

## The Role of Educators in Facing the High Accessibility of Students on Social Media

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**Abstract**— *This article has a background of changing communication patterns in the midst of massive digital developments. This is a challenge for educators in interacting with students, including lecturers dealing with their students in order to adapt to the times. Specifically, this research was conducted on students of Social Studies Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Through the survey method conducted in this study, it shows that students are very active in accessing social media. However, they are not active enough to participate when using social media. This is a new challenge for educators in the field of social studies education to be able to involve a number of approaches or use popular applications in the learning process. This study intends to present an idea that the tendency of students in the digital era must be balanced with the competence of educators to collaborate with technology and be accompanied by things that are liked by students.*

**Keywords:** *Social media, Educators, Lecturers, Students, Digital era*

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### A. INTRODUCTION

The latest data released in February 2022 by *We Are Social* shows that there are 204.7 million Indonesian internet users. And 191.4 million active social media users, up 12.6% from 2021. Other data states that there are four social media platforms that are most actively used by the Indonesian people, namely WhatsApp as much as 88.7%, Instagram as much as 84.8%, Facebook as much as 81.3%, and Tiktok as much as 63.1%. In this era, it is easy for anyone to access each other. In the past, it was very difficult for ordinary people to meet figures who had social status, today it is easy for anyone to deal with public figures on social media.

Everyone is free to access, criticize, and even comment directly with the egalitarians in this world through various social media. The freedom of access raises concerns, where a student will be more influenced by his gadget or the content

contained in his gadget. Even the existence of educators in educational institutions can be defeated by the characterization of an influencer on social media

Responding to this, social studies education as a field of study of social symptoms and problems, has a strategic role to find solutions. This is because social studies education is more practical because it encourages problem solving that must be accelerated. To quote Hamidulloh Ibda (2018, p. 2) that in the 21st century, technological progress is moving rapidly, the state requires Human Resources (HR) which has three important pillars. The three pillars are literacy, competence, and character. Those three things were also mentioned in the 2015 World Economic Forum which gave rise to three important pillars, namely mastery of literacy, competence, and character.

Social studies education students include human resources who will be most

responsible for implementing the implementation of media literacy for students. In addition, today's students studying in college are a generation of digital natives who are very friendly with technology. Education expert Mark Prensky (2001) quoted by Mardina (2011, p. 5) stated that there are two generations, namely digital natives and digital immigrants. Digital natives are the generation that was born in the digital era, while digital immigrants are the generation that was born before the digital era but then became interested and adopted new things from the technology. Another opinion also came from Sari (2014, p. 134) based on a study he has done, *Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan (LPTK)* as producers of prospective educators/teachers need to equip teachers and prospective teachers to be skilled in using technology, especially ICT, because the challenges of future teachers are related to ICT. Teachers must have pedagogical abilities, mastery of technology and materials in the learning process. For this reason, lectures at LPTKs need to familiarize students with using ICT.

The high access of students to the internet and social media must be balanced with their understanding and creativity in creating something that comes from their own thoughts. So, what they get and what they give in social media has benefits for the environment. Therefore, the formulation of the problem in this writing include:

1. What is the tendency of Social Studies Education students to access social media?
2. How is the participation of Social Studies Education students in accessing social media?
3. What is the role of social studies learning in utilizing social media among social studies education students?

This writing does not only discuss student activities in surfing in cyberspace, but also includes the role of lecturers in order to be able to keep pace with the progress of the times and the tendencies of students in the digital era.

## B. METHOD

This study uses survey research methods in the form of observation efforts to obtain clear information on a particular problem in the study. This study uses a small population and sampling from that population. This research was conducted among students of the Social Sciences Education study program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. This survey was obtained from the population of Social Studies Education students at the S-1 level at the Indonesian Education University, which included third semester students and had received the Science, Technology and Society course.

The sample selection process in this study used two-step sampling procedures. In the first stage, the students who will be sampled purposively are selected. At this stage, the students who were sampled were students of Social Studies Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia who were active and had received courses in Technology and Society. In the second stage of this sample selection process, students of Social Studies Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, were selected by stratified random sampling. Stratified random is done by grouping Social Studies Education students based on generation. This method is used so that the selected sample members are more representative. Meanwhile, quantitative data was obtained from a scale of 1-4 which was obtained through an instrument in the form of a validation questionnaire.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Results*

This study has a population of 278 students from three batches who have received courses in Science, Technology and Society. The total research sample can be known by using the Slovin formula (Riduwan, 2016, p. 28). So the number of samples that will be used in this study is a minimum of 164 students. And in this study, researchers obtained a sample of 165 students who were obtained randomly.

After determining the sample, the authors interpret in depth the results of the study so that the research questions posed in

the formulation of the problem can be answered. This study focuses on knowing the tendency of Social Studies Education students in accessing and using social media on student participation in the use of social media itself. So that the results of the research that the author conveys are divided into two parts, namely 1) the tendency of students to access social media and 2) student participation when accessing social media. Further results are as follows:

1. *Tendency of Social Studies Education Students in Accessing Social Media*

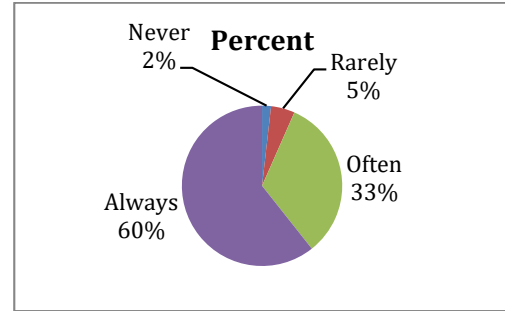
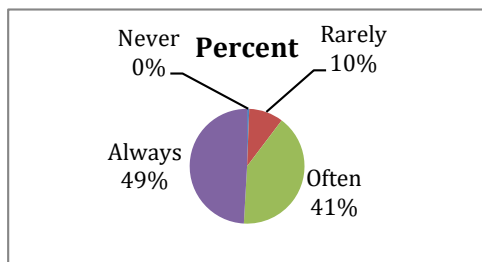


Figure 1. *Personal and Professional Use of Online Social Networks*

The data above shows the use of online social networks by students personally and professionally. The results show that out of 165 respondents, 1 respondent (0.6%) answered that they have never used online social networks personally or professionally. Meanwhile, 16 respondents (9.7%) answered that they rarely use online social networks personally or professionally. A total of 67 respondents (47.9%) answered that they often use online social networks personally or professionally. And as many as 81 respondents (40%) always use online social networks personally or professionally. The conclusion of this item is that on average, UPI Social Studies Education students use online social networks personally or professionally. This means that many students surf on social media.

Figure 2. *Intensity of Accessing Personal Social Media*

The items above are the results of a survey related to the intensity of students in accessing privately owned social media. The data obtained explained that 3 respondents (1.8%) answered that they had never accessed personal social media. Meanwhile, 8 respondents (4.8%) answered that they rarely access personal social media. A total of 54 respondents (32.7%) answered that they often access personal social media. And as many as 100 respondents (60.6%) always access personal social media. The conclusion of this item is that Social Studies Education students on average always access social media, which means that students have a high intensity in accessing personal social media.

2. *Student Participation when Accessing Social Media*

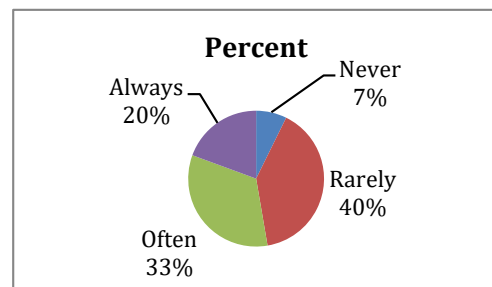


Figure 3. *Writing Opinions on Social Media*

This item reveals about student activities in making opinions on social media. The data above explains that 12 respondents (7.3%) answered that they never wrote an opinion on their own social media. Meanwhile, 66 respondents (40%) answered that they rarely wrote opinions on their own social media. A total of 55 respondents (33.3%) answered that they often wrote opinions on their own social media. And as

many as 32 respondents (19.4%) always write their opinions on their own social media. The conclusion of this item is that on average, UPI Social Science Education students answered that they rarely used their personal social media to write their own opinions.

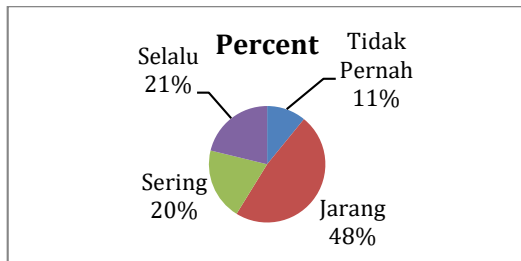


Figure 4. Creating Short Video Content and Uploading it to the Internet/Social Media

The data above shows student participation in creating content on social media. It was found that 18 respondents (10.9%) answered that they never made short videos and uploaded them to the internet/social media. Meanwhile, 79 respondents (47.9%) answered that they rarely make short videos and upload them to the internet/social media. A total of 33 respondents (20%) answered that they often make short videos and upload them to the internet/social media. And as many as 35 respondents (21.2%) always make short videos and upload them to the internet/social media. The conclusion of this item is that on average, UPI Social Science Education students answered that they rarely made short videos and uploaded them to the internet/social media.

### Discussion

Based on the results of a survey conducted by researchers, it was found that students of Social Studies Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, had high activity in accessing the internet and social media. Smartphone ownership has a dominant role in students. The smartphones they hold will make it easier for students to access other interests such as downloading e-books, e-journals, accessing online academic information, and several other internet accesses, even outside the need for

lectures. So that the learning resources owned by students can also be fulfilled properly.

In addition, in the New Media era, students have control over the access they want from their gadgets. This behavior is included in the theory coined by Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumer, and Michael Gurevitch (1974) about uses and gratifications cited by Latifah (2014, p. 261) where this theory says that the audience is active in choosing which media to use. that must be chosen to satisfy their needs, so that the audience may reject the information provided by the media. This includes the use of gadgets and student access. Students have control over getting what they need and what they want to get.

However, the high access of social studies education students to the internet is very different from the ability of students to participate in social media. Whereas the highest level of media literacy is the participation of someone to create their own media. This is confirmed by Sperry and Baker (2016), the participatory nature of new forms of media (such as games and social media) gives students the hope of being involved in selecting, manipulating, and producing their own social messages. The journal written by Anggraeni, et al (2019, p. 17) also mentions that literacy skills are very important in the process of teaching and learning activities because there is a process of scientific exploration that can build scientific improvement and the growth of innovation and creativity.

Therefore, social studies educators must give young people the awareness and ability to critically question and create new media and technologies. These skills are essential for active citizenship in future democracies. However, to get literate students, it is not enough just to provide material in learning. Dwirahayu, et al (2019, p. 52) also mention that if the teacher only uses the lecture method, it will lead to monotonous learning so that students feel bored. Furthermore, students' thinking will not develop much, in the sense that students are only limited to remembering but not understanding the concepts contained in the material being taught. So that the approaches

and methods taught must also adapt to the development of the times of students.

### 1. *Utilization of Social Media in Social Studies Learning*

Bernie Trilling & Charles Fadel (2009) emphasize in their book that in the 21st century, there are two important skills that will remain at the top of job requirements in the digital lifestyle era. First, the ability to acquire and apply new knowledge quickly. Second, knowledge to apply essential 21st century skills, especially in problem solving, communication, teamwork, use of technology and innovation. Thus, abilities in the 21st century take into account competencies that include knowledge competencies and skills competencies. These two points apply not only to students but also to lecturers as educators. That is, if educators have cleaned up and made adjustments first, the more up-to-date learning approach will be implemented more quickly to students.

Research conducted by Hilmi Arif Fauzi (2017) in its introduction states that teachers can utilize various types of learning media to optimize social studies learning. One of them is by using audio-visual media in social studies learning. Hilmi assessed that audio-visual media was chosen as an alternative because it has several attractive advantages for students, with audio-visual media, learning materials will be more effective, for example in pre-literacy materials, with audio-visual media the teacher can show a video in pre-literacy so that students become more interested in listening and understanding it.

However, the author considers that in this era there are media that are more tempting for students, namely the presence of social media as new media. Through one hand, they can access many things and get various literacy from social media. Especially among students who already have their own independence and freedom in accessing the internet. In connection with this, citing the opinion of Safko (2010) in Oktavianti & Loisa's writing (2017) there is a social media terminology put forward by Safko that humans use all technologies

effectively to reach and connect with other humans, make relationships, build trust, and ready when the member in the relationship sells the product being offered. Taking into account the survey results in this study, social media should be a new concern for university lecturers. Social media and all the content in it can be used as inspiration to build effective learning in the digital era.

Based on the survey results shown by this research, the authors see the need to understand the interest of students in accessing the media they like. By knowing student interests, educators can more easily approach learning that is more relatable to the current condition of students. This study also shows that student access to the internet or social media, as well as the use of gadgets used by students, are not matched by student participation in creating the third axis, namely creating alternative media in the midst of a lot of information flowing in the community. Whereas creating and communicating messages is the highest stage of a person being said to be literate. Thus, the optimization of facilities and infrastructure that must be provided to students is not only the procurement of tools and hardware, but students must also be facilitated with a number of soft skills so that they can see the opportunities in front of them in this era of media and information development.

Solutions to increase student participation in communicating and creating messages can be done by looking at the interests and tendencies of the students themselves. Referring to this research data, students like to access social media, so learning must think about how social media content can be included in the learning process in the classroom. Researchers recommend lecturers to hold assignments with digital and social media approaches, including:

- 1) The assignment is in the form of a short video competition that describes social phenomena
- 2) Inviting students to be brave enough to speak up in response to contemporary social issues that are becoming public opinion. This can also be done as an

assignment to students. The speak up/public speaking can be uploaded to social media and then judged from the content of the issues brought by the students who are also assisted by the number of likes, shares, and comments.

- 3) Challenge students to write articles in the public domain. Student participation in mass media can also be done by sharpening students' writing skills. Lecturers can bring editor-in-chief from print or online mass media to provide training in the classroom during learning.
- 4) Meanwhile, to anticipate the dominant activities carried out by students in surfing social media, lecturers can also invite influencers who are used to giving good sharing opinions on their social media. This is so that students are also inspired to create positive content that can have a big impact on the audience.

Another thing that is no less important is that lecturers must have an account on one of the social media platforms favored by their students. This is also in order to facilitate monitoring of assignments and the existence of egalitarian communication between students and lecturers.

#### D. CONCLUSION

The survey data in this study shows that the Social Studies Education students of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia have a high interest in accessing the internet, especially social media. Unfortunately, this research has not revealed what content and platforms are most accessed by these students. On the other hand, the high access of students is not matched by valuable active participation when using their own social media. This is an opportunity as well as a challenge for both students and lecturers in developing social studies learning prototypes that involve social media in it. Participation is expected in this paper, in the form of students' ability to create works, both in the form of opinions and digital works that are able to have a positive impact on the audience. So they does not just follow the flow of information from social media, or becomes a follower of some influencers, but becomes one of those influential

students. The existence of social media can be used as a source of learning in the digital era and can also be a medium for publication of learning outcomes carried out by students. In addition, educators must also collaborate with technology in conveying the values that they bring to their students. This includes facilitating students to meet influencers who can share good opinions on social media.

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