Research Article

Media Literacy of High School Students in Critical and Safe Social Media

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ABSTRACT

Misconceptions about free speech often led to digital crimes. In Indonesia, cases of defamation and hate speech on social media continue to increase. Especially during this COVID-19 pandemic, where people are doing more online activities. Therefore, students should learn media literacy to not be part of the crimes. In this quasi-experimental research, media literacy material was integrated with Pancasila and citizenship education at the senior high school level in Semarang District. The control group used expository learning with a video conference application such as Zoom and uploaded their assignment to Google Drive. The experimental group used discussion-based learning and posted assignments on their Instagram accounts. In this study, ten multiple-choice questions presented digital contents that were proven to have violated the Electronic Information and Transaction Law. Students should identify the violations committed and choose the correct answer. Both groups showed similar pre-test (6.00 and 5.82) and post-test (6.47 and 6.00) scores. However, the experimental group showed attitudes change in the discussion. Many of them commented, "be careful in commenting" which is the best way to avoid online violation. This study recommends teachers conduct democratic learning through social media to provide students with real experiences and improve their social skills.

Keywords: *Social Media, Democracy Learning, Media Literacy, Digital Civility*

Background

The ideal democracy supports free speech for each individual. Unfortunately, some people hide behind the word free speech to do hate speech. This resulted in a low Digital Civility Index. Based on an annual survey by Microsoft, more than half of respondents experienced online crimes such as bullying, hoaxes, and discrimination. In line with that, in Indonesia, there were more than 300 reports of defamation and hate speech in 2020. To overcome

these, people should have a high level of media literacy.

Media literacy refers to the skills, knowledge, and understanding that enable citizens to use media effectively and safely (Carlsson, 2019). Some online media are online forums, podcasts, media sharing networks, content curation networks, blogging and publishing network, emails, and social media. In social media, people receive a lot of information such as text messages, memes, viral videos, and also fake or provocative news. This brings many parents to be afraid of the negative effects of social media on children, such as aggressive behavior, anxiety, and fear. However, media literacy skills are part of human rights and democracy (Grizzle, 2018). Therefore, instead of banning children from using social media, it is better to empower them socially and democratically.

Media literacy education has committed to supporting democratic ideals (Mihailidis et al., 2021). With media literacy, people can critically evaluate information and content to separate fact and fake news. Therefore, media literacy has become the center of gravity to fight "fake news" (Bulger & Davison, 2018). In the end, learning media literacy will help students to fight the black campaign and be better voters. Without this skill, students may repost fake news or accidentally post illegal content and ended up in jail for violating Electronic Information and Transaction Law (UU ITE).

In education, social media provides opportunities for a two-way exchange of information (teachers and students). Social media is readily available and increasingly adopted by educational institutions, as it is considered a 'powerful driver of change for teaching and learning practices' (Lacka & Wong, 2019). However, it was not easy to find literature that specified how to teach students to post critical content safely.

This study aimed to find a way to teach students to post critical content safely and analyzed its effectiveness in terms of cognitive and affective. This study uses social media Instagram which was widely used by teenagers. With Instagram, users can upload content, use hashtags, post comments, and like and share others' content. This research showed that learning with social media can increase politeness in commenting.

Methods
Research Design
This study employed an experimental approach, in which the experimental group received an intervention, and the effects of this change on learning achievement were examined. This study implemented pre-test–post-test for both groups. The purpose of the pre-test was to ensure the comparability of the two groups before the treatment, whereas the post-test allowed the researchers to determine the immediate effects of the treatment on the outcome variable.

The research focuses on developing the ability of students to behave politely in Pancasila democracy according to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Learning materials were integrated with the regulations in the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (UU ITE) and media literacy. The control group studied expository using video conferencing applications and online forms, while the experimental group studied by discussions using social media applications. At the first meeting, students were asked to observe and study examples of content that was proven to violate the UU ITE. Then they are asked to create content that contains criticism. At the second meeting, students were asked to observe and study the content they had created.

Participant
This research was conducted in Semarang Regency. The research subjects were students of class XI Senior High School. Simple random sampling was used to choose which class to be control or experimental group. The number of students in the control and experimental group was 31 and 30 respectively.

Statistical Treatment of Data
The pre-test and post-test were analyzed using an independent sample T-test to show whether there was a difference in scores between groups. The first and second meeting discussions of the experimental group were analyzed using a paired sample T-test to see

whether there was a change in the behavior of the experimental group.

Results

Before learning, the teacher created a new learning account on Instagram to post UU ITE violation examples. The teacher also reposted students' critical content on this account. Several months after the study, there were no students who unfollow the learning account, but they deleted all critical content that they have posted on their accounts. Therefore, any learning activities should be done on a learning account to keep it recorded.

This study discusses the cognitive and affective aspects of students in social media. Cognitive aspects were assessed using a test in which students determined legal violations from the digital content displayed. The affective aspect was assessed based on the level of students' post quality such as thoughtful, reflective, and respectful of others' posts.

Cognitive Aspect

Learning outcomes in this study were determined from the pre-test and post-test assessments carried out by students. Each item in the multiple-choice questions displayed digital content that was proven to violate the Information and Electronic Transaction (ITE) Law. Students identified the violations committed and choose the correct answer. The mean pre-test scores for the control and experimental groups were 6.00 (SD = 1.41) and 5.82 (SD = 1.36, respectively). The pre-test score did not show a significant difference. In other words, both groups had the same initial knowledge. In addition, the mean post-test scores of the control and experimental groups were 6.47 (SD = 1.46) and 6.00 (SD = 1.51) which also showed no significant difference. This showed that no group was superior.

Table 1. Independent T-Test Learning Achievement

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	T
Pre-test	Control	17	6.00	1.41	0.41*
	Experiment	22	5.82	1.36	
Post-test	Control	17	6.47	1.46	0.97*
	Experiment	22	6.00	1.51	

*p>0.05

The table above also showed that the control group and the experimental group did not experience a significant increase in learning outcomes. The change from face-to-face learning to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has indeed resulted in a learning loss (Engzell et al., 2021). Technically, online learning was often constrained with the loss of internet connection and in some areas, there are still frequent power outages. In this study, the control group consisted of 31 students and the experimental group consisted of 30 students. However, students who did both pre-test and post-test were only 17 and 22 students respectively.

In distance learning, the teacher cannot control the message or activity of the students completely, but the teacher can contribute to the discourse (Baruah, 2012). Therefore,

teachers should act extra in guiding and directing students. Unfortunately, the experimental class teacher did not seem to provide enough guidance on student discussions. He was recorded only giving 3 (three) comments on posting of ITE Law violations examples with the same long texts.

The teacher commented, "Thank you to all of you who have commented on the news above. Greetings always. You as the young generation of the nation's successor must be smart and careful in giving opinions to the public, especially on social media. There are several things you should pay attention to in identifying the truth of a news story: 1. Be careful with provocative titles, hoax news often uses provocative sensational titles, if you encounter news with provocative titles, you should look for references in the form of similar news from

official online sites. 2. Look at the site address, for information obtained from the website or include a link, look at the URL address of the site in question. If it comes from a site that has not been verified as an official press institution-for example using a blog domain, then the information can be considered dubious. 3. Check facts, facts are events that occur with testimony and evidence, while opinions are opinions and impressions of news writers so that they tend to be subjective. 4. Check the authenticity of the photo, the way to check the authenticity of the photo can be by using the Google search engine, namely by drag-and-drop to the google images search field. 5. Participate in anti-hoax discussion groups, there are several anti-hoax groups on social media that you can join in these groups, netizens can also ask whether the information is a hoax or not, as well as see clarifications that have been given by others. (Source:

kominfo. go.id) Those are 5 things you should understand before you comment on social media. And good health always." The message conveyed by the teacher was very informative. However, if the teacher provided feedback on each student's comments with parts of the massage, it would certainly improve the quality of learning.

Affective Aspect

The experimental group conducted online discussions twice. The first, they discussed examples of the ITE Law violation, and the second they discussed the critical content they made. Student discussions were graded based on the quality (thoughtful, reflective, and respectful) of their posts. Paired sample t-test was used to determine the mean difference between the two discussions scores.

Table 2. Paired T-Test Discussion

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Mean Different	t
Discuss. 1	22	5.09	3.65	-1.72	-2.17*
Discuss. 2	22	6.81	1.16		

*p<0.05

The data above showed a significant mean difference between the first and second discussions ($t22=-2.17$, $p<0.05$). The average value of the second discussion was 1.72 points higher than the first discussion. In other words, there was a positive attitude change in the discussion.

Online discussion forums created and supported the development of active and interactive communities that will realize the greatest benefits of social capital (Pendry & Salvatore, 2015). In this study, many students mentioned "be careful in commenting" which is the best way to avoid ITE Law violation. Their comments were proven to increase their caution in commenting on the second discussion.

Conclusion

This research was conducted in a short time and with teachers who had never used Instagram. Although learning media literacy through Instagram is less able to improve students' knowledge, this learning makes students

more aware of their comments on social media. They already understand that online rules should not be violated when socializing online. Civics teachers should be able to apply and guide media literacy learning to maintain the safety and comfort of students in cyberspace.

Acknowledgment

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