be optimally utilized in educational or even workplace settings.

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