THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract
Social interaction is a process where individuals who establish contact and communicate influence each other in thoughts and actions. This process involves relationships between individuals or between groups of people. When two people meet, interaction begins; they greet each other, shake hands, and engage in conversation. Such activities are forms of social interaction. Using a literature review method—drawing from various books and journals—it's evident that the presence of the internet and technology has significantly altered societal interaction patterns. Interactions can now occur without the need to be in the same physical space and time. The internet breaks down barriers that previously hindered interaction, expanding what was once limited to immediate social circles into global networks. However, while technology facilitates connectivity, these changes also present new challenges.
Keywords: Technology, the Millennial Generation, and Social Interaction

INTRODUCTION

Social interaction is a crucial element of human life, forming the foundation for the development of social structures and dynamics within society. In the context of globalization and technological advancement, the dynamics of social interaction have become increasingly complex and significant for study. These dynamics encompass not only interpersonal communication but also social change, cultural influence, and adaptation to environmental changes. In the digital era, social media and information technology have transformed the way humans interact, creating global networks that transcend traditional boundaries.

The 21st century is marked by rapid technological development, which has facilitated human activities and communication. The speed of information transfer now reaches various regions around the world. Humans inherently need to interact with others in their daily lives. According to Luthans, one of the essential conditions for social interaction is communication. Today, communication has seen a quality improvement in various forms—not just through voice but also live video via advanced applications or television broadcasts. However, the ease provided by technological advancements also brings about certain negative impacts. [1]

The transition from conventional to digital practices has its own consequences for human life. These consequences can be both positive and negative. The positive impacts of the digital era include quicker and easier access to necessary information, the growth of innovation in various fields oriented toward digital technology that facilitates work processes, the emergence of digital mass media, especially electronic media as a source of knowledge and information for the public, the enhancement of human resource quality through the development and utilization of information and communication technology, the rise of online learning resources like digital libraries that improve educational quality, and the development of e-businesses such as online stores that provide various goods and make them easier to obtain. Such digital transformations universally offer productivity, efficiency, speed, and cross-border reach. [2]

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[1] Aang Ghunaifi, "Merestorasi interaksi sosial pada era teknologi melalui pendidikan jasmani dan olahraga," *Proseding seminar Nasional Profesionalisme tenaga Profesi PJOK*, t.t.

[2] Wira Respati, "Transformasi media massa menuju era masyarakat informasi di indonesia," *Humaniora* 5, no. 1 (2014): 40.

However, the negative impacts of the digital era must be anticipated and addressed to avoid potential losses or dangers. These include the threat of intellectual property rights (IPR) violations due to easy data access, leading to increased plagiarism; the risk of short attention spans in children, training them to think superficially and lack focus; the misuse of knowledge to commit crimes like breaching banking systems; the decline in moral standards; and the ineffective use of information technology as a learning medium, such as relying solely on downloading e-books without utilizing printed materials, or visiting digital libraries without also visiting physical ones. [3]

METHOD

The library research method is an approach that relies on written sources as the primary data. In this method, researchers gather, analyze, and draw conclusions from various materials such as books, journals, articles, reports, and other documents relevant to the topic under investigation. This type of research is generally used to understand specific concepts, theories, or phenomena without conducting direct experiments.

The library research process begins with identifying a specific topic. The researcher then identifies key terms and main concepts related to the topic. Following this, the researcher collects various relevant sources from both physical and digital libraries, including online databases, library catalogs, and academic journals.

The next stage involves critically reading the collected sources to find the most relevant and reliable information. The researcher then analyzes the obtained data, connecting various findings and concepts, and synthesizing the existing literature. This analysis is integrated into a narrative that explains the research findings and answers the research questions. The study concludes with a summary of the main findings and the theoretical implications of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
1. Traces of Social Interaction in the Digital World

Social interaction is a process where individuals establish contact and communicate, influencing each other in thoughts and actions. It involves relationships between individuals and groups of people. When two people meet, interaction begins—they greet each other, shake hands, and engage in conversation. Such activities are forms of social interaction. [4]

Humans are social beings who constantly need others around them. Therefore, every individual acts and strives to fulfill each other's needs, including the instinct to interact with fellow humans. It's important to note that human life is always in a state of flux, accompanied by changes that require continuous adaptation. The Industrial Revolution 1.0 to the current Industrial Revolution 4.0 is tangible proof of this dynamic.

Today, smartphones have become highly popular, especially among the millennial generation. Based on various experts' opinions from different countries and professions, it can be concluded that Indonesian millennials are those born between 1980 and 2000. Compared to previous generations, millennials have unique characteristics based on their region and socio-economic conditions. One of the main traits of millennials is their increased use of and familiarity with communication, media, and digital technology. They are passionate and productive, and compared to earlier generations, they have a stronger affinity for technology. [5]

The presence of the internet and technology has significantly altered societal interaction patterns. Interactions can now occur without being in the same physical space and time. The

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[3] Ilham Tanjung Saputra, "media sosial dan perubahan pola interaksi sosial generasi milenial pedesaan" (Fakultas Ushuluddin dan Studi Agama UIN Raden Intan Lampung, 2022).

[4] Burhan Bungin, *Sosiologi Komunikasi Teori, paragdima, dan diskursus teknologi komunikasi di masyarakat* (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Grup, 2013).

[5] Reski P, "Daya tarik interaksi dunia maya," *Equilbrium : Jurnal Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (2020).

internet dissolves the boundaries that once hindered interaction. With modernity, the connection between space and time has been disrupted, and space gradually separates from place. This suggests that humans have created new forms of interaction, such as those facilitated by the internet, without the need for physical meetings. [6]

2. The Changing Patterns of Human Relationships in the Grip of Technology

Humans use technology because they possess intellect. With their intellect, they seek to solve problems, aiming for a better, safer life, and more. Technological development occurs because people use their intellect to address the challenges they face. Technological advancement is inevitable in life, as it progresses hand in hand with the advancement of knowledge.

Every innovation is created to bring positive benefits to human life. Technology also provides many conveniences and introduces new ways for people to carry out their activities. Over the past few decades, humans have enjoyed numerous benefits from technological innovations. In today's era of globalization, mastery of technology has become a prestige and an indicator of a nation's progress. A country is considered advanced if it has a high level of technological mastery, while those unable to adapt to technological advancements are often labeled as failing nations. [7]

The changing patterns of human relationships in the grip of technology reflect a significant transformation in how individuals interact and form connections. The emergence of technology, especially through mobile devices and communication applications, has provided unprecedented ease of access and connectivity. Individuals can now connect instantly, overcoming geographical and temporal limitations. Relationship patterns have become more versatile, involving communication through text messages, video calls, and social media.

Interactions that were once confined to close social circles can now extend to global networks. However, while technology facilitates connectivity, these changes also introduce new challenges. For instance, there is a risk of losing the personal dimension of interaction, where communication often occurs through screens without facial expressions or eye contact.

Additionally, ethical questions regarding privacy and information security have become increasingly relevant. In the grip of technology, the patterns of human relationships experience a duality between the ease of connectivity and the complexity of interpersonal dynamics, creating a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape in everyday life.

3. Technological Innovation and the Evolution of Social Norms

Significant changes in technology have played a critical role in shaping and transforming the social norms that prevail in society. The transformation in communication patterns has become increasingly apparent with the advent of text messaging, video chats, and social media, which have permeated everyday life. The digital identities that emerge through social media platforms have also altered how individuals present themselves, influencing social norms surrounding self-image and privacy. The interconnectedness among individuals has undergone significant changes, affecting social norms related to social networks, inclusivity, and diversity in social interactions.

Technological advancements have brought about changes in work dynamics and collaboration, creating new social norms related to flexible working hours and the use of digital tools in the workplace. The rapid access to information through technology has influenced social norms related to knowledge and learning, transforming how information is shared, sought, and disseminated.

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[6] Vitri Nainggolan, "Peranan media sosial instagram dalam interaksi sosial mahasiswa fakultas ilmu sosial dan politik," t.t.

[7] Muhammad Ngafifi, "Kemajuan teknologi dan pola hidup manusia dalam perspektif sosial budaya," t.t.

We can now observe how technological advancements have influenced lifestyles and mindsets, especially among teenagers. In the past, students would attend school carrying only textbooks and stationery, but now we see students going to school with smartphones as essential items. Whether they truly need these phones for communication is debatable; what is clear is that for today's teenagers, smartphones are an indispensable tool for socializing. The more advanced the smartphone they own, the cooler and more confident they feel—even though they may not know how to use the sophisticated features their phones offer. [8]

New ethical challenges, such as privacy and data security, have also become integral to the changes in social norms. Moreover, technology plays a crucial role in shaping social norms within specific groups through interactions on platforms like chat groups and online forums. Overall, the impact of technology on social norms creates a dynamic social landscape, driving changes in how we interact and form relationships in this digital era.

The advancement of information technology is a result of the increasingly sophisticated human knowledge, bringing about changes in human life patterns. It provides various conveniences that can be used to alleviate some of the challenges people face at work, in communication, at school, and elsewhere, thereby encouraging the use of information technology. However, the misuse of information technology, such as accessing pornography or using it as a medium for bullying, highlights the drawbacks if it is not used appropriately. [9]

CONCLUSION

Humans are social beings who constantly need others around them. Consequently, every individual acts and strives to fulfill each other's needs, driven by the innate instinct to interact with fellow humans. It is essential to recognize that human life is always in a state of flux, accompanied by changes that continuously require adaptation.

The progression from the Industrial Revolution 1.0 to today's Industrial Revolution 4.0 serves as clear evidence of this dynamic. The presence of the Internet and technology has significantly altered the patterns of social interaction. Interactions can now occur without the need for being in the same physical space and time. The Internet has dissolved the barriers that once hindered interaction, expanding what was once confined to close social circles into a global network. However, while technology facilitates connectivity, these changes also introduce new challenges.

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[8] Hendro Wahyudi, "Teknologi dan Kehidupan Masyarakat," *Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi* 3, no. 1 (2014).

[9] Jagat Aditya Dewantara, "Pengaruh Teknologi dalam sikap moralitas dan tanggung jawab," *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 7, no. 1 (2023).

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