

The Impact of Social Media on Privacy Due to the Lack of Digital Literacy from Generation Z During Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

Gen Z (Generation Z or Zoomers) is the social networking generation who ideally belong to the segment of school to college students or comparatively fresh entrant as manpower in organizations and are extremely online. This paper tries to outline the usage of social media by Generation Z during the pandemic where everything is done online. This paper brings forward how the futuristic Generation, Gen Z's use of social media which influences them as an individual's, organization and society. Also, it attempts to bring forward certain queries regarding the impact on privacy due to the lack of digital literacy while using social media. The theoretical frame of reference brought forward in this paper harvests a thorough set of investigation to raise the awareness of online privacy. Gen Z have shown their interest in using online social sites for communication and interactions with people, may it be the ones they know or anonymous. Online schooling due to the Covid-19 pandemic has been the main reason to the increasing usage of social media. However, in this process no attention is given on their privacy. This generation is a vigorous contributor, high consumer of online content, creative and mash-up experts. They have strong gravitational bond for online communication that they prefer to participate and remain connected via technology available at their fingertips.

Keywords: Gen Z, Social Media, Online, Privacy, Covid-19

1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet is a phenomenal product of communication technology. Not only does it provide convenience in finding information, the internet also changes the way people interact with each other.

In various countries, changes in the order of people's lives have also been felt due to the influence of the internet in the Covid-19 pandemic. This technology can be accessed by various groups of people. Generation Z as one of the users of internet facilities has not been able to sort out useful internet activities. They also tend to be easily influenced by the social environment without first considering the positive or negative effects that will be received when carrying out web activities.

It's no secret that social media has become a favorite among Generation Z. Technologically advanced social networking is becoming a human necessity. Miranda stated that young people as the Generation Z, such as students and university students, are the major users who actively push the development of information and

communication technologies. The usage of this technology, however, is not limited to teens. Social networking is a popular pastime for people of all ages. Humanity's electronic screen is like a tree root that ensnares the human body and forces it to hold on. Social media is increasingly viewed as being of great significance.

Currently the role of social media plays an important role in disseminating information submitted to the public. But this is inseparable from the use of such media that can produce both positive and negative things. An important factor in determining whether or not a technological advanced of social media will have a positive impact on society is its ability to educate the public and stimulate the latest research on Covid-19, and directing the public to their websites and landing pages for the latest and most trusted information regarding Covid-19 [1]. In addition, young people have the desire to create money through social media in anytime and anywhere instead of working in a company.

However, in addition to many benefits, technology also has a negative impact. Especially with the Covid-19

pandemic, it requires all activities to be done online. The attention is expressed in the discussion of the Generation Z afraid of marketing personalization. They claimed to be disturbed by notifications that suddenly appeared offering products they had previously seen. Moreover, people often use social media to expose their personal lives in order to create certain imagery in the eyes of others. This has not only created roller coaster of emotions but also an easy access for the hackers to steal their identity and use them to steal money.

The article will discuss the impact of social media to the generation Z due to their lack of digital literacy during Covid-19. This article is organized as follows. In section 2, it mentions the method used for this paper which are steps taken by researchers to collect data or information for scientific processing and analysis. In section 3, the discuss about the relationship between Generation Z and social media, the urge to prioritize and the importance of education for youth awareness on online privacy, and the role of institutions as the helping hand and protection from the social media impacts. Conclusion is given in section 4.

2. METHOD

The method use for this article is multidisciplinary approach. It is a two or more disciplines jointly examine a particular topic or issue, but use methods and analyze based on their respective disciplines. The final results are then linked and compared to strengthen each other or refute the results of each analysis. The purpose to applied this approach is to compiled different impact from the social media's phenomenon on Generation Z into one complex, yet informative conclusion. To conduct this research is sourced from secondary data consisting of books, scientific works, scientific journals and writings that have a relationship with research problems [2].

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. The Relationship between Generation Z and Social Media

Social media is an electronic service through which Internet users be able to create and share various contents around the world. This includes: online journals, social networking websites, online gaming zones, online sharing sites, forums (reviews), chatting groups and a variety of apps such as discourt, snapchat, tiktok, omegal and more. These platforms are generally used to generate, design, publish, or even view contents and information created and posted by other users. These activities are classified as contribution or consumption on the social media. User's needs from social media is shifting drastically. Where initially people love to contribute and most of them are just consumers. According to reliable sources, social media is now mostly used for information sharing, video calls, chatting with strangers and is seen as a platform for online

participation and entertainment usability.

The use of devices by Gen Z continues to increase. A recent data released revealed that 98% of Gen Z own a smart phone. And in accordance to this, so does its social media usage. Where more than 4 hours are spent on one app. Sixty-five percent of Gen Z consumers have increased their use of social media in the last year all during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

If we take a closer look, there are 4 major reasons why Gen Z spend most of their time on social media especially during the Covid 19 pandemic. And they are:

3.1.1. Gen Z Prefers Visuals

Gen Z prefers social media platforms which is more visually oriented compared to interactions. For instance, apps like Snapchat and Instagram are gaining popularity among the Gen Z as they are more visually oriented. These apps allow its users to create, post photos and videos and also consume when communication is best done with snaps, videos, and pictures.

3.1.2. Gen Z Chooses Entertaining Content Over Interacting with Friends

Gen Z see social media as a source of branded mass entertainment content. Where they only seek for entertainment rather than staying in touch with their people.

3.1.3. Gen Z Appreciates Their Digital Privacy

They know that social media has the power to make or break people. They are respectful and wary of that power. Gen Z also prefers platforms which allows their users the option to hide or publicise their content with others present on the same network. This is because the current generations believe their free behaviour on social media could affect their future regardless in any field. While Gen Z are more conservative in terms of data privacy, this has been forgotten during the global pandemic where the usage of social networking is increasing rapidly.

3.1.4. Social Media: A Platform For E-Commerce

This generation has also made social media a platform for e-commerce where everything can be bought from home itself, with just one click. You are not required to step out and the goods are delivered [3].

The majority (97%) of Gen Z consumers say they now use social media as their top source of shopping. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Pinterest are the fastest growing ones in terms of e-commerce. In fact, the hashtag #tiktokmademebuyit has upwards of 2.3 billion views on Tik Tok, and #amazonfinds has more than 6.7 billion views. According to one Gen Z report, nearly 30% of this group say an easy checkout process is important to them in

making a purchase. Brands need to consider a more seamless experience — from discovery to checkout — by minimizing distractions and being careful to avoid directing consumers away from the page. It’s important to develop strategies that prioritize enabling consumers to move through the funnel with as little friction as possible [4]. Anticipating this upcoming shift in the market, the big platforms have already evolved to ensure purchases are not only frictionless but also safe and reliable. Instagram swipe-ups that take you directly to the product are nothing new. However, Instagram’s “shopping” tab — which can be found in the main navigation and was released in November 2020 — allows for more brand visibility, which means the ability to promote their products and services to a wider audience. Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest have also all recently announced or expanded their Shopify partnerships — a platform ensuring fast, secure payments that doesn’t require users’ financial information.

Gen Z also prefers brands who are eco- conscious. With Environmental concerns quickly rising: 79% of Gen Z across 18 countries responded that companies behaving more sustainably is even more important to them since the Covid-19 outbreak, and there was a strong desire to “build back better” after 2020.

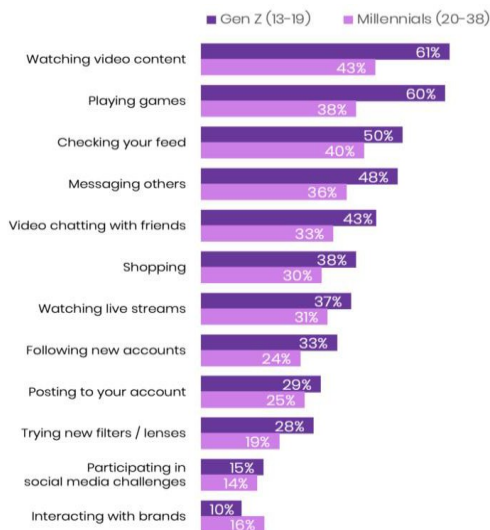


Figure 1. Gen Z’s Activities on Social Media [5]

A survey done by YPulse on January 2021 show what Gen Z has been doing with social media through the Covid-19 Pandemic.

3.2. Prioritizing Education for Youth Awareness on Online Privacy

Covid-19 pandemic had attack the worldwide that virus was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan and spread around the world. The government in many countries took over to lockdown and announce to staying at home to control the transmission of disease [6]. Lockdown and social distancing due to Covid- 19 enforce

to close the school and require students to carry out distance learning. The unexpected pandemic has challenge both students and teachers to do a distance learning, and the tools for E-learning have an important role to help them with the technological advanced of online media. Nowadays, who didn’t know internet? it means people who use cellphone has an internet to access anything. We can use for educational thing, for entertaining, and the most important thing is communicating. In this digital era, young generations as we know gen z (people who born on 1997 until 2012) use social media for communicating with people around the world, as they log in email, Instagram, Twitter, etc. But not all young people understand online privacy, which is so important to know from the beginning they use social media. Online privacy is the level of privacy, protection an individual has while connected to the internet, privacy mean on a computer and internet is the complex issue the way our personal information is used, collected, shared, and stored on our personal devices and while on the internet [7].

People around the world now can be stalker without person in person, they just need our name to knew our personal data, such as our address, about families, school, etc. In addition, tracking and using personal data or information can also improve website usability, and efficiency to enable companies to personalize or do a broadcast and message [8].

In our perspectives, when people use social media and upload anything in that platform such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, they’re not able to have privacy, because when you upload it, and there you go, anyone can see what are you uploaded (except your social media in lock system). Especially in this Covid-19 pandemic, there is a strong increased of internet users using social media for their daily use. According to We Are Social website, since the start of the lockdown in 2020, social media users grew at a fastest rate in three years up to 4.20 billion users around the world. This figure has growth of more than 13 percent. It is a big concern that social media can be used for cyber-attack to young students.

A true story in 2020, there are David boy in has decided to suicide because the cyberbullying. Based on kens5 news interview with his mother (Maurine Molak), she told that social distancing make us to stay at home (isolation) can make cyberbullying worse, because his son can’t met people and do everything to connected with people to use social media but, social media platform in this pandemic increase 70% cyberbullying, those people in social media can freely put up comments negative as a hate speech [9]. From that case, we got the conclusion, if you took that thing (photo, video, comment, on online media) before that, anyone can take a capture from your social media. You can’t erase all of them. The impact didn’t know what are you publish is terrible for other.

Young generation should aware on online privacy, but sadly there are not many platforms in online media to educate them. Algorithm social media appear in explore just from what they watched, it called content-based. This kind of algorithmic design seeks to match user’s taste, based on their profile, to specific post that the system

guesses the user will like [10].

Then, what we are going to do to educate young people towards increase awareness in online privacy? The teacher in E-learning can do a school campaign use the apps, conferences with student about what are privacy is, how to keep safe our private information in online media, and what do and don't to post in online media, and the dangerous behind media online.

Institutions as the Helping Hand and Protection from the Social Media Impacts Technological advances that over time are increasingly sophisticated make the community from Generation Z to take advantage of internet facilities to fulfill various needs as the Covid-19 pandemic have made them to stay at home. Thanks to new technologies such as the internet, all human needs can be met. Starting from the need to socialize, access information to the fulfillment of entertainment needs. The presence of the internet is more used as social media by the community because with social media people can freely share information and communicate with many people without the need to think about obstacles in terms of cost, distance and time. As a result, they do not feel depressed from the effect of Covid-19 pandemic. However, there are many negative things that happen on social media, which makes them the main victims of these negative things, such as the spread of personal data that can affect a person's mentality as a result of identity theft, fake websites. For this reason, they should be required to know the limitations in communicating on social media. In addition to parents and school teachers, government and non-governmental institutions should be able to be the main factors that play a role in providing Generation Z boundaries on social media during this Covid-19 pandemic era.

3.2.1. The Role of Educational Institutions

The role of educational institutions in raising awareness about risks for the young generation when surfing through the digital media in this Covid-19 pandemic is one of the most important solutions from almost all levels of expertise. Schools teach their students about online safety information, including character building, health and civic commitment, and ways to recognize hoaxes and how to prevent them. Back to the 19th century, teaching media had its function of the ability to analyze and appreciate literature, but now the focus has been enlarged and for some time now it also includes skills with regard to computers. With the involvement of technology's rapid development, interactive exploration covers both from the books and the internet because students will not only acquire the 4C's of Learning and Innovation skills, but also digital literacy such as information literacy, media literacy, and ICT literacy. Other than that, it's a must for schools to give knowledge about the ability to recognise, analyse, select, and send variable contexts on social media because it shows that of the young generation have vast ability to access and find information at a fast rate which increase the risks by giving their personal data to collect the information.

Beemt et al. [11] adds that student teaching methods must be in line with the use of information technology is another way to increase the awareness as the pandemic has made them to use the social media to help with their homework for online classes. Generation Z is a generation that is comfortable working in a globalized world. They already have a lot of information in their minds. In his brain there are too many variables that they have to relate. The task of the school is to provide them with the provision to connect between these variables and even filter out variables that are not useful for their lives. However, few methods given do not effectively change the attitudes of the students in risking their privacy on social media due to a scarcity of online safety education, even more that this type of education is harder to earn as very little research has been done. It is recommended that schools should consider online safety education as the primary goals in educational tools to tackle unsafe behaviour from students.

3.2.2. The Role of the Government

During this pandemic, the community from Generation Z who are celebrities, young leaders, and researches is now caught with studying and working from home. They have been using social media at an increasing rate. Information on the pandemic is being disseminated through social media. Moreover, they mostly spread their personal information so to impress the internet users. However, other than the advantages can be seen, disadvantages do also take place. For instance, there are thousands of social media scams that are promoted to attract the internet users to fill their personal data as a result of fraud. Research has shown that thousands of internet users who are from Generation Z have experienced frauds, cybercrime, and identity theft due to their lack of digital literacy. Therefore, the government should be in the presents to protect them. There are several obligations the government must uphold to make efforts in protecting users' personal data on social media. To begin with is to rework the structure of the regulatory concerning personal data. Secondly, conducting the periodic supervision based on the mandate of the law, as well as coordinating the government with supervisory agencies and law enforcement. Third is to educate the community with digital literacy and how to surf the social media safely through webinars and workshops, provide infographics about the importance of personal data through the government's social media channels, as well as in collaboration with various tech institutions/companies. And lastly, the need for standardization and governance in the processing of personal data is also an important point of concern in the policy because creative innovation and development will ensure the protection in the cross border data flow. This will ensure the sake of data sovereignty for the sake of state security, as well as protected and guaranteed basic rights of citizens as data subjects. However, companies see the privacy policies as an addition to costs that may trouble them in surviving due to a need to institute the policy. This has become a debate as most institutions see this only for the interest of the

government instead of protecting the community due to political and social development in a country. The government's political involvement has affected the community's ability to protect their personal information because there are cases of an assault upon their individuality, a loss of identity, and a gradual erosion of their privacy [12].

3.2.3. The Role of Tech Institutions / Companies

Tech institutions/companies are now in a competition to attract more new consumers to buy their products through mass digital advertisement due to the dramatic increase in online use in the Covid-19 pandemic. Their target users are people from the Generation Z who are actively use social media such as Tik Tok, Snapchat, and Instagram for entertainment and social interaction. The company promotes thousands of products ranging from food and beverages to clothing. However, in order to successfully market their product, they gathered information from the internet users by tracking and collecting data. Some apps require permission from the internet users to access their device, including photos, files, location data, call information, and contacts. Moreover, the apps stated in their privacy policy that they are not obliged to help internet users when their data has been stolen. This is a huge risk for the young generation as they do not fully concern the impacts they will get. For instance, the research conducted by Reset Australia Policy Memo [13] concerning profiling children for advertising shows that Facebook collected personal data from users who are aged 13-18 to categorize them for advertising purposes, as this is also applied to other social media platforms.

Principle 6 of UNICEF's Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct states that they use marketing and advertising strategies that respect and support children's rights [14]. This emphasizes the company to operate in a context characterized by the fact that social media networks are used massively in marketing aimed at children and youth. Images for a company's advertising on social media should not be meant to communicate a specific idea, but rather a variety of lifestyles and behaviors. Companies must have specific guidelines for advertising their products that apply the principles of prudence, supervision, safety and professionalism. In addition, the company also develops resources for the development of advertising and marketing policies and codes of conduct in accordance with the ICC Consolidate Code of Advertising and Marketing Communications Practice and 'Check' (Children Ethical Communications Kit) which contains rules, laws and guidelines regarding marketing and communication to children and youth. This should be a concern because the companies gathering resources may use the information from the users who are stating their age on social media, and also affect their buying behaviour. Another aspect to look at is the labelled content in a social media platform. Adopting the systems of labelling or content classification will help to protect

minors from the risks associated with exposure to content which is deemed unsuitable, especially when it comes to privacy that could cause potentially harmful harm. Thanks to globalization, convergence and the development of new technologies, social media developers have made the social media more complex that the regulation may unable to regulate them. This has caused an increase of the potential users in accessing information of the content creator anytime and anywhere. Content creators in this focus during this Covid-19 pandemic, continually uploading content to maximise their quality of views and maintain loyal fans. Once they run out of content, their only way to keep on going is to include their personal life such as their home address, photos, identity card, valuable things such as laptop, cars and legal documents. This has raised a big issue towards protecting privacy. For instance, Facebook allows users to upload personal stories through personal information updates every day. Most of the proportion of information uploaded is Personally Identifiable Information (PII), which is all kinds of information that can be used to trace a person's identity, such as name, place and date of birth, school origin, home address, and personal photos [15]. Someone who opens PII on social media is vulnerable to becoming a victim or getting risk in the future. Other than that, some content creators are also uploading content that is not supposed to be seen by users at such a young age that has led the users to buy their content without their parent's consent and this makes it difficult for platform providers to rate content on a daily basis. The traditional way to solve this problem is to inform parents and caregivers to rate and label systems about certain media products and enable restriction of access. A modern solution could be applying a concept of collaborative filtering to identify privacy preferences. This will specify privacy policies that are using visualization tools and usable interfaces. The system will recommend the unknown preferences of other users based on the location-based social network and users' sharing behaviours and let the users decide whether to connect with them. In addition, users can filter any information with their privacy configurations to find similar users as their focus [16]. This is similar to the concept of Platform for Privacy Preferences (P3P) where the algorithm identifies the data collected, and how they will be used, who will receive the data that the site collects, and other policy information such as how disputes are resolved and where the users can find the site's text version of its privacy policy.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results that have been discussed together with the opinions of researchers and their perspectives used in this study, several conclusions can be drawn. Generation Z or indigenous digital era people are born in the digital world with comprehensive technology such as PCs, cellphones, gaming and internet devices. The majority of their spare time is spent on the internet

especially social media, and they prefer to play online rather than go outside and play. There are several reasons to this matter, which are they prefer social media platforms for visual comparison so interaction can be build, there are thousands of contents can be seen through social media which are entertaining to them, and research have shown that Generation Z does aware of their privacy. However, they have not realized that social media built differently and complex that may affect their mindset to spread their personal information for entertainment instead. For example, they use their valuable things such as house address and their photos as for content. Their personal information can be stolen and sold online. Moreover, their identity can be used as fabricated evidence to steal a lot of money. In order to prevent this, there are ways to protect them. To begin with, prioritizing education by providing online safety information. However, this may not be affective because attitudes from them play an important part, which fewer educational institutions provide education on that. Secondly, government's present to protect personal data of internet users' is an obligation. The government can conduct a daily basis supervision and coordinate with law enforcement to prevent cybercrimes therefore state's security is safe. In addition, tech companies/institutions as the innovators of social media apps need to apply the concept of collaborative filtering to identify privacy preferences and must help internet users when their data has been stolen.

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