

INCREASING LITERACY INTEREST IN THE DIGITAL ERA FOR Z GENERATION

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ABSTRAK

Generasi Z adalah masyarakat yang lahir antara tahun 1997 hingga tahun 2012. Tujuan penulis menerapkan literasi digital sebagai upaya meningkatkan minat membaca generasi z karena generasi muda saat ini lebih sering menggunakan media sosial dan internet sehingga generasi saat ini lebih tertarik membaca melalui media digital dibandingkan media cetak. Artikel yang disusun menggunakan metode kualitatif ini memaparkan tentang perkembangan peran generasi z dalam literasi digital. Permasalahan yang sering terjadi pada generasi z sekarang adalah rendahnya minat literasi membaca, generasi z lebih tertarik pada pembelajaran visual dibandingkan media cetak sehingga minat membaca semakin rendah setiap tahunnya, dari permasalahan tersebut penulis memilih untuk memanfaatkan literasi digital sebagai salah satu upaya meningkatkan minat membaca generasi z di era ini. Terdapat 3 inovasi penerapan literasi digital pada generasi muda masa kini agar terlihat lebih menarik yaitu dengan memberikan inovasi media literasi seperti E-Book, perpustakaan online, media sosial. Dengan adanya inovasi digital tersebut akan memudahkan siswa dalam mengakses media pembelajaran, sekaligus menyenangkan. Dengan adanya inovasi media literasi ini diharapkan dapat memudahkan generasi z dalam memperoleh sumber bacaan dan informasi sehingga dapat meningkatkan budaya literasi generasi z di Indonesia. Literasi digital mempunyai pengaruh penting di era generasi z ini. Terbukti dari penelitian yang dilakukan untuk mengetahui keberhasilan keterampilan literasi digital pada generasi muda di Indonesia berada pada tingkat sedang dengan skor rata-rata di atas 80%. Pergaulan bebas juga bisa menjadi pemicu generasi z malas membaca dan berkomunikasi dengan baik, karena pergaulan bebas membawa dampak negatif dan positif bagi setiap individu yang merasakannya.

Kata Kunci: Literasi, Generasi Z, Era Digital, Minat Membaca.

ABSTRACT

Z generation are people born between 1997 and 2012. The author's purpose in applying digital literacy as an effort to increase generation z's interest in reading is because today's young generation uses social media and the internet more often so that today's generation is more interested in reading through digital media than print media. This article, which

was compiled using qualitative methods, describes the development of generation z's role in digital literacy. The problem that often occurs in generation z now is the low interest in reading literacy, generation z is more interested in visual learning than print media so that interest in reading is getting lower every year, from these problems the author chooses to use digital literacy as an effort to increase generation z's interest in reading in this era. There are 3 innovations in implementing digital literacy for today's young generation to make it look more attractive, namely by providing literacy media innovations such as E-Books, online libraries, social media. With these digital innovations, it will make it easier for students to access learning media, as well as fun. With this literacy media innovation, it is hoped that it can make it easier for generation z to obtain reading and information sources so that it can improve the literacy culture of generation z in Indonesia. Digital literacy has an important influence in this generation z era. Evidenced by the research conducted to determine the success of digital literacy skills in young people in Indonesia is at a moderate level with an average score above 80%. Promiscuity can also trigger generation z to be lazy in reading and communicating well, because promiscuity has negative and positive impacts on each individual who feels it.

Keywords: *Literacy, Generation Z, Digital Era, Reading Interest*

A. INTRODUCTION

As technology becomes more sophisticated, its influence on the progress of the nation and people's lives cannot be ignored (Ngafifi, 2014). However, this technological advancement does not only have a positive impact, but also brings negative impacts, one of which is the declining interest in reading among the younger generation. Generation Z, which has been accustomed to using technology since birth, has a mindset that tends to be instant and quick to respond (Wiratami et al., 2023). Their lives are highly dependent on information technology such as smartphones and the internet.

The 2020 pandemic has also reinforced this dependency, especially due to online learning which makes it easier for Generation Z to access technology to learn and obtain teaching materials. Unfortunately, reality shows that many of them often feel bored with traditional teaching materials and are more interested in activities such as opening WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, or searching for information that is not related to the lesson (Darmayanti et al., 2022). Based on surveys during the pandemic, students' interest in reading has decreased, both in terms of feelings when reading, the type of reading material chosen, and reading habits such as duration, reasons, and places to read (Nurtika, 2021; Subakti et al., 2021).

In social life, generation Z also tends to be addicted to using gadgets beyond the time limit set by parents. This is influenced by an environment that encourages unlimited use of technology. Although technology brings many benefits, its impact is not always positive. One of the negative impacts is the decline in reading habits and the tendency to fall into promiscuity, which is often done as a form of emotional release or search for self-existence (Ainiyah, 2018). The factors causing this promiscuity vary, ranging from the environment of friends, family, to the influence of technology .

In the era of scientific and technological advancements, digital literacy is important for Generation Z. They are required to understand and utilize technology with ease. They are required to understand and utilize technology wisely in order to remain relevant and competent in modern times. Although technology facilitates many aspects of life, generation Z needs to be directed to use digital media productively, including in terms of reading. This research aims to apply digital literacy as an effort to increase generation Z's interest in reading, as they are more interested in reading through digital media than print media.

In this context, "Increasing Adolescent Literacy Interest in the Digital Age" examines the declining interest in adolescent reading influenced by technology and social media. The report highlights the importance of digital literacy as adolescents spend more time on visually stimulating digital platforms than interacting with educational content. Key factors affecting interest in reading include the availability of poorly filtered information, the influence of social media that often distracts from reading, and the need for digital literacy that empowers adolescents to evaluate and select information wisely. This study aims to explore strategies to increase literacy interest by creating engaging content and integrating digital literacy into education. The goal is to find effective methods to revive interest in reading among adolescents and prepare them to use technology critically.

Based on the existing literature review, the phenomenon of declining interest in reading among adolescents has become increasingly visible in recent years. Many studies show that although adolescents have extensive access to information sources, they are more interested in digital entertainment such as social media, video games and streaming, rather than in in-depth reading activities (Smith et al., 2022). In this context, digital literacy becomes very relevant, as it requires individuals to not only be able to read, but also be critical of the information conveyed through various digital media.

Previous research shows that the use of digital media in learning can increase adolescents' interest in reading, but there are still many challenges in implementing it effectively (Johnson & Anderson, 2021). Therefore, it is important to identify factors that can increase adolescents' interest in literacy and develop strategies that suit their tendencies and needs in this digital era. This research aims to delve deeper into effective ways to increase interest in reading and digital literacy among adolescents, utilizing a more contextual and interactive approach.

By understanding the challenges and opportunities that exist, it is hoped that the results of this study can make a real contribution to efforts to strengthen literacy among adolescents, as well as provide new insights for the development of literacy education in the evolving digital era.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach to explore the factors that influence the decline in literacy interest among Gen Z in the digital era. Some of the methods used in this research are literature study, survey, digital content analysis and case study.

First, this research started with a literature study to understand the phenomenon of declining literacy interest among Gen Z. This study included an analysis of academic journals, surveys, digital content analysis and case studies. This study included analysis of academic journals, articles, books, and reports related to literacy and changes in reading behavior in the digital era. Next, a survey was conducted to collect quantitative data on Gen Z's reading habits and use of digital technology. The survey focused on the types of content that are more frequently consumed, time spent reading, and factors that influence their literacy interests.

In addition, digital content analysis was conducted to explore the influence of content consumed by Gen Z, such as online articles, educational videos and social media, on their literacy development. The research also includes case studies of digital platforms or apps that focus on literacy and education for Gen Z, to see how technology can be leveraged to increase literacy interest and support reading habits among the younger generation.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on generation theory, generation z is a human born in the birth year from 1995 to 2012. This generation is also called the i-generation where humans born in that year are very dependent on the internet. Humans born in the generation z era grew up in a modern environment with a lot of sophisticated technology. Generation z in daily life depends on technology and the internet, where it is a necessity that must exist and be owned by each person. The characteristics of generation z are that humans born in this era immediately get access to technology without experiencing technological transitions. So they are predicted to be a generation that is more literate and more developed in access to information and technology compared to previous generations.

In generation z, information and technology are things that coexist with their daily lives, so they cannot be separated from the use of IT such as smartphones and internet access. Many impacts are received by humans in this era, especially in the education phase. The positive impact that can be felt is that they can access and obtain learning resources and learning materials on the internet anytime and anywhere, besides that they can quickly obtain information and can communicate with other people who are far away instantly. But there are also many negative impacts, where they are lazy to interact with the surrounding environment and choose to communicate with others who are far away instantly.

In addition, not a few students only utilize internet access and media not for learning and put aside printed media such as books and the role of the surrounding environment such as friends, teachers, family and society in obtaining learning information. Many young people in this era have been given a personal cellphone by their parents to facilitate access to learning information, but this is inversely proportional to the reality where young people more often access social media.

In the era of generation z, the learning process has used a lot of digital technology, for example in learning activities using cellphones and laptops. However, the use of this technology is often misused by students to access social media and other platforms that are not related to learning. In addition, young people's interest in reading in this era is quite low due to access to reading media that is less interesting and more interested in accessing social media and online games. In this era, access to printed reading media has become less and less attractive to young people and is slowly being abandoned. The ease

of using and accessing technology is one of the reasons why print media is less desirable in this era. In addition, obtaining information using a smartphone is much more efficient than looking for information in a book. In this z generation, those born in this era are very fond of convenience or instant things so it is possible for them to prefer smartphones over printed media.

The ease of using technology and accessing information in this era has caused Generation Z's interest in reading in Indonesia to lag behind. Although this generation is very active in using digital technology, their awareness of digital literacy is still very much lacking. This is because children in this era use digital access only to fulfill consumptive and entertainment needs, they pay less attention to the importance of the benefits of literacy for the continuity of their daily lives, especially literacy is very important for students for the phase of education they are in and the acquisition of knowledge. The freedom to access the internet has resulted in many children in the era of generation z, especially those who are students and university students, forgetting activities. learning, especially reading and literacy as important. Instilling an interest in reading in children in the generation z era is something very important and a challenge that must be resolved immediately.

With the development of technology in the field of information technology, it triggers major changes in digitization technology, namely the condition that all print and electronic media content can be combined and distributed (Apriadi, 2013). According to Paul Gilster, digital literacy is the ability to understand and use information in many formats from various sources when it is presented on a computer. And Retnowati argues that digital literacy was developed as a tool to protect people from media exposure in order to have the ability to think critically and be able to express themselves and participate in the media. Digital literacy is a new era of development in the world of reading and writing. All information is easily obtained through social media, and all news is presented quickly, but sometimes the news presented is not accurate. Therefore, an understanding of the adverse effects of digital literacy needs to be emphasized to users, especially to children and teenagers of today's generation. This is because the biggest users of information techniques are children and teenagers. They use smartphones as a medium for self-actualization. Like the two sides of a coin, the digital literacy era can improve things, but it can also make things worse.

The role of parents is very important in this case to supervise the behavior of children and adolescents. A poor understanding of digital literacy will affect the psychology of children and adolescents who tend to insult others, cause an envious attitude towards others, cause depression, get carried away with negative comments, and get used to speaking in disrespectful language. During the covid-19 pandemic in 2020, students and adults were required to use the internet in terms of learning and work due to conditions that did not allow them to move outside the home. Therefore, digital literacy is needed in today's technological advances. Digital literacy is not only a person's ability to operate IT technology, but also includes the ability to understand content so that it can create knowledge. Digital literacy greatly affects students' reading culture, because students are required to read books or other information that the teacher does not have time to explain in class, even when school is online (Intaniasari & Utami, 2022).

Based on the results of research from Yossinta Intanisari, teachers have utilized several platforms that can support the continuity of learning during a pandemic, including teachers using Google Meet, Zoom, Google Classroom, Youtube, WAG, and many more. In fact, almost all teachers utilize technology in learning. One of the reasons teachers use the WhatsApp Grub application is because it is easier, It is practical, effective, does not require a lot of quota, and is easily accessible to all people. The utilization of Google Classroom in learning is very helpful when learning online because of the ease of access and organized and scheduled with the software. The use of Goggle Classroom and e-learning is more effective and organized starting from providing material, collecting assignments and even inputting data when giving final grades. In Indonesia, the development of science and technology is not inferior to other countries, technology continues to develop rapidly according to the times. With the development of technology today

One example of the development of science and technology is the availability of Google Classroom and e-learning which makes it easier for teachers and students to do learning when done online or online classes. The current era is an era where progress and technology dominate daily life and produce modernity in today's progress (Fitri Mulyani, 2021). However, it is not uncommon for students and generation z to make the wrong use of technology, especially for teenagers who are still 15-18 years old. One of them is because they are influenced by Hollywood stories that are not suitable for teenagers under

the age of 18 to watch. Most of the stories that are aired expose immodest actions between men and women. This situation causes teenagers who watch these shows to be influenced and want to try with the opposite sex.

Opening illegal websites that can damage the morals of the z generation and the mentality of these children, so that the socialization of the environment around them becomes uncontrolled. According to Anisa Rohmawati, the relationship between the use of social media and the ethics of interactions between members of the opposite sex is a causal relationship. This means that if the use of social media is high or good, then the social ethics between members of the opposite sex will be high or good too. Vice versa, if the use of social media is low or not good, then the ethics of association between members of the opposite sex will be low or not good either (Rohmawati, 2018). However, there are also many around us teenagers who are still under years old but their thinking is like the thinking of adults in general who think about how the future is (Tari & Tafonao, 2019).

Why is digital literacy so important in this era of technological advances? Because the Internet is a medium where everyone can publish ideas, and information in general at low or no cost. Various formats of information can be digitized and published on the Internet, which means that we can get information in the form of sound, images, audiovisual, and text via the Internet, with just one click we can bring up what we want to find (Naufal, 2021). After collecting information we can also sort out information that is not appropriate, do not just accept information with invalid data but as a student or generation z who is intellectual must be good at sorting, evaluating the information that comes to find out the truth of the information. They can also think critically and process information before it can be accepted by them. Why are some members of Generation Z now misusing technology, and how does this impact the social interactions of teenagers? Previously, there were three types of responses to the Internet or Information Technology. The first is accepting the technology and using it effectively for work purposes. The second is using the Internet to communicate via email or WhatsApp. The final response is a wait-and-see approach. This response generally comes from senior citizens or the elderly, who prefer to observe and ensure their comfort before using the Internet (Proboyekti, 2015).

Over time, those who predominantly favor and utilize the Internet are Generation Z, ranging from elementary school students to office workers. Some even become addicted to using the Internet. While using the Internet to gain knowledge and information is still tolerable, a portion of the current generation spends too much time on gadgets, solely for playing games, watching inappropriate videos, accessing unhealthy social networks, and other deviant activities.

In fact, after the writer asked several members of Generation Z, they admitted they could not part with digital devices, which they consider highly important. The misuse of technology can also affect teenagers' social interactions. For instance, when someone accesses inappropriate dating sites, it could influence them to engage in activities unsuitable for teenagers, such as drug use, unhealthy relationships with the opposite sex, and other deviant behaviors.

Digital literacy is an interest, attitude or behavior and a person's ability to utilize, interpret and understand technology. With the existence of digital literacy, it provides many benefits, namely saving time, obtaining information from various sources from anywhere and anytime, the learning process is easier, can communicate remotely faster and increase the ability to think more critically and socialize better. In learning activities, digital literacy has a very important role. With the existence of digital literacy, it is easier to access learning to run more effectively, for example in utilizing technology with the internet. Apart from the pandemic period when learning activities are carried out online, digital literacy is very effective in applying, for example, in using online learning support applications and utilizing the internet to support its smooth running. One of the media for utilizing digital literacy in online learning is elearning.

E-learning is a learning system that has been adapted from a traditional educational institution system to a digital system via the internet. E-learning serves as a uniform input. The first measure of digital literacy is the ability to use it. Use this ability to access media features. There are three types of user skill criteria, namely proficiency in general media use, active knowledge about media use, and advanced knowledge about media use and consumption. The skill or access indicators, namely computer use and internet access, consist of computer ownership, computer/laptop use, and media ownership and email accounts.

There are many forms of media use in e-learning activities. Such as the use of laptop media for the implementation of presentations, the use of the internet as a place to obtain information sources, the use of social media such as whatsapp and other chat media as a means of discussing remotely outside of in-class activities and email, classroom, youtube and others as a place to collect and upload assignments.

With the existence of e-learning can carry out the purpose of the existence of questions, quizzes and forums as a medium in meaningful discussions, it can be felt when the process of learning activities takes place With e-learning can feel the usefulness of the media well and maximally. Elearning helps document the subject matter well so that it can be delivered in accordance with its objectives. In addition, the implementation of e-learning online and virtually can have a good impact on increasing expertise in digital media, besides that with e-learning, where learning activities occur online can indirectly improve digital literacy.

In digital literacy-based learning activities, there are several alternative media used to increase literacy and reading awareness in generation z.

The media are as follows:

1. Digital Book

Digital Book (Digital Book) or known as the Electronic Book (E-Book) is a book that can be opened and accessed electronically via a computer, laptop, or smartphone. As for some of the functions of digital books, including a) being an alternative learning media tool, b) not harmonious using printed books, digital books contain some multimedia content in them so that they are able to present interesting teaching material and can form more innovative learning and form learning to be more fun; c) become a medium for disseminating information, d) digital books are disseminated more simply, both through websites, emails and other digital media, and digital books can be carried and accessed anywhere that does not require a large space so that it can attract interest in reading among the younger generation.

2. Digital Library A digital library is often used interchangeably with an electronic library (virtual library).

A digital library is a library that utilizes technology and its collections in digital form, which can be accessed anytime and anywhere and the dissemination of information

is fast and thorough. The advantage of this digital library is that it can facilitate access to various information. The utilization of digital technology provides flexibility for people who are looking for information because they can perform various search methods and provide an ease of remote access, and is one of the other ways to increase literacy efforts in today's young generation.

3. Social Media

Social media is a place used by all people to interact with each other by creating various kinds of information and exchanging information and ideas in a world community network. Public media is one of the most frequently accessed software by all groups and can be utilized as a digital literacy-based media. Digital literacy has an important influence in this generation z era, where in its implementation it does not have to be separated from smartphones, such as the characteristics of generation z who always use smartphones in all their daily activities. Digital literacy can have a good impact on increasing reading interest in today's young generation. They can access learning media and information anywhere and anytime, with the ease of access they feel can increase interest in reading through digital media. Copy that with the existence of digital literacy, young people in this era can manage and sort out existing information so that they can utilize current technological developments wisely towards a more positive and useful direction. It is evident from the research conducted to determine the success of digital literacy skills in young people in Indonesia at a moderate level with an average score above 80% (Oni Rizal Bastiandkk, 2021).

D. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2012, grew up amidst rapid technological advancements. They have never experienced life without technology and the internet, which are now an essential part of their daily lives. Technology and the internet are no longer just new inventions, but have become integral elements in their activities.

Digital literacy, which includes understanding and using technology wisely, has many benefits. Some of these include time efficiency, easy access to information from various sources, a more practical learning process, fast remote communication, and the development of critical and social thinking skills. One way to increase Generation Z's

interest in reading is by implementing digital literacy. Media that support the implementation of digital literacy include digital books, digital libraries and social media. Research shows that the implementation of digital literacy among Generation Z in Indonesia is quite effective. The results show that the level of digital literacy skills among youth is in a fairly good category, although it is still classified as medium.

Suggestion

To increase reading interest and digital literacy among Generation Z, several strategic steps can be implemented. Here are some suggestions that can help achieve that goal:

1. Increasing Access to Digital Books and Learning Resources

The government and educational institutions need to provide easier and more affordable access to digital books and online learning materials. In this way, Generation Z will find it easier to access the information they need, which in turn can increase their interest in reading. The development of a digital library or e-library is very important, because this generation tends to prefer easy access via digital devices compared to having to go to a physical library.

2. Integrating Digital Literacy in the School Curriculum

Education must include digital literacy into the curriculum taught in schools. This is important so that Generation Z can master the skills to use technology wisely and be able to verify the information they encounter online. Training on digital ethics also needs to be carried out so that students understand the importance of privacy, copyright and responsible interactions in cyberspace

3. Utilizing Social Media to Increase Literacy

Social media can be an effective tool for promoting digital literacy. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube can be used to spread educational content that is interesting to Generation Z. By following relevant accounts, users can get the latest information and useful educational content

4. Organizing Literacy Programs and Competitions

Holding digital-based competitions such as reading or writing competitions can increase Generation Z's involvement in literacy activities. These programs will not only motivate them to be more active in reading and writing activities, but also help them develop these skills

5. Raising Awareness about the Importance of Digital Literacy

It is important to raise awareness among parents, teachers and the public about the significance of digital literacy. Educational campaigns that teach how to use technology wisely, recognize valid information, and maintain personal security in the digital world are needed to help Generation Z become smart technology users. By implementing these steps, it is hoped that reading interest among Generation Z can increase significantly, while equipping them with the digital literacy skills needed in this modern era.

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