Analysis of the Impact of Digital Media on Social Activities in the Campus Environment: A Case Study of FIS UINSU Students

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ABSTRACT

Digital media has become an integral part of student life in various aspects, including context of social activities on campus. This research aims to analyze impact of digital media on the social interactions of FIS UINSU students. The research used a qualitative approach, involving in-depth interviews and participant observation. The results of research show that digital media and campus community involvement from various aspects have a positive impact. Based on the research, it also found that there are still students who don't have enough good social interaction and sensitivity. It was found that there are students who choose not to use digital media apart from the academic process. This research recommends a digital media balance strategy to support strengthening social relations in campus environment. Researchers hope to carry out further research periodically to determine development of the impact of digital media on social activities within UINSU Faculty of Social Sciences.

Keywords: *digital media, social activities, student interactions*

1. INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital media has had a significant impact on many aspects of life, including the campus environment (Pratama, 2024) . This transformation is inevitable in today's digital era, where the development of knowledge and technology continues to grow rapidly (Simanjuntak et al., 2024) . Digital technology provides convenience and efficiency in various activities, such as information searching, learning, communication, and entertainment. However, behind these benefits, challenges also arise that must be faced, one of which is changing patterns of social interaction among students (Nur Cahya et al., 2023) . Excessive use of digital media can reduce face-to-face interactions, increase social isolation, and affect students' social sensitivity (Dalimunthe et al., 2024; Ritonga & Dalimunthe, 2024) .

Students, as agents of change, have a significant responsibility to use digital technology wisely (Ilmu et al., 2025) . It is hoped that this technology will be used to support their academic and social activities, not the other way around.

With the various technological advances available, students can more easily access information, broaden their horizons, and build relationships with other individuals, both within and outside the campus, such as in the campus housing environment (Ezra Muharrifah et al., 2024) . However, students also face risks such as reduced direct social connectedness and changes in self-concept due to the influence of digital media, especially social media (Tsabitah et al., 2023) .

Changes in interaction patterns caused by digital media not only impact individuals personally but also social dynamics within the campus environment (Al-Mujtahid et al., 2024) . Social media, as one of the main products of digital technology, has become a very dominant platform in student life (Kusaini, 2024) . This media is used not only for communication but also to shape self-image, build networks, and even influence decision-making.

In this context, social media can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, social media can expand social connections and open up opportunities for collaboration; on the other hand, social media can cause negative impacts such as increased social pressure, cyberbullying, and excessive reliance on social recognition obtained online (Ihza et al., 2024).

Previous research by (Uskono et al., 2024) showed that students' interactions in the digital world often influence how they interact in the real world. (Rabbil et al., 2022) emphasized that students' self-concept can change significantly depending on how they use social media. For example, students who frequently compare themselves to others on social media can experience decreased self-confidence, which ultimately affects their relationships with peers on campus. Furthermore, the content consumed on digital media can also shape their perceptions of social and cultural values, which in turn affects their social sensitivity (Makmuriyah & Vanni, 2020) .

This phenomenon demonstrates the importance of a deeper understanding of the influence of digital media on students' social activities. In an era of rapid digital media development, campus environments face the challenge of maintaining a balance between technology use and healthy social interactions (Trianziani, 2020) . Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the impact of digital media use on students' social activities, particularly in the Faculty of Social Sciences, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU). In addition, this study also seeks to identify factors that influence students' social sensitivity in the digital era, so that it can provide relevant insights for educational administrators and students themselves.

This study applies qualitative research methods to gain in-depth insights into students' experiences and perspectives regarding digital media use (Anita Santri Caniago et al., 2023) . By conducting in-depth interviews and observations with students at the Faculty of Social Sciences, UINSU, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact of digital media on their social activities. The focus of this research is not only limited to how students use digital media, but also how this use affects their social interactions, interpersonal relationships, and involvement in campus activities.

This research aims to identify effective strategies for optimizing digital media use among students, thereby supporting a healthier and more harmonious social environment on campus. The researchers hope this research will provide a foundation for educators, policymakers, and those involved in developing programs aimed at improving the quality of student social interactions in the digital age.

2.   RESEARCH METHODS

The process in the research conducted by the author applies a type of qualitative research method by using various techniques in collecting the necessary data such as through direct and online interview processes as well as with documentation study techniques carried out by researchers with various sources or parties who have authority who are included in the research process (Ihza et al., 2024) .

Interviews were conducted with students and lecturers at the Faculty of Social Sciences, UINSU to explore their experiences regarding communication that occurs between students who are members of organizations and the Faculty. Documentation studies were conducted by analyzing various reports on student organization activities and communications carried out by the faculty.

Researchers used qualitative research because it was considered highly suitable, easy, and aligned with the desired end results. This method also allowed researchers to gain a better understanding of the perspectives and opinions of the students and lecturers, who were the subjects of the study, across multiple aspects, including their opinions, behaviors, attitudes, and responses (Rabbil et al., 2022) .

3.   RESULT AND ANALYSIS

With the increasing demands of human activities, technological developments were created with the aim of facilitating all kinds of student affairs (Anita Santri Caniago et al., 2023) . Here, students must know well how to utilize these technological advances to facilitate the lecture process and utilize them to foster a social spirit with better interactions, so that it is no longer wrong that technology is a sophistication that is truly useful and provides positive contributions to the community in the campus environment, especially the Faculty of Social Sciences UINSU and the environment outside the campus in building the nation to move towards an advanced era, no longer in a developing era.

Nearly 95 % of students at the Faculty of Social Sciences at UINSU use digital media, including social media. Some students even have more than one social media account, joining several existing platforms widely used by students and teenagers. This was echoed by many students interviewed and met by researchers.

By providing open Wi-Fi for students on campus, the campus is participating in encouraging the use of digital technology to make it easier for campus residents, especially students and lecturers, to carry out non-academic and academic activities.

Although there are still students who choose not to use digital media for several reasons, but basically students who enter the world of higher education must know and be adept at using digital media, because as part of the modern generation , students are considered proficient in the technological advances of the modern era, especially for matters of social activities through digital media (Marheni & Melani, 2021) .

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers in the Faculty of Social Sciences UINSU, it was found that there are a number of reasons why students choose to use digital media in any matter, in fact they cannot be separated from digital media today, the reason is because they follow the current developments, because the more technology improves, the more human lifestyles and habits develop, especially in the scope of social interaction.

Based on the author's observations, it was also found that many students have begun to develop a sensitivity to the importance of social interaction and are increasingly showing concern for one another, even within the small classroom and faculty. This can be seen in the students' caring attitude when they hear or receive news via WhatsApp groups or other digital media, such as a friend being sick, having an accident, going missing, being mugged, or even experiencing heartbreak.

Based on the research results, there are two possible reasons for this: first, the overwhelming campus pressure through news disseminated on digital media to raise awareness of the importance of social sensitivity. Second, the students themselves may have experienced similar experiences . For example, if a student has experienced fraud, other students who have experienced the same fate will empathize and be sensitive to their feelings, leading to mutual assistance and support.

From the results of the author's analysis during the research, students will care if there are students uploading stories or activities on digital media such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or WhatsApp that contain sad news or happy news. This is in line with the opinion of Withall (M Teguh Saefuddin1, Tia Norma Wulan2 & 1, 2, 3, 2023) where students make social media such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or WhatsApp as a Social Bible or guide in social life which is important to find out news or information related to friends, loved ones, old friends who have rarely met, distant families to people they have just met on social media or in real life.

For this reason, it is important for students to control how they use sophisticated digital media wisely, because one of the causes of the formation of a student's character is influenced by the use of increasingly developing digital technology.

4. CONCLUSION

The sensitivity of each human being's social activities, in this case students, is not created without supporting factors but is created because of the existence of several supports or stimuli that are provided continuously. The environment around FIS UINSU students and digital media factors are one of the factors that have an impact on increasing social activities to be more caring and empathetic. In addition to following and understanding the development of digital media is something important and must be considered by students in this digital era, utilizing digital media is one of the supporters of the emergence of the impact of social sensitivity digital understanding is a competency that must be mastered by every student in the digital era, Support from the FIS UINSU community environment, especially lecturers and organizations is an important aspect in the formation of social attitudes to be better and broader. By carrying out structured cooperation with all parties, the formation of positive social activity sensitivity will achieve its goals even to all aspects of life on campus and off campus. Therefore, according to researchers, it is necessary to conduct further research periodically to further understand how developments occur from the impact of digital media on the social activities of students, especially students of the Faculty of Social Sciences UINSU.

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