

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF CYBERBULLYING THROUGH THE INSTAGRAM STORY FEATURE ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF GENERATION Z STUDENTS IN DENPASAR

Ni Made Nila Widya Puspa Dewi¹, Ni Putu Yunita Anggreswari², Nuning Indah Pratiwi³, Sahri Aflah Ramadiansyah⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Communication Studies Program, Universitas pendidikan Nasional

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Corresponding author*:

Ni Made Nila Widya Puspa Dewi

Contact:

nilapuspadewi04@gmail.com

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the impact of cyberbullying through the Instagram Story feature on the mental health of Generation Z students in Denpasar. The rapid advancement of technology and the increasing use of social media have significantly changed the patterns of communication and social interaction among young people. Instagram, as one of the most popular platforms among Gen Z, offers the Story feature that allows users to share daily activities quickly and openly. However, this convenience is often misused for negative actions such as ridicule, sarcasm, or the spread of harmful information. This research employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method by examining various relevant previous studies. The findings indicate that cyberbullying through Instagram Story can trigger psychological problems such as stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression. Moreover, social pressure to appear perfect on social media exacerbates students' mental health conditions. Nevertheless, Instagram also has positive potential when used wisely as a medium for self-expression, information sharing, and strengthening social connections. Therefore, increasing digital literacy, promoting ethical social media behavior, and encouraging the active role of universities and the government are essential to create a healthy and safe digital environment for the younger generation.

Keywords: content, formatting, article.

INTRODUCTION

In this era of rapid technological development, almost everyone has and uses social media. There are 4.3 billion active social media users worldwide, with user growth in 2020 increasing by around 9.2%. In Indonesia alone, 59% of the population are active social media users (Ramadhan, 2020). Social media has changed the way humans interact, making it easier by removing the barriers of distance and time. The use of social media also has psychological benefits, such as increasing self-affirmation and social connectedness. In addition, many studies have proven that the use of social media can lead to several psychological disadvantages, such as addiction, behavioral disorders, and the risk of depression and social anxiety (Islami, 2022).

Current information and communication technology includes increased internet access, which has benefited young people and adults alike. Internet usage has increased from the previous year, with 215 million users in 2023 and 221 million users in 2024. Internet usage among men reached 50.9%, while among women it reached 49.1% (Pinalis et al., 2024).

The presence of the internet and social media (platforms) implemented in the right way can have a positive effect that can facilitate people's daily activities in their lives according to their respective roles and needs. In addition to positive effects, progress and developments in this field can also have negative effects if not used wisely or unnecessarily. Social media is a tool for interacting, exchanging information, and creating blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networks, and forums. There are no time or space restrictions when interacting on social media, which makes it easier and faster to exchange information. In this era of advanced digital communication, there are many social media platforms available, such as

Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and so on. The use of these media depends on the individual user, whether it is used positively or negatively. In recent years, social media has been increasingly used by the public for various activities, ranging from promotion, communication, business, education, entertainment, and so on (Rachmayanti & Candrasari, 2022).

When interacting on social media, there are no time or space constraints, thereby facilitating and shortening the process of exchanging information. Social media is a tool for interacting, exchanging information, and creating blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networks, and forums. When interacting on social media, there are no time or space constraints, which can simplify and shorten the process of exchanging information (Aprilia et al., 2023).

Instagram is a platform that emphasizes visuals (photos and videos), with numerous photo filters and retouching capabilities that make every photo look perfect, which can lead to anxiety. The photo filter feature that allows users to beautify their photos has changed the way individuals present themselves online. The portrayal of an ideal self can affect the emotional and psychological responses of other users who see it. Instagram is the most popular platform among Generation Z, who tend to use social media to share moments, build identities, and interact with friends. With over one billion monthly active users, Instagram offers attractive interactive features, such as Stories, IGTV, and Reels, which make it increasingly popular among this generation. Although social media, including Instagram, provides a platform for communication and interaction, there are concerns that its use may cause changes in how Generation Z interacts socially. This generation is more likely to interact digitally than face-to-face, which can affect their social skills and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, there is a need to understand how interactions on these platforms affect the behavior and psychological well-being of adolescents. Given the complex dynamics between Instagram use and social interaction among Gen Z, this research is important for identifying how Instagram features influence social interaction patterns and how Gen Z can optimize their experience on the platform. This study aims to provide deeper insights into the influence of Instagram on the formation of Gen Z's identity and social interaction (Musakif, 2024).

Instagram was first established in 2010. At that time, Instagram only had a photo uploading feature. However, Instagram has always been updating its features and adding new ones, such as video uploading, Instagram stories, close friends, reels, and many more. Among the various features offered by Instagram, there is one feature that has recently gained popularity among Generation Z. This feature is multiple accounts on Instagram. Multiple accounts can be accessed by users without having to log out of their main Instagram account first. With the introduction of the multiple accounts feature, many members of Generation Z have started creating second accounts on Instagram (Musakif, 2024).

Gen Z is one of the age groups most vulnerable to the influence of social media because they are in the stage of self-discovery and have a need to socialize. Instagram, as a visual-based social media platform, allows Gen Z to share experiences, express their identity, and communicate with their social circle. This is influenced by the increasingly widespread penetration of the internet and the rapidly developing digital culture. However, intensive engagement in social media often displaces direct social interaction, which can impact the quality of their interpersonal relationships. This study examines how Instagram influences Gen Z's social interactions, focusing on the opportunities it offers and the challenges that arise from its use (Sudirman et al., 2024).

One phenomenon that can affect the mental and physical health of victims and cause prolonged trauma is cyberbullying. Additionally, the increasing ease and widespread use of social media creates opportunities for individuals to engage in negative actions, whether intentionally or unintentionally, which can potentially harm others. The lack of knowledge and education about cyberbullying among students is a major factor contributing to their low awareness of this issue, even though cyberbullying can have serious effects if not handled properly. The use of social media among students plays a major role in the high incidence of cyberbullying. Social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok are the main platforms for students to communicate, express themselves, and share information. However, the ease of communication also carries the risk of cyberbullying, which can take the form of insults, humiliation, and threats through text messages, images, or videos online (Ananda et al., 2024).

Bullying can also be defined as the act of intimidating someone through attitudes, actions, and words. Therefore, bullying is not limited to physical abuse, but also psychological abuse. Isolating and gossiping

about someone are also acts of intimidation. Bullying is a psychosocial problem in which someone repeatedly insults and demeans others, which has a negative impact on both the perpetrator and the victim, with the perpetrator having greater power than the victim. Rigby argues that bullying involves the desire to hurt, negative actions, an imbalance of power, repetition, and the perpetrator's enjoyment and the victim's distress, all of which are examples of rigged bullying. Therefore, there are two things to consider in bullying: the perpetrator and the victim. However, most of this abuse occurs on the internet, using digital technology. Known as cyberbullying, perpetrators can upload inappropriate photos or videos, spread gossip and negative rumors on the internet, make rude comments that put others down, and hurt others with words written on the internet or social media (Lim et al., 2021).

Through the visual content they produce and consume, Gen Z not only shares experiences but also builds self-image and personal branding that affects their perception of themselves and others. However, even though social media offers many benefits in strengthening social interactions, there is also a dark side that needs to be considered. Excessive use of social media can contribute to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and pressure to maintain an ideal body image. Concerns about privacy and social pressure are also common issues faced by teenagers when using Instagram. This is where it is important to understand the dynamics and complexity of the relationship between Gen Z, Instagram, and its impact on social interactions and behavioral ethics (Aenul Farodisa et al., 2025).

Based on this, it is very important to understand how social media influences the consumptive behavior of Gen Z. The influence of social media can provide useful insights for parents, educators, and policymakers to help Gen Z use social media in a healthy and responsible manner. By understanding the impact of social media, appropriate steps can be taken to reduce negative influences and maximize the positive benefits of this technology. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of social media on Gen Z's consumptive behavior using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. The SLR method is a research approach to identify, evaluate, and interpret research results that are relevant to specific research questions, topic areas, or phenomena of interest (Subhan et al., 2023).

RESEARCHMETHOD

In this study, the researcher used descriptive qualitative research. According to Sugiyono (2012), descriptive qualitative research is a type of research used to study the natural conditions of an object, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out in a combined manner, data analysis is qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Meanwhile, Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong (2012:4) describe the data presented in this study as being supplemented by the use of questionnaires. The data sources in this study are primary data obtained from informants and secondary data related to literature that supports the results of this study. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and literature studies. Phenomenological studies are used to explore Gen Z's direct experiences and perceptions of Instagram use in everyday life, particularly in social interactions in the digital age (Musakif, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews conducted with several Gen Z students in Denpasar, it was found that the majority of respondents actively use social media, especially Instagram, as a means of sharing their daily activities through the Story feature. From the interviews, most respondents admitted to having experienced or witnessed cyberbullying on this feature, such as negative comments, indirect mentions, and the dissemination of stories or screenshots that humiliate someone. This form of cyberbullying is often disguised as a joke, but it has a significant psychological impact on the victim.

The interview results show that respondents who had been victims felt mental pressure, such as stress, anxiety, insomnia, and decreased self-confidence. Some of them even admitted to withdrawing from their social environment or choosing to limit their activities on Instagram. However, there were also respondents who were more neutral and tried to ignore negative comments on the grounds that social media is not something to be overly concerned about. This shows that there are differences in mental resilience and coping skills among Gen Z individuals.

In addition to the negative impacts, some respondents also highlighted the positive aspects of the Instagram Story feature, such as the ease of sharing information, expressing oneself, and interacting with friends. However, they emphasized the need for awareness in using the feature to avoid unintentionally

offending or hurting others. Interviews also revealed that most students hoped for social media ethics education from the university, as well as psychological support for students who are victims of cyberbullying.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that cyberbullying through the Instagram Story feature has a significant effect on the mental health of Gen Z female students in Denpasar. This open and fast-spreading feature is often used to convey opinions, sarcasm, or comments that have the potential to cause feelings of anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, and depression in victims. Social pressure to appear perfect on social media also worsens the psychological condition of female students who are the targets of bullying. However, on the other hand, Instagram Stories can provide positive benefits if used wisely as a means of sharing information, expressing oneself, and building social support. Therefore, it is important for the younger generation to increase awareness and ethics in using social media, use features positively, and avoid behavior that can hurt others. Universities are expected to play an active role in providing digital literacy education and counseling services for affected students, while the government and platform developers need to strengthen policies to protect users from cyberbullying. With wise use of social media and adequate supervision, negative impacts can be minimized, and social media can become a healthy space for the mental and social development of Generation Z.

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