

A TEENAGERS' COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

In the digitalization era nowadays, the use of social media has a huge impact on the lives of children and teenagers. Social media produces both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact of social media is to help and support their daily lives such as making it easier for the children and the teenagers to complete their school assignments. In the other side, some of the negative impacts of using social media that hinders human life such as isolating an individual from his group and accessing inappropriate information for children which can endanger their lives. One of the good impacts of social media on children and teenagers is that they can learn how to communicate well and connect with other people through social media. They can also learn foreign languages by connecting to foreigners through social media. There are more good impacts on them by using social media. However, there are also bad impacts on the children in using social, one of which is the possibility for them being connected to any individuals or any communities that can negatively impact on them and even endanger their lives.

Keywords: Teenager, social media, communication

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1. Introduction

A competency is a person's knowledge or skills while communication is a way of conveying a message to a person or to a group of people. It can be concluded that communication competence is an individual's ability to convey messages to a person or to a group of people.

Social media is a medium that is used by a person to interact, share, and build social network content without being limited by space and time. Social media is widely used by group of people: children, teenagers, and adults. In addition, social media is also very influential to someone's daily life, for instance to communicate remotely with relatives who rarely meet face to face one to another.

Social media has two impacts, positive and negative impacts, that affect the changes in the character or the mindset of its users. The positive impact of using social media is that it can make easier for someone to communicate remotely with other people. One of the negative impacts of social media is that it makes a person continuously access social networks in cyberspace which sometimes causes the users to be negligent and lack of time to interact face-to-face with their fellows, especially with their own family members. Another bad impact of using social media is that it makes someone to be addicted to surf on social networks which lead him to have a lack of socializing with the people in his community, especially for young people nowadays who prefer to stay at home rather than to socialize with other people in his surroundings.

Social media is also a great tool for the youth to compete in communication field. Teenagers can practice how to communicate well with their fellows—the other social media users.

The existence diverse nature of social media users, teenagers may train their ability to communicate with many kinds of people they meet. Teenagers can learn how to communicate with other people who have different reactions in responding to a message conveyed while they are communicating one to each other.

2. Literature Review

After conducting a research on social media users, the researcher concludes that the average social media users are between the ages of 15-39 years. The first age group is teenager, between the ages of 15-19, who are commonly known as the millennial generation. The second age group is the youth between the ages of 20-24 years. The third age group is the youth aged in between 25-29 years. In the fourth age group is the medium aged people, between the ages of 30-34 years. The fifth age group is the users aged in between 35-39 years.

The more number of social media users, the more hoaxes (fake news) that are easily spread. One of the reasons is the lack of user literacy in responding to a news read on social media. DailySocial.id, a technology blog in Jakarta, collaborated with the Jakpat Mobile Survey Platform to conduct a research about the reactions of social media users in responding to a hoax (hoax news). The result of their research showed that some Indonesian citizens could not identify the differences between hoaxes (fake news) and the truth news.

3. Results and Discussions

A young generation is a time when an individual grows from childhood to adulthood. At this age, teenagers experience physical and psychological changes. Teenagers experience a process of changing character and mindset from being childish to being more mature. The children think actually and the teenagers think more spiritually, while the parents think more logically by seeing and judging something from various perspectives. It is the behavior and the thought patterns that influence the formation of an individual's character. The factors that influence someone's character formation are the family, education, and the surroundings. The behavior influenced by the family members (family factor) is attached closely to the children because the children get basic knowledge in life from the family itself especially from their communication within the family members. One example is when a baby begins to talk is derived from the guidance of his parents. In the other hand, frequently a child has a bad etiquette to speak with others because some parents, during a fight in the house, often say bad or rude words that are not appropriate to say. This will lead their children to imitate such bad or rude words that are not appropriate to say while interacting to others.

The second factor that influences the behavior and the mindset of an adolescent is an education side. School is a place where teenagers get education from their teachers. In the school, teenagers are taught hospitality in language and communication, both between the students and their fellow and between the students and their teachers. It is often for a teacher to reprimand a student when he communicates using bad expression. Therefore, a teenager begins to get used to communicating well with others since he is studying in the school.

The last factor is an environmental factor. This factor is also very influential because the environment itself is a place where a person spends most of his time. Therefore, the way a teenager communicates with others can also be affected by the environment where he is living. A good environment will create a good impact, otherwise a bad environment can shape a bad impact.

However, out of these three factors, in the current era there is one factor that also influences the formation of adolescent behavior and mindset, namely social media.

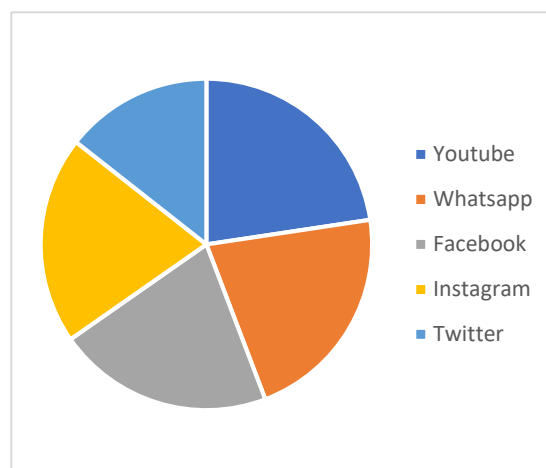
In this digitalization era, the use of social media has a huge impact on the lives of children and teenagers. Social media produces both positive and negative impacts.

Lately, a very influential factor in changing the behavior and the mindset of teenagers is social media. However, social media has two impacts, positive and negative impacts, that change the behavior and the mindset of teenagers.

The positive impact of social media is to help and support their daily lives such as making it easier for the children and the teenagers to complete their school assignments. In the other side, some of the negative impacts of using social media that hinders human life such as isolating an individual from his group and accessing inappropriate information for children which can endanger their lives.

In 2017, children and teenagers used to go to internet cafes, commonly known as internet cafe , in order to get the internet connection for accessing any social media. An internet cafe (warnet) was a place that was often visited by children and teenagers to explore their social media. They often spent their pocket money to rent a personal computer at the internet café. But now that has changed. Most of them use their pocket money to buy internet data plan. Sometimes, they find it difficult to manage their time in using social media. This causes changes in adolescents in both sides, their behavior and their mindset.

Nowadays, there are several social media platforms that can be accessed by children namely YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The followings are the percentage of using the five platforms: YouTube reaches 88%; WhatsApp reaches 84%, Facebook reaches 82%, Instagram reaches 79%, and Twitter reaches 56% of users.



However, based on the analysis conducted in this research, most of the teenagers only access a few sites which have similar features such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

On Facebook, the user can share photos and videos and also can express his

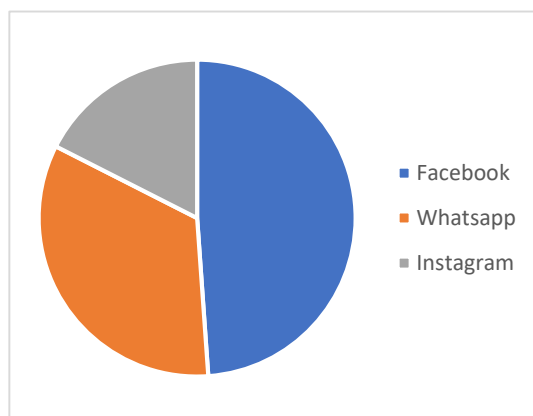
mood using status mode. It is different from the Instagram platform in which the user can only share photos and videos.

The users can also express their mood in the form of status, which is an outpouring of their emotions by writing on their social media wall-post. On Facebook, there is also a live broadcast feature which can be used by a user to broadcast himself or the place atmosphere around him. In this feature, a friend can communicate with him, the broadcaster, by writing comments or by joining the ongoing live broadcast. Instagram also has many features in common which Facebook has.

WhatsApp is used as a medium for communication that has replaced the functions of telephone and SMS (short message service) in their early usage. Nowadays, teenagers prefer using WhatsApp because it is more practical and it only uses data plans. In addition, in sending messages using WhatsApp, you can also share images, voice messages and videos. The completeness of this feature has an impact on the behavior and mindset of teenagers who prefer spending more time playing social media than giving less time to be with their family members.

In other side, social media also has some positive impacts. Social media brings together all the users from different countries so the teenagers can expand their friendship all over the world. Teenagers can also learn foreign languages by communicating or interacting with foreigners through social media. In addition, some schools or colleges sometimes require their students to look for material references via internet. On YouTube platform, there are many tutors who create some video tutorials to teach how to communicate in other languages that teenagers can watch and learn from them. Such kinds of videos make it easier for some teenagers to communicate with foreigners if one day they meet strangers or foreigners who are coming from different countries.

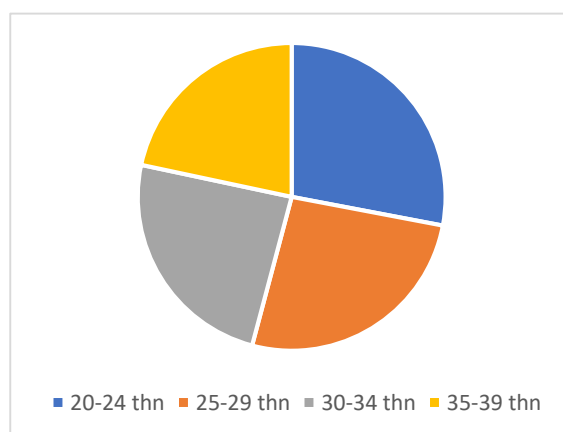
At this era, a lot of information, both actual information and hoaxes (lies), is easily shared due to the rapid development of technology in accessing the internet. One of the technology blogs in Jakarta, named Dailysocial.id, conducted a research and concluded that some Indonesians could not distinguish between fake news and real news. Some of the respondents mentioned that they felt unsure of their skills in recognizing between hoax and fact. Other users stated that they prefer ignoring it when they got false information. Nowadays, there are many media where the hoax news spreading. The followings are the names of social media with the percentage of spreading fake news (hoax): Facebook at 82.25%, WhatsApp at 56.55%, and Instagram at 29.48% (dailysocial.id). The following is a diagram showing names of social media with the percentage of spreading fake news (hoax).



The result of this research indicates that many Indonesian people are still unable to interpret the information properly and correctly even though they have scanned the contents of the information. Nowadays, social media users generally tend to share news content to other people even though they only read the title of the news.

This is in line with a statement which said that half of the Indonesian population who have completed their education are stated to be functionally illiterate because they can read but they cannot interpret the meaning of what they are reading. Most of the Indonesian people still have lack skills in reading comprehension. They can read but they have difficulties in comprehending the reading material. The ability level of the Indonesian people is very different from the internet-usage level which has a large number of users.

In a statement, there is an information which states the percentage of Indonesian people in using internet are as follows: 1) The teenagers which is called millennial generation, the ages of between 15-19 years, have the highest position in using internet; 2) the youth in the age between 20-24 years reaches 88.5%; 3) the youth in the age between 25-29 years has reached to 82.7%; 4) the people in the age of between 30-34 years reaches 76.5%; 5) and the last group, the age between 35-39 years, reaches 68.5%. The percentage of internet users in Indonesia can be seen in the following diagram.



From this statement, it can be concluded that the highest percentage of social media user is the younger generation or what is often called teenagers. However, it is found that there are still many teenagers who do not have the concept of media

awareness called media literacy. Media literacy can be defined as the ability to seek, learn and utilize various media sources in various forms.

In the concept of media literacy, there are conditions that must be understood by an individual to be stated to have media literacy skill. Media literacy functions to provide insight, knowledge and skills to the teenagers who are using social media in order to be able to sort and assess the content of information that can be useful for their lives. Therefore, teenagers should be more careful in receiving information and should be more critical in responding or in interpreting the information they are reading.

In other sides, there are also many functions of using social media for teenagers, one of them is for communicating. Social media can be a medium for teenagers to compete with others in communication field. Teenagers can train themselves in how to communicate with other people through social media. They even train themselves in how to communicate using foreign languages, especially English, by connecting with foreigners through their social media platforms.

Another benefit of using social media is that the teenagers can practice their Public Speaking skills by speaking in public. In addition, they can also interact with other people around the world.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

A competency is a person's knowledge or skills while communication is a way of conveying a message to a person or to a group of people. It can be concluded that communication competence is an individual's ability to convey messages to a person or to a group of people. While social media is a medium that is used by a person to interact, share, and build social network content without being limited by space and time. Teenagers is a time when an individual grows from childhood to adulthood. At this age, teenagers experience physical and psychological changes. Nowadays, many teenagers use social media to interact closely and remotely with other people. Many teenagers use Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram applications to communicate with their friends and siblings. The application mostly used by all group of people is Facebook.

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