

Analysis of Z Generation Group Communication Dynamics in the Digital Era

Ulfa Musfirah^{1*}, Hanisa Larasakti², Hairunnisa Putri Aurora Nst³, Nurul Tazkiyah⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Student of Communication Science, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Malikussaleh, Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia

*Corresponding author. Email: ulfa.220240006@mhs.unimal.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The communication dynamics of Generation Z groups continue to develop along with changes in technology and social dynamics. Studying how they communicate helps us understand how digital technology influences their social and cultural interactions. This research aims to analyze the communication dynamics of the Generation Z group in the digital era. Generation Z consists of individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, growing up in a highly digital environment. This study explains how digital technology influences communication patterns, including social media, instant messaging, and other online platforms, in shaping Gen Z's identity and social interactions. The research results show that Generation Z has unique communication characteristics, such as a preference for written communication. Creating digital content creatively and a tendency to participate in social movements and online activism. In the digital era, Generation Z's communication dynamics are becoming increasingly complex, affecting relationships, culture, and politics. This study provides important insights into the role of technology in shaping adolescent communication in the digital era.

Keywords: *Communication Dynamics, Group Communication, Generation Z, Digital Era*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reporting from a book entitled "Communication Dynamics" explains that communication dynamics are what, what it looks like, how communication occurs between two or more people occurs. Important details both verbal and nonverbal, situations, emotions, there are other things that influence the occurrence of a communication [1].

According to Effendy, group communication is a group of individuals who can influence each other, get some satisfaction from each other, interact for some purpose, take a role, are bound to each other and communicate face-to-face. other members accurately [1]. According to Shaw (1976) this famous psychologist, in his book "i-Gen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy-and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood," uses this year's boundaries for Generation Z. He emphasizes the impact of digital technology on the way they grow up and interact [2].

In the ever-evolving digital age, communication is undergoing significant changes, and one of the groups in the spotlight is Generation Z. Generation Z consists of those born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s, the first group to grow up in a completely digitally connected environment. These are the products of an age where the internet, social media and mobile technology have become an integral part of everyday life.

Generation Z's communication dynamics in the digital age reflect major changes in communication and interpersonal interactions. They understand technology as a second language that influences the way they communicate, interact with others and shape their identity. Generation Z presents unique challenges and opportunities for understanding communication and its impact on culture, relationships and society as a whole.

The purpose of this study is to find out the communication dynamics that influence Generation Z in the digital age. We explored how they use social media,

written communication, and creativity in digital content. In addition, we analyze how they engage in online activism and how technology affects their interpersonal relationships. By understanding these changes in communication, we gain a deeper understanding of how Generation Z constructs its digital identity and participates in an increasingly digitally connected world. This research is important because effective communication in the digital age is not just about technology, but also understanding the social, cultural and psychological dynamics that affect our relationships in an increasingly virtual and online world.

Researchers observed that the issue of changes in the communication behavior of generation Z was not doing well. Looking at the reality in the field, there is a kind of communication disorder that can eliminate the meaning of communication itself. Communicators who are neglected, can feel disappointed or angry when interacting with communicants who remain engrossed in their digital activities.

Therefore, there is a negative potential if the message is misinterpreted or does not get a response [3]. Indeed, there must be ethics of digital use when communicating with others, what must be done. Literacy of good communication behavior using devices needs to be given to gen Z in the social environment.

Many things have happened after the presence of gadgets and new media in the social sphere, various kinds of changes in the communication behavior of gen Z that cannot be predicted in expressing their feelings in cyberspace. Will the real world be drowned by the trend of living in cyberspace, even in the ongoing family dinner. According to the observations that researchers saw in the field, observing gen Z still had time to play their devices, showing the use of two different worlds, real and virtual.

Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide direct input as a consideration for parents, teachers, lecturers and leaders. In giving a touch to gen Z to maintain effective communication behavior and maintain ethics in communicating with various parties in the public sphere. This research also provides appropriate recommendations for individuals who are addicted to gadgets. So that it eliminates humanity in social life, it is time to return to humanizing humans. This research also provides benefits for parents of gen Z as a guide in giving gadgets to children at the right time, so that there are no mistakes in use. In addition, the results of this study are expected to be used as evaluation material for the City government regarding the development of programs that are appropriate for gen Z in maintaining communication in the real world to be balanced. Likewise, it can also be used by the City government who needs this scientific work for policy

making for the gen Z program to return to face-to-face interaction.

2. METHOD

The literature method is the choice of this research. The literature method plays an important role in formulating the theoretical basis and conceptual framework. A comprehensive analysis of literature relevant to mass communication, digital technology and information consumption trends was conducted to understand the changes that have occurred. A qualitative approach was used to analyze data obtained from various scientific writings, books, research reports, and other reliable sources.

According to Hamzah (2020), library research is a qualitative research method, in which the characteristics of research are transformed into the context of library research [4]. The field setting is moved into the library room, interview and observation activities become text and discourse analysis. Zed (2008) explains that this method is a series of steps relating to methods or means such as data collection, reading and recording and processing research materials [5]. The research in this literature study will examine various literature sources such as, books, journals, theses, theses and articles on the website. A qualitative approach is used to analyze data obtained from various scientific writings, books, research reports, and other reliable sources.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Changes in Generation Z Group Communication in the Digital Age

Reporting from the Journal "Changes in Communication Behavior of Millennial Generation and Generation Z in the Digital Age" Based on the results of the study, changes in communication behavior into several themes, based on the experiences of ten informants. The phenomenon of communication changes has occurred in observations and in-depth interviews. At first, researchers described and categorized communication changes specifically how changes occurred in generation Z in particular [6].

The changes in Generation Z's communication in the digital age reflect major changes in the way they interact and communicate. Some important changes in Generation Z's communication in the digital age:

The technology-dependent Generation Z grew up in the digital age. They rely heavily on electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets and computers for communication, information access and entertainment. Generation Z are also active users of social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc. They use these

platforms to share experiences, create digital identities and create social connections. They use these platforms to share experiences, create digital identities and make social connections.

According to Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality, the existence of Instagram social media makes people feel free, which means that individuals are able to create an identity without clarity, status, social relationships, which are not part of the actual situation with the aim of building communication and creating friendships in cyberspace.

Text and instant messaging, written communication through SMS, instant messaging and chat apps like WhatsApp has become the dominant mode of communication. It replaces verbal communication in most daily interactions.

Creativity in digital content, Gen Z is known as a creative digital content producer. They create videos, memes, images and other visual content to convey messages, self-expression and entertainment.

Prior to the digital era, Generation Z used to rely more on face-to-face communication in their social environment rather than interacting on social media. The influence of communication development is inseparable from the development of technology, which is part of public communication. The biggest aspect of technology is the birth of the digital era, where the use of text and in the form of code can be divided into the process of production, distribution, and storage at the same time [7].

Online Activism Generation Z is often involved in online activism and social movements. They use social media to express their opinions on social and political issues and to organize campaigns and social actions.

Interpersonal Relationships in Gen Z relationship dynamics are often influenced by social media. They often make new friends and connections through online platforms, although this can also lead to problems, such as a lack of face-to-face interaction. When we "share" our lives online, we are also distributing digital material about our lives to others and communicating our lives to a wide audience [8].

Digital Experiences Generation Z spends a lot of time in digital experiences, including playing online games, exploring virtual worlds, and interacting with artificial intelligence and smart technologies.

Privacy and security, they are more aware of online privacy and security issues. They tend to be more cautious about securing their personal information and understand the risks associated with cyberspace. Generation Z exhibits the phenomenon of no gap between the virtual and real worlds, 24/7 online chat

services, reduced intensity of physical encounters with others, and even in meetings, devices remain close at hand, dividing the focus between the virtual world of the device and the real world.

Generation Z is very open to multiculturalism and diversity, they often interact with friends from different cultures and backgrounds and this is reflected in their communication. These changes create unique challenges and opportunities for understanding Generation Z communication in the digital age. Understanding these changes is important in an ever-changing cultural, social and technological context.

In addition to the internet and digital technology, globalization has brought about many cultural changes including communication styles. Culture is one of the factors that determine the communication style of each generation. Like the communication style of generation Z, which has a free character and is always happy with flexibility, it is clearly different from previous generations, and also this generation dares to voice opinions that they think are right.

Dr. Miryam A. Sigarlaki, M.Psi revealed that Generation Z is skeptical and cynical, upholds privacy, has great multi-tasking skills, experiences dependence on technology, and has a very broad and alert mindset. He argues that gadgets should make them a smarter generation than the previous generation because of the information provided by these devices. But unfortunately, Generation Z has an addiction that causes them to be unable to be separated from gadgets, resulting in a lack of socialization, being unfocused, and having very little social competence.

In today's digital age, Generation Z craves recognition for its existence and is always connected to social media, ignorant and unfriendly, even enjoying solitude and losing the ability to communicate. Under these conditions, Generation Z's communicative success must be driven by positive outlook and feelings. Positive emotions also create positive behavior patterns in interpersonal communication. The most effective communication that can be done by the people closest to generation Z is face-to-face, thus providing time to gather and interact with them face-to-face. This creates closeness, so the effectiveness of interpersonal communication can increase public distance to intimate distance. Since generation Z emphasizes open communication, they prefer to have conversations with their parents or previous generations rather than being given input on decisions that do not affect them. By giving the right treatment to generation Z, it is hoped that they will become a digitally superior generation from an early age, having communication qualities that are full of courtesy and empathy.

3.2. Generation Z Group Communication Process From Active to Passive in the Digital Era

According to Zis, Effendi, and Roem, the role of communication has become more passive, lack of good communication between Generation Z, frequent online communication so that face-to-face communication is less to do [6]

According to Adriyanto et al (2019), one of the indicators to measure Generation Z communication, namely the information center, has changed because communication before the change in this era of sophisticated technology, communication is more effective because it is done face to face so that the messages received will be well understood and interactions are better with the people around them. Whereas now in the era of technology, communication has changed and is more passive because of changes in information that was originally delivered directly now the information is given online. This makes communication less good and there is no very good interaction between superiors and subordinates within the company.

The transformation of the communication process of Generation Z groups from active to passive in the digital era can be influenced by various factors, especially related to the use of technology and social media. There are several factors that can cause such changes:

Information overload: Generation Z is often exposed to an overwhelming amount of information in the online world. This can lead to information fatigue and result in a lack of interest in actively participating in group communication.

Distractions: The availability of various social media platforms, apps and digital content can divide Gen Z's attention. They can be distracted by notifications or other more engaging content. As social fashionistas (social media trend-setters), Generation Z often follows rapidly changing social media trends. When a particular trend begins to fade, they may move on to other platforms or trends, reducing participation in their previous social groups.

Burnout: Gen Z can experience digital fatigue when they are connected to the web for too long. This can cause them to become less active in communication as they seek a break from the digital world. Changing priorities and responsibilities As Gen Z grows up and faces changes in their lives such as school, university, work or family responsibilities, their online communication priorities may change. Relationships and interpersonal conflicts: conflicts or tensions in groups or relationships may make them less active in communicating. They may feel the need to keep their distance.

Mental stress: the burden of mental stress can affect the level of participation in communication. Poor mental health can lead to withdrawal from online activities.

Change in interests: Changes in an individual's interests and preferences can also affect changes in communication activity. If they are no longer interested in the topic or purpose of the social group, then their participation may decrease.

As quoted from the journal "Changes in Communication Behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in the Digital Age", researchers observed millennials and gen Z communicating in various places in the research area with their friends while playing gadgets. They still communicate in real life, but are busy looking at their respective devices as well. Acen's experience as a gen Z in communicating before the introduction of gadgets was more focused than now [9].

More focused, if now we chat the other person is busy playing gadgets. That person does not understand what we have said, so it is less connected and not connected (Informant Acen).

According to the results of research conducted by Saleh and Pitriani, social media Instagram and Whatsapp have an influence on the formation of a alone together culture at Riau University [10]. The culture of alone together is a condition where several people or a group gather together, but are engrossed in their respective devices.

Generation Z is simpler and likes to use gadgets, but that means it does not immediately function properly. So Gen Z needs to change its politeness like face-to-face communication. Not only does Gen Z need training to speak well, they also need training to focus. By concentrating, Gen Z can focus more on listening to orders and perform their tasks better. Generation Z should realize that not everyone should always understand them, and Generation Z should also be able to adapt to the surrounding communication environment. It is necessary for business owners to understand Gen Z's communication patterns so that they can communicate smoothly and so that Gen Z is also ready for the world of work.

Generation Z is actually considered good because it has a more flexible and open communication attitude, but there are still some things that need to be considered in order to create good communication. Because Gen Z has changed due to living in the digital era before, Gen Z must have a time limit in using devices when there are interlocutors to invite them to interact, especially superiors with coworkers in the company, in order to show mutual respect for each other and so that there is no transmission and reception in communication understanding of messages. Moreover, there must be a good way to manage it yourself, namely by consciously

trying to limit digital use and use it only when it is really and urgently needed.

The shift in communication of Gen Z groups from active to passive in the digital era is a phenomenon that can occur. It is important to understand that this change is natural and can be influenced by various environmental factors. The solution is to work with Gen Z groups to understand this shift and find ways to re-engage.

3.3. Group Communication Dynamics of Generation Z in the Digital Age

Analyzing the communication dynamics of Generation Z groups in the digital era requires an understanding of how these groups interact, communicate and build relationships in the context of digital technology. Generation Z's social media usage is very active on various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc. The analysis should identify their preferences in using these platforms, the types of content they share, and their impact on their relationships. The analysis should identify their preferences in using these platforms, the type of content they share, and their impact on social relationships.

Impact of Social Media Trends, Changing trends and characteristics of social media platforms affect the way Gen Z interacts. For example, short video trends such as TikTok have influenced the way they deliver messages and communicate.

Creativity in digital content, Gen Z are creative producers of digital content. Analysts must understand the type of content they create, whether it's videos, memes, images or writing, and how that creativity affects their communication.

Adaptability, Generation Z is quick to adapt to technological changes. Analysis can examine how they handle changes in apps and platforms and how those adaptations affect their group interactions. Influenced by online activism, Generation Z is often involved in online activism and social movements. Analysts should understand how their group communication is used to support and organize social activities. Relationships, although technology is changing the way they communicate, relationships remain important.

Analysts must understand the dynamics of friendship groups, romantic relationships, and interactions with family in a digital context. Security and Privacy Gen Z is more aware of online privacy and security issues. The analysis should consider how they protect their personal data and how they respond to privacy concerns. Multicultural trends, Generation Z is very open to multiculturalism and diversity. The analysis should

consider how culture and diversity affect interactions between these groups.

Global crises and events: The impact of global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on the communication of Gen Z groups needs to be assessed, including how they respond to changes in communication dynamics during a crisis. Future technological trends and their influence on the communication dynamics of future Gen Z groups should also be considered when analyzing future technological developments. When analyzing the communication dynamics of Generation Z groups in the digital age, it is important to understand how technology, social media and digital content affect their communication, identity formation and interpersonal relationships. This also allows us to respond to these changes and understand their impact on the current communication culture.

Technological advances are present to facilitate communication through devices. Mobile communication media has become a fundamental need of the digital era, to make long-distance communication connections compared to the use of posts or telegrams that take much longer to convey messages [11].

Gen Z's social media usage is very active on various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc. The analysis should identify their preferences in using social media platforms. The analysis should identify their preferences in using these platforms, the type of content they share impacting social relationships. Impact of social media trends, changing trends and characteristics of social media platforms affect the way gen Z interacts.

Creativity in digital content Gen Z is a creative digital content producer. Analysts must understand the type of content they create. Whether it is videos, memes, pictures or writing and how that creativity affects their communication. Analysts should understand how their group communication is used to support and organize social activities. Although technology is changing the way they communicate, relationships are still important. Analysts should understand the dynamics of friendship groups, romantic relationships and interactions with family in a digital context.

Gen Z is the generation that will replace the current leadership. Behavioral changes will also determine the direction of the nation's next journey. Especially with Gen Z's enthusiastic use of social media. The multi-directional pattern of interaction is what makes teenagers enthusiastic about social media as their daily social interaction activity [12].

Generation Z is more aware of online privacy and security issues. The analysis should consider how they protect their personal data and how they respond to

privacy concerns. The analysis should consider how culture and diversity affect interactions between these groups. The impact of global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on the communication of gen Z groups needs to be assessed, including how they respond to changes in communication dynamics during a crisis. Future technological trends and their influence on the communication dynamics of future gen Z groups should also be considered when analyzing future technological developments. When analyzing the communication dynamics of gen Z groups in the digital age, it is important to understand how technology, social media and digital content affect their communication, identity formation and interpersonal relationships. This also allows us to respond to these changes and understand their impact on the current communication culture.

4. CONCLUSION

An analysis of Generation Z's communication dynamics in the digital age reveals that this group is undergoing a major transformation in communicate and interact. Generation Z views digital technology as their second language and uses social media platforms, digital content, and instant messaging apps to convey messages, build digital identities, and establish relationships.

They create digital content creatively, such as videos, memes, images, and text, to convey their messages. The influences the way they communicate and express themselves. Generation Z engages in online activism and uses social media to voice their opinions on social and political issues. They have great potential to shape social change through online communication and are active in protecting their data.

Generation Z accepts and celebrates multiculturalism and diversity. They interact with friends from different cultures and backgrounds. Generation Z is adapting to technological changes, and analytics needs to consider upcoming technological trends.

Support and facilitate Generation Z's online activism efforts on social issues they care about. They can speak out for positive change. In addition, Generation Z needs media literacy, which includes the ability to analyze and understand the information they encounter online.

Analysis of Generation Z's communication dynamics in the digital age provides valuable insights into how this generation communicates, interacts, and engages in an increasingly digitally connected world. With a deep understanding of these changes, we can effectively respond to them and facilitate positive communication and digital culture.

REFERENCES

- [1] O. U. Effendi and T. Surjaman, *Dinamika komunikasi*. Remadja Karya, 1986.
- [2] S. Livingstone, "iGen: why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood." Taylor & Francis, 2018.
- [3] W. M. Watt, "Relational communication: Principles for effective leadership," *B. Rev.*, p. 37, 2013.
- [4] A. Pujiono, "Media sosial sebagai media pembelajaran bagi generasi Z," *Didache J. Christ. Educ.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1–19, 2021.
- [5] M. Zed, *Metode penelitian kepustakaan*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2008.
- [6] S. F. Zis, N. Effendi, and E. R. Roem, "Perubahan perilaku komunikasi generasi milenial dan generasi z di era digital," *Satwika Kaji. Ilmu Budaya Dan Perubahan Sos.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 69–87, 2021.
- [7] C. Nugroho, S. Sos, and M. I. Kom, *Cyber Society: Teknologi, Media Baru, dan Disrupsi Informasi*. Prenada Media, 2020.
- [8] G. R. Adiarsi and H. Silsa, "Fenomena bergabungnya anak muda Jakarta ke dalam organisasi sinergi muda secara suka rela," *Profetik J. Komun.*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 99–115, 2018.
- [9] S. F. Zis, N. Effendi, and E. R. Roem, "Changes in the Communication Behavior of Millennials and Generation Z in the Digital Age," *Satwika Study Cult. Stud. Soc. Chang.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 69–87, 2021.
- [10] G. Saleh and R. Pitriani, "Pengaruh Media Sosial Instagram dan WhatsApp Terhadap Pembentukan Budaya," *Alone Together*”” *J. Komun.*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2018.
- [11] R. Nasrullah, *Teori dan riset media siber (cybermedia)*. Prenada Media, 2022.
- [12] D. A. Triantoro, "Konflik sosial dalam komunitas virtual di kalangan remaja," *J. Komun.*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 135–150, 2019.