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## Instagram as One of Generation Z's Choice of Health Information Sources in Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

Digital communication is a new way of obtaining information; advances in communication technology have succeeded in shifting the mass media as a tool to get information. The availability of social media technology has added a new dimension to information gathering. Therefore, this study aims to determine which social media platform Generation Z prefers for collecting health information. This study uses a survey approach conducted on 485 individuals identified to be in the Generation Z spread throughout Indonesia. This study indicates that generation Z chooses Instagram as a medium for seeking health information considering that Instagram has various visual image features that are fun and easy to share the information obtained with others.

*Keywords: Generation Z, Instagram, digital communication*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Information is knowledge obtained by humans to increase knowledge and skills in meeting their needs. Humans obtain information in various ways, among others, by looking for it themselves or the information comes without being wanted by themselves. In its journey, advances in communication and information technology provide a new color in the search for information in the community (Dea Ramadhan Putri, Siti Nursanti, 2021). Now people no longer have trouble finding information; internet-based technology makes it easier to discover knowledge sources anytime and anywhere, even when they are in bed (Nursanti & Ayusafitri, 2019). Information seeking is a behavior of society in meeting information needs through reliable sources, and information seeking is carried out when people need the information to decide what action to take.

Longo and colleagues mention that humans need information about themselves, social life, health, and the surrounding environment (Longo et al., 2010). The search for health information is carried out when people feel there is a gap between their knowledge and the reality in front of them (Broekhuis et al., 2020). Health information-seeking behavior

can be classified as seeking information carried out either intentionally or unintentionally, actively or passively by an individual (Donald Case et al., 2005). Individuals who actively seek health information need this knowledge to decide immediately what action to take (Anker, Reinhart, & Feeley, 2011), while those who passively feel that they do not need the information even when the information is in front of them (Donald Case et al., 2005). In addition to active and passive health information seekers, some individuals ignore known information (Anu Sairanen, n.d.). This happens because the person concerned feels unnecessary and does not want to know the information because the information obtained makes them uncomfortable (Gaspar et al., 2016) excessive anxiety and panic (Chae, 2015).

Several studies found that information-seeking behavior is based on various goals (Ramirez et al., 2000), among others, if they feel they lack knowledge about health problems they face (Moon et al., 2021). Lack of information in dealing with a problem makes humans need sources of information to fulfill their curiosity. Various ways are used to find health information; the ease of finding information does not make all humans rely on technology to find the information they need. Some people are more comfortable getting information from their closest trusted family (Duchastel, 2001). Family is an important part to discuss (Nursanti et al., 2021) and make decisions.

In contrast to those who are more familiar with technology, which is easier to find information through social media, they use social media to compare their conditions with those of other people (Bazoukis et al., 2020). Efforts to find health information through social media, which are currently in demand by millennials, are an alternative to obtain the desired information; the ease of communication and information technology becomes a new solution in securing information. Generation Z is the new digital native (Prensky, 2001). They are born with the convenience of technology; they like something easy and fast (Helsper & Eynon, 2010) because information communication technology has been connected through smartphones which new people generally use digital natives. According to Helsper and Eynon (2009) and Koutropoulos, not every person born within a specific timeframe exhibits general generational features — for example, the environment of childhood, historical background, and socioeconomic level of individuals all play essential roles (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). It is critical to understand a person's exposure to and experience with digital technology before categorizing that individual as a "digital native" or "digital immigrant" (Prensky, 2001). 'The concept of generational traits is a rough guideline, and people do not always fall neatly into such defined groups' (Ruth Helyer, 2012). This study aims to see how the health information-seeking behavior of generation Z on health information; this research will be conducted using a quantitative survey method to generation Z in Indonesia.

Information-seeking behavior is an activity performed by individuals to meet their need for information that can be used to make a decision or take action (Liddy et al., 2014). The studies about searching for information have been carried out since 1950. In 1983, James Krikelas created the first model of information-seeking behavior theory consisting of several stages: finding out the information, searching for the report itself, defining the

data, and seeking the information for satisfaction at the end of the process (Krikelas, 1983).

Savolainen used information that seeks behavioral models to solve problems occurring in everyday life (Savolainen, 1995). This concept of information-seeking behavior model was also used in Barahmand's research on female students in Iran (Barahmand et al., 2019), Yeoman's research on premenopausal women in America (Yeoman, 2010), as well as Loudon's research on new mothers about having children in America. The search for information is closely linked to the problems experienced by someone that needs to be resolved immediately by finding information as much as possible. It can be done by asking more experienced people, reading books, or browsing the internet.

In line with the advancements in communication technology and data, social media platforms are also used as an alternative way to retrieve data. Social media users can actively share information through various platforms and share it with people with similar interests (De Choudhury et al., 2014). The synergy of the search for communication between the internet, social media, and the general media has stimulated the activeness of information seekers to obtain the requested information (Park et al., 2020)

The search for health information using social media is usually done to determine whether other people have experienced similar situations as they felt at the time (Cartright et al., 2011). In some cases, information searches are carried out through websites to seek advice, connect with experienced officers, and pursue further professional action (Cartright et al., 2011). The search for health information via the internet is more manageable and can be done anytime; Digital media is rapidly replacing conventional media (Qorib, 2020), although some people feel that talking to friends and family is more comfortable (Duchastel, 2001). Differences in information-seeking behavior based on health information sources give rise to community groups and how they obtain it. Community groups or social generations are defined as social formations shaped in the form of groups of people with different levels of ability according to similar levels of differentiation, categorized in terms of age, time of birth, or year of birth.

## **METHOD**

The survey method was employed in this study as a quantitative approach. The survey is conducted using a questionnaire that is given to respondents online. Each social media platform has the potential to examine numerous user habits (Kwak & Cho, 2018). There is no information available on the size of the research population. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), a sample of at least 100 is required for descriptive investigations. These studies employ the formula for an unknown or approximated population, with a confidence level of 0.95 percent, a margin of error of 0.05 percent, and a standard deviation of 0.5.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research on Generation Z's impressions of COVID-19 health information, with the characteristics of respondents being Gen-Z internet users in Indonesia, discovered that 485 persons completed questionnaires sent across all platforms often utilized by Generation Z thus far. Table 1 displays the demographics of the respondents.

**Table 1 Shows the Demographics of The Respondents.**

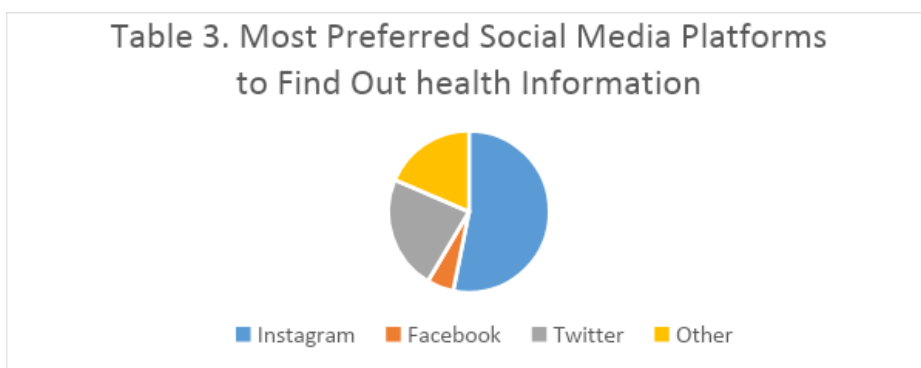
	N = 485	Percentage%
<b>Gender</b>		
Women	325	67
Man	160	33
<b>Generation</b>		
Gen X (45-60+ years)	4	0.89
Gen Y (25-44 years)	15	3.092
Gen Z (17-24 years)	466	96.08
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban	319	65.77
Rural	151	31.13

The descriptions of the respondents' demographics can be found in Table 1. A total of 325 female respondents, or an equivalent of 67%, and 160 men, or an equivalent of 33%, had completed the questionnaire. The division of this generation is based on the development of communication and information technology that comes with the time of birth for each generation. The first generation of Generation Y was born in 1980 in which Helsper and Eynon said that at that time, Facebook and MySpace gave birth to the second generation, namely digital natives (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). Digital natives refer to those knowing the internet only to the extent of their social and participatory functions (Fuchs, 2011). The new digital native is characterized by a more reachable Internet in which mobile phone technology is synchronized with the Internet (Amalia Ferniansyah, Siti Nursanti, 2021). Therefore, those present in this century can read the information via the internet, produce a report, and share it with others.

**Table 2. The first resources where the respondents find out about Health Information**

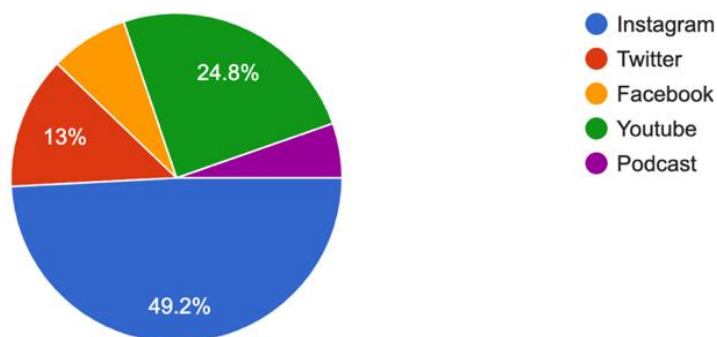


Table 2 shows the distribution of the first information sources used by the respondents to obtain information about health information. As many as 64 percent of respondents said that the internet became their first source of information where they find out about health information. In comparison, 29.3 percent of respondents received the information from television, and the rest of them received it from radio, newspapers, and WhatsApp Groups applications. The existence of communication and information technology that has been internalized with a mobile phone makes it easy for Generation Z to get information quickly without being limited by time and space (Qurratu'aini et al., 2021). What is unique in Generation Z is that they can easily share any information they have obtained with other people.



In this study, respondents were also asked which social media they prefer when looking for health information related to COVID-19, as presented in Table 6. It can be seen that 53.2 percent of respondents liked the information shared on Instagram, 22.9 percent via Twitter, while 18.6 percent of them chose to use other social media such as TikTok, YouTube, and podcasts. Instagram, founded in 2010, is a social networking platform for sharing images and video network services. Instagram users can utilize a feature-limited application or web interface to access the platform and modify the content with numerous filters. A caption, which may be up to 2200 characters long, can be added to each Instagram post. This platform also has a private chat, the ability to tag material with hashtag searchability, the ability to include numerous photographs or videos in a single post, and the tales feature, which allows users to upload original content that others may view for 24 hours. Messages, bars, and tales enable users to connect in various ways to varying degrees (Carpenter et al., 2020).

Facebook, one of the most popular Internet programs in the last decade, has over 2 billion members globally (Feng et al., 2019). Users may use Facebook to post status updates, wall updates, remark, read news feeds, give likes, message, publish, take images, organize groups, play games, manage fan pages, create events, take notes, and talk in groups (Ryan & Xenos, 2011). Facebook has become an indispensable tool for maintaining a social presence and expanding social ties.

**Table 4 Media that should be used for health campaigns**

When searching for information on social media, Instagram serves as the respondents' primary choice. Table 10 explains which media are most preferred by respondents when seeking information. As many as 49.2 percent of respondents chose Instagram as the leading choice to seek health information. In contrast, other respondents chose Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and podcasts as alternative media to obtain information regarding health conditions. The visual nature of Instagram is considered the key feature that distinguishes it from other social media (Yanuar et al., 2021), which are relatively more text-based (Pittman & Reich, 2016). The use of images and captions on Instagram allows users to express and share writing through images. McLuhan (1964) said the media itself is a technological message that shapes the way people learn and think. Internet-based media is a reasonably economical option in disseminating health information (Nursanti et al., 2019), social media can move people (Benedict & Ariestya, 2020), and the public is free to choose the desired content according to their needs (Fadilla, 2020).

### Discussion

In Table 1, you can see the respondents' demographics who answered questions randomly distributed through social media platforms owned by the research team. Table 1 shows that the respondents are Generation Z that typically live in urban areas. Generation Z, or digital native, was born in 1980, along with the emergence of communication and information technology that facilitates all the needs and activities of said generation. Some researchers refuse to categorize societies based on their technological adaptation (Davies et al., 2016), but Prensky (Prensky, 2001) differentiates between digital natives and digital immigrants so that everyone is aware of the impact of technological developments on human behavioral development (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). Table 1 also shows that more respondents live in urban areas than rural regions. The study also examines whether those living in rural areas can access information shared through high-level communication and information technology, given the difference in reception levels available in the city and the village.

An individual's attempt to find the information they need will lead to information-seeking behavior. It includes all behaviors of human beings when interacting with information sources and channels, involving active and passive search and data usage. Information-

seeking behavior aims to achieve specific objectives based on individuals' needs to meet specific goals. Information-search behavior is a micro-level action taken by an individual when searching for information and interacting with an information system. This behavior consists of various forms of designated interaction related to using a computer, such as using the mouse or clicking a link at the intellectual and mental level. Moreover, information-user behavior refers to a person's physical and mental actions when combining the information they find with their background knowledge.

Generation Z, born and raised along with the advancements in communication and information technology, has chosen the internet as one of the primary sources of health information. David Ellis has developed a theory of information retrieval behavior closely associated with information retrieval systems. Ellis studied scientists engaging in daily activities, such as reading, conducting field or laboratory research, writing papers, etc. His study results in a theory that explains the general behavior of information in a series of activities. Ellis suggested several characteristics of information-seeking behavior. The first stage is Starting, meaning that the individuals search for information from an expert in one of the scientific fields that spark their interest.

Moreover, the next stage of Ellis' information retrieval behavior is Chaining. It refers to an activity when individuals write the important things they found on a small note. In Generation Z, the stage of Chaining is not related to conventional messages on paper anymore. Instead, the essential information is sometimes written on social media platforms, making them available for others and can be opened anytime with no limitation in time and storage place.

Advances in communication and information technology have made the world enter a new era where humans can quickly obtain information. The existence of the internet marks the presence of new media in broadly sharing information activities. The main characteristics of new media are their interconnectedness, their access to individual audiences as recipients and senders of messages, their interactivity, and their diverse uses as different characters— open, and its ubiquitous nature (McQuail, 2014). The existence of the internet has succeeded in making new media appear, one of which is Instagram, which is a social media that is often used to find and share information. Everett Rogers (Rogers et al., 2019) mentions four elements in adopting new media. The theory of diffusion of innovation describes how, why, and at what rate new technologies are developed and adopted in various contexts. This theory underscores the existence of 4 (four) main elements that influence the development of new media, namely innovation, communication channels, time, and social systems. Rogers defines the characteristics of an innovation that can affect an individual's decision to adopt or reject an innovation. The innovation diffusion theory approach states that not only leaders can influence audience behavior through personal contact, but there are other change agents and gatekeepers who are also involved in the diffusion process. This approach offers a framework for



considering how information flows through a network and the factors that shape opinions through technology use decisions.

The ease of access to social media, which is almost certain to exist on every generation Z smartphone, makes them choose to search for information using social media, one of which is Instagram. Information sharing activities will be followed by information-seeking, knowledge-enhancing activities, and arguments that can be used to make decisions. Browsing is an activity to find structured or semi-structured data. The search for information in the X generation has traditionally been carried out by visiting information centers such as libraries, academics, or coming directly to the nearest health facility. Meanwhile, information-searching of Generation Z, which is closely linked to the internet, can be done more quickly. The availability of smartphones with internet connections makes them easier to find the information they need. The internet can help Generation Z obtain necessary information in various fields, including health, education, economics, politics, and other information to get and provide the information they.

Similar to previous studies on the behavior of Generation Z, which were closely associated with communication and information technology, this study found that Generation Z respondents prioritized the search for health information via the internet and actively shared the information they obtained through their respective accounts on various social media platforms. The search for information should also consider some factors of a discrepancy, such as data division or reduction, to select which data to use and which one of them is not necessary to be included in the study. Not all the information obtained from any source is needed; even some of the news received cannot be justified based on its validity. Therefore, a selection of the data must be made to prevent such occurrence.

## **CONCLUSION**

The theory of diffusion of innovation is one of the concepts presented by Everett Rogers to understand the presence of new media in human life in the use of communication and information technology with four crucial elements in the process of technology adoption by humans. In the theory of diffusion of innovation, information flows through communication media that are easy to find and use; this information, in the end, will more or less influence humans in making decisions depending on the information they have. Known as the new digital native, Generation Z is attracted to anything instant with a close relationship to communication and information technology, including the internet. This generation can obtain, manage, and even produce information through the internet, mainly on social media. Instagram is one of Generation Z's most preferred information providers, considering that Instagram provides quite interesting image features and makes it easy to share any health information it has. This research has limitations in terms of other reasons why millennials like images that sometimes do not match the captions shared and how Generation Z checks the validity of the information shared whether it has ever occurred to Generation Z that the news shared may be news that is Hoax.

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