

Literature Review: The Relationship Between Social Anxiety and Social Media Addiction in Generation Z

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Abstract

Generation Z is a generation born between 1997-2012. Generation Z grew up in an environment influenced by technology and social media. Social media is a digital technology that allows individuals to connect, interact and exchange messages. According to We Are Sosial, social media users in 2024 are dominated by 18-34 year olds (54.1%), with the frequency of use of Indonesian people spending an average of 3 hours 14 minutes per day and 81% accessing it every day. Excessive use can cause social media addiction so that it has an impact on mental disorders, one of which is social anxiety. This study aims to determine the relationship and influence between social anxiety and addiction to social media among gen Z. This study uses a qualitative method with a literature review approach. The use of this method is based on various sources relevant to the research topic collected regarding the existence of anxiety behavior based on excessive use of social media in gen z, then analyzed. Based on the articles used in this literature review, it shows a positive relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction. This article is expected to provide an overview of the impact of excessive social media use on gen z so that it can be used as a guide in order to avoid mental disorders in the form of social anxiety.

Key words: social anxiety, social media addiction, generation z

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INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, which includes individuals born between 1997 and 2012, is a group that has grown up with digital technology as an integral part of their daily lives. Popular social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and others illustrate that there have been interactions carried out online both individuals, communities, or organizations, especially among students to communicate and engage with others (Abbas et al., 2019). The various benefits obtained from the internet are one of the factors for the significant increase in internet users.

Based on a survey conducted by the GlobalWebIndex Institute in 2020, it was found that 50% of respondents from generation Z aged 16-23 years around the world use social media to communicate with friends and family. As many as 44% of respondents use social media to fill their spare time, 38% to search for specific content, 35% to search for trending topics, 34% to read news, and 32% to find inspiration. In addition, 27% of Generation Z respondents use social media to search for items to buy, watch live broadcasts, share opinions, and follow artists. Meanwhile, 22-24% of respondents access social media for work, looking for communities with similar interests, following sports-related matters, and uploading their personal lives.

Based on the survey results, social media can provide many benefits to its users. Some users use social media to get work-related information, find communities with similar interests, look for inspiration and so on which if used wisely can increase individual productivity. The availability of various information makes the use of social media considered a necessity. The convenience of supporting features makes it easier to get information quickly.

The presence of social media has led to changes in human relationships. The existence of virtual gifts, messages and also games in social media has reduced face-to-face communication between humans. People are starting to turn to social media because they can communicate from anywhere without difficulty. The increasing interest in social networking has caused people to experience addiction to social networking sites (Kirik, Ahmet, Ahmet and Mehmet, 2015).

In general, the younger generation is more vulnerable to social networking site addiction. Economic problems, psychological disorders, or physical disabilities make individuals escape from the real world and seek comfort in the virtual world. This leads to poor social relationships and isolation. Although social network addiction is defined as excessive time spent on social networking sites and the inability to control oneself from accessing social networking sites, there is no definitive diagnosis of this

disorder. Individuals who experience social networking site addiction will have difficulty distinguishing between the real world and the virtual world (Kirik, Ahmet, Ahmet and Mehmet, 2015).

According to the American Psychiatric Association (APA), social anxiety is defined as an ongoing fear of social situations associated with and related to social interactions and actions that make a person have to deal with unfamiliar people or face the possibility of others seeing them, fearing that they will be humiliated or insulted.

In the context of generation Z, research by Fatih Azka et al. (2022) revealed that there is a significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction. They found that individuals who experience social anxiety tend to use social media as an escape or a way to avoid real social situations. However, this use can actually reinforce feelings of anxiety as they constantly compare themselves to others and feel less satisfied with their own lives.

This study aims to delve deeper into the relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction in generation Z, hoping to provide better insights for more effective interventions in dealing with this issue.

METHOD

The design applied in this research is a literature review or literature review. Literature review is the process of searching and analyzing literature sources by reading and reviewing various journals, books, and other publications relevant to the research topic. The aim is to produce writing that discusses a particular topic or issue (Marzali, 2016). This article presents the results of a literature study related to the relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction in generation Z. The articles used in this study include articles on social anxiety and social media addiction. The articles used in this study include national and international articles. After searching with the keywords "social anxiety" and "social media addiction" with a time span of 2018-2024 and through the selection stage, 7 articles were obtained that could be used as literature studies in this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Social Anxiety

Social anxiety is a condition that makes a person feel uncomfortable when in a social environment or meeting other people. According to Rapee and Heimberg (2019) social anxiety is defined as excessive fear or anxiety in one or more social situations where a person experiences feelings of being judged or evaluated negatively by others. Individuals with social anxiety tend to have a negative mental representation of themselves seen from the perspective of others, and they anticipate negative consequences that will occur in social situations. Social anxiety can cause a person to behave in maladaptive ways such as avoidance or awkwardness, it can trigger negative reactions from others, which then reinforces negative internal mental models.

In addition to psychological aspects, physical, social and lifestyle factors also play a role in social anxiety. Supriyanti (2022) also argues that individuals with social anxiety often have difficulty identifying, understanding and regulating their emotions. They tend to lack the ability to accept, express and respond to emotions in adaptive ways. An individual's response when experiencing, expressing and responding to social anxiety is strongly influenced by prevailing cultural norms, values and expectations.

Social anxiety is not a uniform condition. There are various subtypes and different presentations in each individual (Wijaya, 2023). Overuse of social media and digital technology can exacerbate symptoms of social anxiety, especially through unhealthy social comparisons. However, on the other hand, technology can also be utilized to facilitate safe social interactions for those experiencing anxiety.

2. Social Media Addiction in Generation Z

In a study conducted by Rahmawati (2023) found that generation Z, which consists of those born in 1997-2012, has a higher tendency to experience social media addiction compared to previous generations. This is influenced by several factors unique to this generation. Generation Z grew up in an era where self-presentation on social media became increasingly important for self-esteem and social acceptance. This encourages them to engage more intensely in social media activities, which can

eventually lead to addiction.

Generation Z is at a critical stage of development, where self-identity formation is a major task. According to Widyastuti (2023) excessive use of social media can have a significant impact on psychological aspects. Generation Z adolescents tend to rely too much on social feedback and approval on social media to define who they are. This can hinder the development of autonomy and the ability to recognize oneself independently. Social media addiction is associated with increased symptoms of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem in Generation Z. They are often caught up in social comparison. They are often caught up in unhealthy social comparisons and experience pressure to meet unrealistic standards.

A study conducted by Prasetyo (2023) found that social media addiction in generation Z is often associated with significant social anxiety symptoms. Adolescents with social media addiction tend to have difficulty in interacting directly with others. They feel more comfortable interacting in the digital world, but often have difficulty expressing themselves and making meaningful connections face-to-face. This can hinder the development of essential social skills. Over-reliance on social media can trigger feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem and even depression in Generation Z youth. They tend to experience reality distortion and feel unable to fulfill the expectations formed on social media.

No.	Author	Year	Title	Method	Result
1.	Fatih Azka, Dendih Fredi Firdaus, dan Elisa Kurniadewi	2018	Kecemasan Sosial dan Ketergantungan Media Sosial pada Mahasiswa	This study uses a quantitative approach with a predictive correlation method	There is an influence of social anxiety on social media dependence significantly. The social media dependence variable is only influenced by about 7.2% by the social anxiety variable.
2.	Mustafa Baloğlu1,, Hatice İrem Özteke Kozan dan Şahin Kesici	2018	Gender Differences in and the Relationships Between Social Anxiety and Problematic Internet Use: Canonical Analysis	This research uses a correlational quantitative approach	There is a significant relationship between social anxiety and Problematic Internet Use (PIU).
3.	Veren Wendy Warella1 dan Herlan Pratikto	2021	Kesepian dan kecemasan sosial: Dapatkah menjadi prediktor kecanduan media sosial?	This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlative research design	This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlative research design is a significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction in college students because the social anxiety variable with social media addiction obtained a t value of 0.496 with a significance value = 0.000

No.	Author	Year	Title	Method	Result
					<0.05.
4.	Bram Kristian Santoso, IGAA Noviekayati dan Amherstia Pasca Rina	2022	Kecemasan sosial pada remaja akhir: Bagaimana peranan adiksi media sosial?	This research uses a correlational quantitative approach	There is a highly significant positive correlation between the social media addiction variable and the social anxiety variable. Hail is obtained from the results of the Pearson Product Moment correlation test obtained a value of 0.948 with $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.001$).
5.	R.Widya Henisaputr	2022	Analisis Hubungan Kecanduan Media Sosial Dengan Kecemasan Sosial dan Hubungan Interpersonal pada Remaja	This research uses a quantitative approach	The results of this study indicate that the social media addiction variable has a t-value of -0.98, meaning that social media addiction does not contribute to social anxiety.
6.	Elena Stanculescu dan Mark D. Griffiths	2022	Social media addiction profiles and their antecedents using latent profile analysis: The contribution of social anxiety, gender, and age	This study used a quantitative approach	The results of this study indicate that individuals with higher social anxiety are associated with severe social media addiction.
7.	Farikha Aslamiyah, Dyan Evita Santi dan Aliffia Ananta	2024	Kecemasan Sosial Dewasa Awal: Adakah Peran Kecenderungan Kecanduan Media Sosial dan Body Dissatisfaction?	This research is a correlational quantitative research	There is a highly significant positive relationship between the tendency of social media addiction and early adult social anxiety obtained from the regression t value of 10.654 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$).

Based on the articles reviewed, there is a correlation between social anxiety and social media addiction.

Research conducted by Fatih Azka, Dendih Fredi Firdaus, and Elisa Kurniadewi in 2018 shows that

there is a significant positive relationship between the level of social anxiety and social media dependence. Students with higher levels of social anxiety tend to use social media more often and show signs of dependence. The findings show that students with social anxiety use social media as a way to avoid face-to-face interactions. Social media becomes a place where they can communicate without having to face the fear of direct judgment.

Research conducted by Mustafa Baloglu¹, Hatice İrem Özteke Kozan and Şahin Kesici in 2018 showed that there is a significant relationship between social anxiety and Problematic Internet Use (PIU). Individuals who experience higher social anxiety tend to have higher levels of PIU. This study also shows that women tend to show higher levels of social anxiety than men.

Research by Veren Wendy Warella¹ and Herlan Pratikto in 2021 showed that there is a significant relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction. Individuals with high social anxiety tend to use social media as a way to avoid face-to-face interactions that they find frightening or threatening.

Research by Bram Kristian Santoso, IGAA Noviekayati and Amherstia Pasca Rina in 2022 showed a significant positive relationship between social media addiction and social anxiety. The results of this study indicate that adolescents with social anxiety use social media as a tool to avoid face-to-face social interaction. They feel safer communicating through social media so they don't need to communicate directly which can cause them to face anxiety.

The results of R.Widya Henisaputr's research in 2022 show that there is a significant positive relationship between social media addiction and social anxiety. Adolescents with high levels of social media addiction tend to have high levels of social anxiety. In addition, this study also states that social anxiety can exacerbate the negative impact of social media addiction on interpersonal relationships.

A 2022 study conducted by Elena Stănculescu and Mark D. Griffiths showed that individuals with high levels of social media addiction were positively associated with high social media addiction behavior. These findings support the view that individuals with social anxiety may use social media as a coping mechanism to avoid face-to-face interactions. This study also shows that women use social media with higher intensity than girls.

Research by Farikha Aslamayah, Dyan Evita Santi and Aliffia Ananta in 2024 showed a significant positive relationship between the tendency of social media addiction and social anxiety. Early adults with high levels of social media addiction tend to have high levels of social anxiety. This study also states that body dissatisfaction can strengthen the relationship between social media addiction and social anxiety. Individuals who are dissatisfied with their bodies and addicted to social media simultaneously have a greater risk of experiencing social anxiety.

CONCLUSION

From the review of all articles, it shows that there is a positive relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction in generation z. Research shows that social anxiety is positively associated with social media addiction. Individuals with high social anxiety tend to use social media as a way to avoid stressful face-to-face interactions, which in turn can worsen their level of addiction to social media. Based on this literature review, it is clear that there is a complex relationship between social anxiety and social media addiction in Generation Z. Social media addiction is not only a consequence of social anxiety but can also exacerbate the symptoms of anxiety. The use of social media as a means of escape from real social interactions, pressure to appear perfect, and constant social comparison can reinforce the cycle of anxiety and dependence.

In addition, factors such as body dissatisfaction, loneliness, and gender differences also play an important role in this dynamic. Therefore, holistic and individual-focused interventions are needed to reduce the negative impact of social media addiction and social anxiety in Generation Z. Further research is needed to develop effective strategies to help Generation Z better manage their social media use and improve their mental well-being..

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