

THE UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE REINFORCEMENT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN GENERATION Z

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z, born after the Millennial Generation, represents the generation that arrived at the farthest point in Indonesian history. Despite concerns about the strength of national identity among Generation Z, who were born during a period of rapid technological advancement, their quick familiarity with social media across various domains, including education, general knowledge, entertainment, and lifestyle, has been remarkable. To address these concerns and shed light on national identity reinforcement within Generation Z, a research study was undertaken. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the use of social media and its impact on the strengthening of national identity among Generation Z, specifically focusing on Instagram usage among adolescents

aged 18 to 22. The research methodology employed combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study involved 42 respondents from universities in South Tangerang as respondents. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman methods. The anticipated outcomes of this research are expected to contribute to our understanding of social media utilization and the reinforcement of national identity among Generation Z. Furthermore, the study results may serve as valuable recommendations for formulating policies related to social media usage within this demographic and for strengthening national identity

Keywords: social media; national identity; Generation Z

Introduction

The number of the world's population today continues to grow, hence there are several generations starting from the Baby Boomers Generation who were born between 1946 and 1960 to the generation that has a vital role today, namely Generation Z. Generation Z or Gen Z was born between 1995-2010. According to Firamadhina and Krisnani (2020), Generation Z is the first generation that has been exposed to technology from an early age. These technologies are in the form of computers or other electronic media such as mobile phones, internet networks, and even social media applications (Firamadhina and Krisnani, 2020).

The development of science and technology that is increasingly sophisticated in the era of globalization makes information spread quickly and more easily. Access to information can be found on several social media, such as Instagram, Google, Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, or Youtube. Social media has such a great influence in life because it is able to present interactions between two people who are separated by distance and time. With social media, Generation Z can not only communicate face-to-face, but also communicate cross-border in cyberspace (Firamadhina and Krisnani, 2020).

Along with the development of social media, education in Indonesia has also developed with an impact that can be seen from the many educational activities that use social media. (Suryaningsih, 2020). The development of this technology is a trigger for Generation Z behavior in daily life. The feature of social media is very influential on eastern culture so that some of them have changed into western culture.

Education is one of the important components in providing experience and attitude skills for students to see diversity and position themselves to be part of pluralistic so that they are able to see from various perspectives. Values and behaviors like this are appreciated in order to encourage the nation's future generations to maintain traditional and cultural values that are part of multiculturalism so that the nation's national identity becomes stronger (Adha et al., 2021).

From the research conducted by Zulfa and Najicha, it is known that at this time, a lot of cultures or customs that come from the vast area of the country enter Indonesia. This has a great influence on the life of the nation, especially the easier it is for people to access technology in the era of society 5.0. For example, the entry of the Korean wave, or Korean culture which is currently being talked about by teenagers to adults. The entry of foreign culture is certainly a threat to the nation's identity with its very easy and rapid spread through existing technology. Several things that need to be done as an effort to maintain local wisdom include fostering self-awareness of regional culture. In addition to the role of the government in making various projects such as education, art performances, and others as an effort to preserve culture, there is also a need for self-awareness that individuals must have towards their regional culture (Zulfa and Najicha, 2022).

Julianty et al. (2021) found that the influence of globalization is indeed inevitable no matter what. The influence of globalization is indeed inherent in our daily lives. We can make the best use of the positive impact of globalization. On the contrary, the negative impact of globalization can be a threat or even a challenge to the existence of the Indonesians' national identity. Therefore, we must strive to strengthen the national identity of the Indonesian nation. We can overcome this by always fortifying ourselves against the negative influences of the globalization process. In addition, the education process plays a very important role in producing a good and intelligent young generation who are able to strengthen the national identity of the Indonesia nation (Julianty et al., 2021).

Istiqomah and Widiyanto (2020) said that a dynamic national identity has a dilemmatic impact on the community in representing their national identity. Urban society tends to follow novelty and mainstream so it is feared that it will experience confusion in internalizing the values or ideologies that develop in society due to the globalization system. This is considered to be a threat to the strengthening of the nation's national identity, because if the community is not able to filter properly, there will be a clash of values (Istiqomah and Widiyanto, 2020).

According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia or KBBI (2023), the word "media" literally means means of communication such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, movies, posters, and banners. Meanwhile, the word "social" means with regard to society. In the dictionary, 'social media' is defined as a page or application that allows users to create and share content or get involved in the network (KBBI Online, 2023). According to Gani (2020), Social media is an online media, with users can easily participate, share, and create content including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds. According to him, blogs, social networks and wikis are the most common forms of social media used by people around the world. Kaplan and Haenlein (2014) divide social media into six sections, namely Collaborative Projects (wikis, bookmarks), Blogs and Microblogs (twitter), Content (youtube), Social networking sites (Facebook

and Instagram), and Virtual Game Works (3D). He also said that there are various social media that are popular in Indonesia, including: path, facebook, Instagram and twitter. According to him, social media has become a trend in itself with users in Indonesia (Mutiah et.al., 2019). According to Puspitarini and Nuraeni (2019), social media is also called a medium on the internet that allows users to represent themselves and interact, cooperate, share, communicate with other users and form social bonds virtually (Puspitarini and Nuraeni2019).

According to KBBI online (2023), the word "identity" literally means jati diri or self-identity. Meanwhile, the word "national" means national; related to or of one's own nation; encompassing a nation. So, national identity can be interpreted as an identity that is related to or comes from the nation itself. Pasha et.al. (2021) said that national identity is a national personality or identity that is attached to a country or group of people that exists in it and that it is not owned by other nations. They say that national identity is a characteristic that a nation has and is different from other nations. National identity essentially comes from a collection of cultural values that develop and grow in various aspects of people's lives. Therefore, the national identity of a nation cannot be separated from human nature and character as well as national nature and identity.

According to Winarno, national identity is the unifier of the nation that is able to strengthen relationships between citizens in carrying out and achieving common goals, goals for the future of the nation. National identity is a differentiator between one nation and another. The Indonesia nation with a strong national identity must continue to be built and developed so that the national identity can be inherited to the next generation. The factors that form a common identity in Indonesian society are based on a sense of primordial, sacred, character, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, history that has been passed by the nation, economic and institutional development (Winarno, 2020). Winarno (2020) also said that in the book *The Power of Identity* written by Castell (2011), it is explained that national identity is motivated by the historical journey from time to time which forms a life alliance consisting of elements of interaction between individuals (social), religious, economic, cultural, and regional location. Meanwhile, Colhoun (Schnabel & Hjerm, 2014) said that national identity shows more of a common fate and that each individual feels the sameness of life in the life of the nation and state (Winarno, 2020).

According to Nana (2018) in Sudargini and Purwanto, there are four main characteristics of the nation that must be reflected by Indonesia society, namely religious humans, humans as individuals, social humans, and humans as citizens of the nation. To cultivate these characters, educational institutions are expected to instil the values of life that are national identity, namely religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious, nationalistic, love for the homeland, respect for achievements, friendship, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, care for society, and be responsible (Sudargini and Purwanto, 2020).

According to KBBI Online, "generation" means (1) all people who have approximately the same time of life; generations; derivatives and (2) the period of people of the same generation. Meanwhile, "Generation Z" means the generation born in the late 1990s and early 2000s (KBBI, 2023). According to Qurniawati & Nurohman in Zisa et.al. (2021), there is a generation Z that was born after the millennial generation. They were born in the range from 2001 to 2010. Generation Z is also called the natives of the digital era born in the digital world with complete technology Personal Computer (PC), mobile phones, gaming devices, and the internet. They spend their free time browsing the web, preferring to stay indoors and play online rather than go outside and play outdoors. According to Zisa et.al. (2021) Generation Z is closely related to technology, the need to depend on the internet both in the social world, education, and knowledge of something that makes them rigid in communicating in the real world.

According to White in Subowo (2021), Generation Z has several characteristics, including: first, generation Z is an independent generation. Their independence is reflected in the work choices of Generation Z who tend to prefer to create their own jobs rather than become workers. Second, Gen Z becomes active through WiFi. Generation Z was born in an era where computers were widely used by people. Generation Z is growing in the midst of rapid advances in digital technology. They spend a lot of time with computers and internet access. A lot of information they get through the internet. The third characteristic is that there is a wide gap between wisdom and information. In terms of social media use, Generation Z is different from the previous generation. Generation Z is more able to sort out which content they think needs to be posted or not. This generation uses social media to please those who see, so as to minimize conflicts as much as possible. The fourth characteristic is that this generation is shapeless in terms of sexuality and relation. Kristen Stewart in Subowo (2021) mentioned that Generation Z is not too bothered with a person's sexual tendencies. Because they were born in an era of such rapid development of

information technology, many of them have lost their childhood. Generation Z has grown into a multitasking generation or can do various things at the same time, such as exercising while listening to a headset, as well as replying to WA via mobile phones (Subowo, 2021).

Methods

The research method used is a mixed method. The respondent recruitment technique in this study was that the author used 42 respondents from one of the state universities in South Tangerang (Cohen, 2007). According to Cohen, et.al, (2007, p. 101) the larger the sample size from the existing population, the better, but there is a minimum limit that must be taken by researchers, namely 42 samples. According to Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2017), the mixed method is carried out interactively and lasts continuously until it is complete so that the data is saturated. Activities in data analysis, namely *data reduction*, *data display*, and *conclusion drawing verification* (Sugiyono, 2017). Data was collected based on a survey of 42 Generation Z respondents. Respondents answered questions on a Google Form questionnaire.

Result

From the answers of 42 respondents, it was known that there were 2 people aged 18 years, 7 people aged 19 years, 17 people aged 20 years, 14 people aged 21 years, and 1 person aged 22 years. Meanwhile, there is 1 person who answered the year of birth in 2023. As mentioned by Zisa et al. (2021), they were born between 2001 and 2010. Therefore, they are called Generation Z.

From the data collection, it is known that most of the respondents (30 people) have known gadgets (mobile phones or smartphones) since elementary school age, namely the age of 6 to 12 years. The one who introduced the gadget was his father (16 people) and mother (14 people). This means that in those days parents were no longer worried about introducing gadgets at elementary school age.

Most of the respondents (33 people) have known laptops (portable computers) since elementary school age, namely the age of 6 to 12 years. The one who introduced the laptop (portable computer) was his father (14 people) and mother (13 people). This means that in those days parents were no longer worried about introducing laptops (portable computers) at the age of elementary school children and laptops were no longer an item so that they could be used by young children.

From the data collection, it is known that most of the respondents (25 people) have known *wifi* since elementary school age, namely the age of 6 to 12 years. Those who introduced *the wifi* were other relatives (21 people) and his father (11 people). When you are familiar with smart gadgets or laptops, a child will certainly be introduced to *wifi*. WIFI is a name patent owned by a network certification body in the United States called the Wireless Ethernet Compatibility Alliance (WECA). WECA itself has changed its name to WIFI-alliance with its trademark Wi-Fi which is an association on the standard testing provisions of communication networks in accordance with the IEEE 802.11b specification standard reference (Calvinus & Utama, 2020).

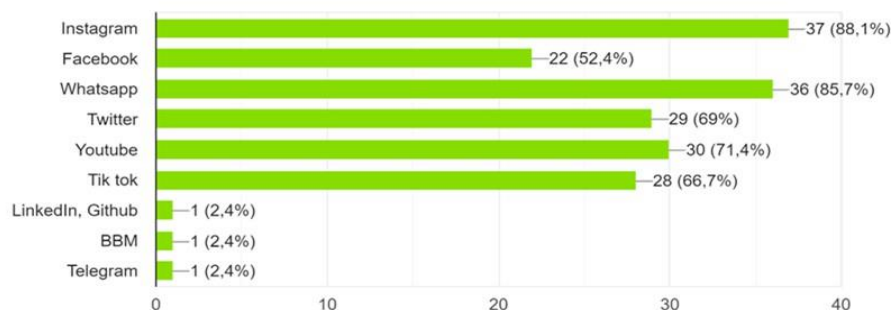
In its development, there are 31 people who are familiar with social media and 26 people who have had social media since elementary school. From the data obtained, there are actually 23 people or 54.8% who already know social media from other relatives and 10 people or 23.8% know social media from their brother. Their fathers and mothers occupy only a small percentage in terms of social media adoption. This is likely because when a person has entered the world of education, there are more and more relatives who are known, for example, teachers at school, friends in the classroom and outside the classroom, or their ushers.

From the data collection, it is known that there are 20 people or 47.6% who open the Instagram application 5 to 10 times in one day, 16 people or 38.1% open the Instagram application more than 10 times in one day, and 6 people or 14.3% open the Instagram application less than 5 times in one day. This shows how much a person is dependent on social media or in this case, Instagram.

Diagram 1 Social Media Ownership

4. Jenis media sosial yang sekarang saya dimiliki adalah (boleh memilih lebih dari satu)

42 jawaban



The diagram shows the percentage of social media ownership by respondents. Instagram and Whatsapp are the selected social media. Every social media has its own purpose for its users to share their experiences, ideas, or life moments. As the data in the chart, Instagram (IG) is the most used social media by respondents. According to Sakti and Yulianto, Instagram is the second most popular social media platform, with 59% of online users aged 18-29 using Instagram. Through social media, the public, especially teenagers, do not hesitate to upload all kinds of activities, complaints, personal photos, and short videos to be conveyed to the wider community through Instagram social media accounts in forming their identity (Sakti & Yulianto, 2013).

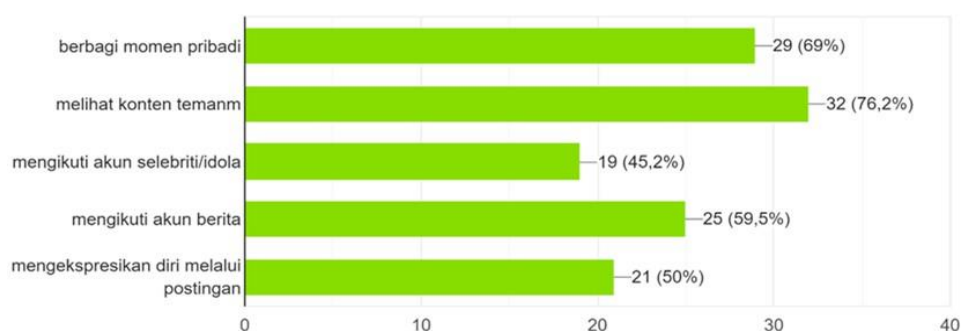
Whatsapp (WA), for example, is generally used by most people to communicate by sending written messages, voice messages, picture messages, sending images/photos, videos, or documents. Now, sending wedding invitations is also made through WA, complete with photos and plans to the inviter's address. According to Fauzi (2021), WhatsApp is a social media application that can do *text/voice chat, photo sending, video sending, document sending and location sending*. So that with this WhatsApp social media can construct a culture in the technology-literate generation, it is also more appropriate to use it as personal or group communication that can be a means to maintain relationships with others and as a source of information (Ridwan et al., 2016).

Thus, it is illustrated that the ownership position of IG and WA among the younger generation is compared to other types of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, or Tiktok.

Diagram 2 Purpose of Instagram Use

5. Tujuan utama saya menggunakan Instagram adalah (boleh memilih lebih dari satu)

42 jawaban



From Diagram 2, it is known that the main purpose of using Instagram is to view friends' content. The next goal is to share personal moments, follow news accounts, express yourself through posts, and lastly, follow celebrity/idol accounts. Thus, it is illustrated that the main purpose of using IG is that almost all parts have the main purpose, which is to be prioritized.

Regarding the attitude of Generation Z towards reinforcing national identity, it is illustrated through the available answers, namely agree or disagree. There are 15 attitudes expressing 100% approval of belief in God Almighty, ownership of official identity, ownership of tolerance to all religions, enforcement of personal discipline, working hard for oneself and family, possession of high creativity, ownership of always independence, ownership of democratic attitude, ownership of curiosity for new things, ownership of national spirit, ownership of love for the homeland, Ownership of peace-loving attitudes, ownership of environmental care attitudes, social care attitudes, responsible attitudes, and ownership of attitudes always feel connected to national identity (nationality).

Meanwhile, there are 3 attitudes that 1 person or 2.4% disagree with, namely possession of high creativity traits, always appreciating the achievements of friends, always displaying a friendly attitude, and there are 3 attitudes that there are 2 people or 4.8% disagree, namely always liking to read to add insight, always participating in content on Instagram that strengthens or highlights values, culture, or national traditions, and always looking at social media, including Instagram, influenced my perception and understanding of national identity. The existence of a statement of disapproval shows that Generation Z is closely related to the knowledge of something that makes them rigid in communicating in the real world, some like it and some don't like it.

Conclusion

The results of the data analysis showed several significant findings related to the introduction of technology and social media usage behavior in Generation Z. Most respondents have known gadgets, laptops, and wifi since elementary school age and show that access to technology has become a natural part of their lives. However, the introduction of this technology is dominated by parents, especially fathers and mothers.

The use of social media, especially Instagram, in Gen Z's daily lives also shows a significant level of dependence, with most respondents opening the Instagram app periodically throughout the day. This reflects the significant impact of social media in shaping the daily routine and social interaction of Generation Z.

Because they have a dependence on social media, especially Instagram, Generation Z also uses social media wisely so that education on national identity and cultural values can strengthen the moral education of Generation Z.

Educators and parents need to continue to understand the role of technology in the lives of Generation Z. Early introduction to technology must be balanced with an approach that supports the responsible and ethical use of technology. Social interaction and the role of other relatives, such as teachers, classmates, and family, are important in introducing Generation Z to social media. Therefore, there needs to be collaboration between educators, parents, and the social environment in guiding the positive use of social media, especially in strengthening national identity.

This can be done through a more integrated approach in the educational curriculum to increase understanding and love for the homeland and culture of Indonesia. In the face of technological developments and social media, it is necessary to continue to conduct research and monitoring to understand its impact on generation Z and identify more effective ways to support their development in a positive way.

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