

Gen-Z: Is It Able To Use Media Technology To Additional Knowledge Of Islam?

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z is a generation born in the early 2000s when technological developments occurred so rapidly. Social media is a tool that is familiar in carrying out daily activities, especially as a place to increase knowledge, especially Islamic knowledge. This needs to be straightened out so that social media can provide more benefits than disadvantages, making its users someone who has noble character because of the wide range of knowledge that can be accessed as a means of increasing faith. This research is a qualitative research using descriptive analysis techniques with library research. The results of the study reveal that a person's character, morals, aqidah and understanding are seen from what they follow. Using social media as a means of increasing Islamic knowledge can be done by watching videos on Youtube, Tiktok, looking for information on trusted websites and following beneficial accounts on Instagram. Apart from that, as a generation living in the 4.0 era, we need to be more critical in sorting out information and knowledge, especially knowledge about religion.

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1. Introduction

Today the development of information technology is developing very rapidly, especially in the means of increasing knowledge. The Internet as a global system of all interconnected computer networks uses the standard Internet Protocol Suite (IP) to serve billions of users worldwide (Fromm & Read, 2018). Information technology continues to advance and improve from time to time, which has caused many teenagers to use information technology as a means of enhancing knowledge, especially Islamic knowledge, because the internet can reach any knowledge and information from anywhere in the world (Callison, 2022).

Generation Z is a generation born in the early 2000s when technological developments occurred so rapidly. Social media is a tool that is familiar in carrying out daily activities, especially as a place to increase knowledge, especially Islamic knowledge. This needs to be straightened out so that social media can provide more benefits than disadvantages, making its users someone who has noble character because of the wide range of knowledge that can be accessed as a means of increasing faith (Luttrell & McGrath, 2021).

One social media that can be used to gain knowledge is Instagram. Obtaining Islamic knowledge through Instagram social media is seen as quite effective, because this application can be accessed anywhere with a note that it must be connected to the internet network. Apart from that, Instagram is quite significant, being very effective enough to be used as a means of increasing knowledge. Other social media that can be accessed are Tiktok, Youtube, and others.

Today science is on the verge of a very powerful progress that affects the lives of many people. With knowledge maybe it can change the nature of humanity itself or in other words,

science is no longer a means to help humans achieve their goals in life, but also creates goals in life itself. His research on Islam and Science, according to Islam, to achieve prosperity in the world, knowledge is needed as a human need, and makes it easy to know God. Therefore, Islam is of the view that knowledge is part of the implementation of human obligations as servants of Allah SWT (Tabroni, 2019).

Galih Sakitri wrote in his article entitled *Welcome to Gen Z, the Driver of Innovation!* Explaining the behavior of Gen Z can be grouped into four groups based on that Gen Z is a generation that seeks truth. First, Gen Z is referred to as "the undefined ID" , where this generation values the expression of each individual without giving a specific label. The search for identity makes Gen Z have great openness to understand the uniqueness of each individual.

Second, Gen Z is identified as "the communaholic" , a generation that is very inclusive and interested in being involved in various communities by utilizing technological sophistication to expand the benefits they want to provide. Third, Gen Z is known as "the dialoguer", a generation that believes in the importance of communication in conflict resolution and change comes through dialogue. In addition, Gen Z is open to the different thoughts of each individual and likes to interact with various individuals and groups.

Fourth, Gen Z is referred to as "the realistic" , a generation that tends to be more realistic and analytical in making decisions, compared to the previous generation. Gen Z is a generation that enjoys independence in the learning process and seeking information, so that makes them happy to be in control of the decisions they choose. Gen Z realizes the importance of having financial stability in the future. This is in line with survey findings which reveal that Gen Y and Baby Boomers are generations that tend to be more idealistic, especially in the context of work.

Another study conducted by Nur Zazin and Muhammad Zaim in their article entitled *Social Media-Based Islamic Learning Media in Generation-Z* explains that indeed this generation Z grew up with technological developments, this research shows that there is a negative correlation between smartphone addiction and academic success. But there is also a positive correlation between smartphone addiction and depression levels. As addiction levels increase, academic success decreases 26 If we look at Indonesia, a survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Network Operators Association (APJII) shows that as many as 132.7 million Indonesians are connected to the internet. The total population of Indonesia alone is 256.2 million people 27. This data shows that more than 50% of Indonesia's population is connected to the internet either via a computer or using a smartphone (Madden, 2019).

Furthermore, in research conducted by Reni Ferlitasari, Suhandi, and Ellya Rosana in their writing entitled *The Influence of Instagram Social Media on Teenagers' Religious Behavior*, it was stated that the influence of Instagram social media on teenagers is 11.9%, which means that adolescent religious behavior can be seen from content consumption. or features from Instagram or other social media. Therefore, teenagers must be smart in using social media itself, especially Instagram. The various available features can be used as propaganda material or a means of seeking knowledge (Wilga Secsio Ratsja Putri, Nunung Nurwati, 2016).

In an article entitled *The Influence of Social Media on Adolescent Behavior* written by Wilga Secsio Ratsja Putri, R. Nunung Nurwati, and Meilanny Budiarti S. Emphasizes the positive and negative impacts of social media on adolescents (Wilga Secsio Ratsja Putri, Nunung Nurwati, 2016).

The positive impacts include: Good and cheap promotional places, expanding friendship networks, easy communication media, places to find useful information, places to share photos, information, etc. Negative impacts include: Disturbing youth learning activities, the

danger of crime, the danger of fraud, not all social media users are polite, disrupting family life and communication.

2. Methods

This research is a qualitative research with descriptive analysis with literature review. Data collection techniques are by conducting interviews and observations, interviews are conducted to complete the data and efforts to obtain accurate data and appropriate data sources. In this study, the authors interviewed 2 informants, consisting of students and teenagers active on social media.

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the interviews and observations that have been conducted, the authors can describe the benefits of social media in an effort to increase Z generation's Islamic knowledge. Sd, as a teenage girl who is currently a student at a Purwakarta high school, said that apart from offline learning activities, Sd also prefers online learning media as a means of enhancing broader knowledge. Usually via Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok, WhatsApp, and Telegram. Even though in terms of effectiveness it turns out that you understand better if learning is done offline. In addition, Sd thinks that with social media a person's character can change, having good or bad morals. The following is a description of the results of the interview.

If I go online myself, I prefer to take learning media via Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok, WhatsApp and Telegram. Actually, there are lots of opportunities for us to use social media as a medium for learning about Islam, but most teenagers now use social media just for fun and only need long-distance communication. If I say social media has more influence on one's Islamic knowledge because unconsciously every day and even every hour we ourselves cannot be separated from what is called a cell phone and we definitely use social media more.

Yes, it's important because if we use this social media to seek additional knowledge about Islam, surely a lot will come out, but we also have to be smart to find the truth because sometimes what is posted on social media can be removed from the original.

We have to be able to sort out things that are negative as much as we can avoid them because sometimes they can affect our brains too, make social media on our cellphones a means or medium to find out things about Islam. The point is that in using social media it depends on how we use it for what kind of things, because now technology has developed so that any information if you look for it will definitely be there... what about each other's self-awareness."

From the results of the interview above, the authors see that elementary schools use social media not only to communicate but as a means of increasing knowledge as well as specifically Islamic knowledge because elementary schools think that with social media understanding can be searched easily but with a note that they have to be more selective.

Apart from Sd, another informant Fa as an active youth on social media has the same opinion that social media plays the number 1 role in determining one's morals. According to Fa, by following good advice accounts, Ustadz accounts besides increasing Islamic knowledge also increase faith. He said that his understanding of religion has increased by frequently watching long/short videos displayed by ustadz, besides that it's nice to see Micro Blog discussions that are often shown by the creators. Below is the full description. Could be that we judge a person's character from what they see, from what they follow. It's not possible or it's rare, for example he is said to like Western artists, the spectacle is also in that scope, but on the one hand he follows ustadz like it's impossible. Therefore, in my opinion, social media influences today's personal character.

Social media is important because we live in a crazy era, the cell phone era is a mess, the 4.0 era, the media era is on the rise. Social media is a very important tool, as a means of finding information about anything, including Islam. How to use social media properly in my opinion... Unfollow accounts that are not good enough, unfollow accounts that contain gossip or toxic content. Starting to try to follow the account of good advice, follow the account of the ustadz, from there you will definitely find Islamic information. If we search, we often look for good things, often like good posts, God willing, our social media algorithms that appear will definitely be good ones too. I like to see the content/discussions of micro blogs that are often shown by the creators, but sometimes I like to see long/short videos shown by the teacher.

The statement above has confirmed the answer from the first informant, the author sees a tendency that a person's character is seen from what he consumes daily on his social media. There are many applications or websites that can be used as a place to learn to explore knowledge (Robinson et al., 2021).

The above information is in accordance with previous research theories which explain that the character of a teenager can be influenced by what they watch and consume, as in research conducted by Reni Ferlitasari, Suhandi, and Ellya Rosana in their article entitled *The Influence of Instagram Social Media on Adolescent Religious Behavior* stated that the influence of Instagram social media on adolescents was 11.9%, which means that adolescent religious behavior can be seen from the consumption of content or features from Instagram or other social media. This proves how influential social media is in shaping the character of teenagers, therefore teenagers must be smart in using social media itself, especially Instagram (Gerhardt & Annon, 2021). The various available features can be used as propaganda material or a means of seeking knowledge.

In another study conducted by Galih Sakitri in his article entitled *Welcome to Gen Z, the Driver of Innovation! Explaining one of the behaviors of Gen Z is referred to as "the realistic"*, a generation that tends to be more realistic and analytical in making decisions, compared to the previous generation. Gen Z is a generation that enjoys independence in the learning process and seeking information, so that makes them happy to be in control of the decisions they choose. Based on this study apart from being independent in terms of seeking information, critical thinking and analysis is also needed in sorting out information obtained from various sources scattered on social media (Mas, 2022).

4. Conclusion

The results of the research that has been done show that a person's character, morals, aqidah and understanding are seen from what they follow. Using social media as a means of increasing Islamic knowledge can be done by watching videos on Youtube, Tiktok, looking for information on trusted websites and following useful accounts on Instagram. Apart from that, as a generation living in the 4.0 era, we need to be more critical in sorting out information and knowledge, especially knowledge about religion.

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