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The Short Video Platform Phenomenon and Its Impact on Pre-teen Children's Behavior: An Empirical Study in Medan City

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the impact of using short video platforms on the behavior of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. The rapid development of social media, especially short video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels, has become an inseparable part of the lives of pre-adolescent children. In this context, this study explores how addiction to short video content affects children's social, emotional, and cognitive behavior. The research method used is a quantitative approach with a survey involving 150 respondents aged 10-12 years from various schools in Medan City. The results of the study indicate that excessive use of short video platforms is correlated with increased impulsive behavior, decreased direct social interaction, and a tendency to imitate trends and lifestyles displayed in video content. In addition, this study also found that the duration of use of this platform is closely related to decreased concentration in learning at school. This study recommends stricter supervision by parents and digital education for pre-adolescent children to minimize the negative impacts of social media use.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed the way humans communicate and access information. Among the most influential digital platforms today are short video-based social media, such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. These platforms offer short videos that can be watched quickly, capturing users' attention in seconds. This phenomenon has given birth to a new wave in the way people, especially children and adolescents, consume digital content (Kemp, 2023).

TikTok, as one of the most popular short video platforms, has more than 1 billion monthly active users worldwide, with a significant proportion consisting of children and teenagers. In Indonesia, TikTok has become one of the most downloaded and used applications by school-age children. This shows how strong the appeal of this platform is for the younger generation

growing up in the digital era (Datareportal, 2023).

Short video platforms offer a variety of content that is entertaining, informative, and sometimes educational. However, the ease of access and the huge volume of content also raise concerns, especially regarding its impact on pre-teen children. Children at this age are in a critical developmental phase where they begin to form their identity and are influenced by their social environment, including digital media (Livingstone, 2019).

A study conducted by Anderson & Jiang (2018) found that the more time children spend on social media, the more likely they are to experience behavioral changes, both positive and negative. Pre-teens, in this case, are the group most vulnerable to the influence of social media because they are not yet fully able to filter or critically process the information they receive.

One of the most common negative impacts of social media use is addiction. Social media addiction, especially to short video platforms, has become a global issue. Many children feel compelled to continuously use these platforms without time control, resulting in decreased productivity, quality of direct social interactions, and mental health disorders (Fikri, 2023).

In Medan City, the use of short video platforms has also become a growing trend among pre-teens. Children aged 10 to 12 years often spend hours every day watching videos on TikTok and similar platforms. This phenomenon raises concerns among parents and educators about its long-term impact on children's behavior (BPS Medan City, 2022).

One of the main problems that arise from excessive use of short video platforms is the emergence of impulsive behavior in children. Pre-teen children tend to imitate what they see in videos, including behavior that may not be in accordance with local social or cultural norms. For example, viral challenges on TikTok often encourage children to do dangerous things to gain popularity (Cheng et al., 2021).

In addition to impulsive behavior, research also shows that excessive use of social media can lead to a decrease in children's ability to interact directly with others. Children who are addicted to social media are more likely to withdraw from their social environment and have difficulty building healthy interpersonal relationships (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

Social media addiction not only affects children's social behavior, but also their academic performance. A study conducted by Kirschner & Karpinski (2010) showed that students who frequently use social media tend to have lower grades than those who do not. This is due to impaired concentration and reduced time spent studying.

In the context of Medan City, this negative impact can be seen from the increasing number of cases of pre-teen children who have difficulty balancing time for studying and time for surfing on social media. Many parents reported that their children experienced a decrease in learning motivation because they spent too much time watching short videos (BPS Medan City, 2022).

On the other hand, short video-based social media also provides benefits, especially in terms of creativity and digital skills. Children who use TikTok or Instagram Reels are often involved in content creation, which can develop technical skills such as video editing and shooting. However, these benefits are often not commensurate with the risks if the use of these platforms is not properly controlled (Chambers et al., 2019).

Lack of digital education among the community, especially parents and teachers, is one of the main reasons why pre-teens are vulnerable to the negative impacts of social media. Many parents do not understand how to monitor their children's online activities, while teachers in schools are also not fully equipped with the skills needed to educate students about the wise use of social media (Livingstone, 2019).

In addition, there is concern that pre-teen children who are frequently exposed to short

video content tend to lower their moral and ethical standards. Much of the content on TikTok contains elements of violence, sexuality, or other inappropriate behavior. When children watch such content repeatedly, there is a high chance that they will consider it normal (Mendoza, 2020).

Despite efforts by some social media platforms to filter out content that is inappropriate for children, their effectiveness is questionable. The algorithms used by platforms often promote the most popular content without considering the psychological impact it has on young users. This exacerbates the problem of addiction and exposure to inappropriate content (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

Research on the impact of short video platforms on children in Indonesia, especially in Medan City, is still limited. Most of the existing studies focus on the impact of social media in general, without detailing the specific influence of short videos on the social and emotional development of pre-adolescent children. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the impact of short video platforms in more depth.

In this study, a quantitative approach was used to measure the impact of short video platform usage on the behavior of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. Data were collected through a survey involving pre-adolescent children from various socio-economic backgrounds. This survey was designed to measure the intensity of use, the type of content consumed, and the behavioral changes experienced by children after accessing the short video platform (Creswell, 2014).

In addition to the survey, in-depth interviews with parents and teachers were also conducted to gain a broader perspective on how children are affected by social media. These interviews helped in understanding the role of parental supervision as well as the role of schools in educating children about safe and responsible use of social media (Yanti, 2017).

This study is expected to provide significant contributions in understanding the phenomenon of short video-based social media addiction among pre-adolescent children. With a better understanding of its negative and positive impacts, it is hoped that parents, educators, and policy makers can take appropriate steps to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits of using this technology.

Overall, this study aims to provide deeper insights into how the use of short video platforms affects the behavior of pre-teen children in Medan City. Thus, this study can be used as a basis for developing more effective policies and strategies in addressing the negative impacts of social media.

With this background, this study is also expected to contribute to the academic literature related to social media, children's behavior, and the challenges of digitalization in the modern era. This study emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach in understanding the phenomenon of social media and its impact on the younger generation in Indonesia (Livingstone, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to measure the impact of using short video platforms on the behavior of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. This study was designed to obtain an empirical picture of the intensity of use, the type of content consumed, and behavioral changes caused by short video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts.

Types of research

This study is a descriptive quantitative study, where numerical data is collected through a

survey given to pre-adolescent children. Quantitative research was chosen because it allows researchers to measure relationships between variables objectively and measurably (Creswell, 2014). This method allows for extensive data collection in a relatively short time.

Population and Sample

The population in this study were pre-adolescent children aged 10-12 years in Medan City who actively use short video platforms. The research sample was selected using purposive sampling technique, which is a sample selection method based on certain criteria. The criteria used were pre-adolescent children who actively use short video platforms for at least one hour per day in the last three months. The number of samples used in this study was 150 children, which was considered sufficient to provide a representative picture (Sugiyono, 2017).

Data collection technique

The data collection technique used in this study was a survey using a closed questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of questions that measure the intensity of use of short video platforms, the types of content that are often consumed, and changes in social, emotional, and cognitive behavior that may arise. This questionnaire is designed based on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (Sugiyono, 2017).

In addition to the questionnaire, in-depth interviews with several parents and teachers were also conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of social media use on the behavior of pre-adolescent children. These interviews used a semi-structured format to ensure flexibility in developing questions based on the responses given by the informants (Yin, 2017).

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. This technique is used to describe and interpret the data results numerically, which are then displayed in the form of tables, graphs, and diagrams. Statistical programs such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) are used to analyze the data, including testing validity, reliability, and correlation between variables (Ghozali, 2018).

The results of the data analysis will be used to answer the problem formulation, namely how the intensity of use of short video platforms affects children's behavior, as well as the positive and negative impacts that arise from the use of these platforms.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

To ensure that the questionnaire used is valid and reliable, validity and reliability tests are carried out. Validity measures the extent to which a research instrument is able to measure what it should measure, while reliability measures the consistency of the instrument (Sugiyono, 2017). Validity testing is carried out using content validity through consultation with education and psychology experts, while reliability is tested using Cronbach's Alpha.

Research Ethics

In conducting this research, research ethics is an important concern, especially since it involves child respondents. Consent from parents or guardians is required before children are included in the survey. The researcher also ensures that the respondents' personal data is protected and not used for purposes outside of this research. Information obtained from respondents will be treated anonymously to maintain their privacy (Creswell, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Intensity of Using Short Video Platforms Such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and Youtube Shorts Affects the Social and Emotional Behavior of Pre-Teenagers in Medan City

This study was conducted to examine the effect of the intensity of use of short video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts on the social and emotional behavior of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. Based on the results of a survey conducted on 150 respondents consisting of pre-adolescent children aged 10-12 years. Most respondents (85%) reported that they use short video platforms every day, with an average duration of 2 to 3 hours per day. TikTok is the most popular platform among respondents (65%), followed by YouTube Shorts (25%) and Instagram Reels (10%). This finding is consistent with national trends showing that TikTok is one of the most popular platforms among children and adolescents in Indonesia (Datareportal, 2023).

The majority of respondents reported that they watch more entertainment content such as dances, viral challenges, and funny videos. However, there are also a number of children (around 30%) who stated that they consume content that contains educational elements, such as scientific experiment videos and skill tutorials. This shows that although educational content is available on the platform, entertainment content dominates the preferences of pre-teens (Febrina,, 2022).

The use of short video platforms appears to have a significant impact on the social behavior of pre-adolescents. As many as 70% of respondents reported that they felt more confident after frequently engaging in making videos and interacting with their friends through comments and sharing features. They felt that these platforms allowed them to express themselves more freely, which could improve their social skills in an online context (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

However, not all social impacts are positive. As many as 45% of respondents admitted to having participated in viral challenges they saw on short video platforms. Some of these challenges required them to take impulsive or even risky actions. Parents interviewed reported that their children often tried to imitate the behavior they saw in the videos, which in some cases was dangerous or inappropriate (Cheng et al., 2021).

The study also found that heavy use of short-form video platforms can reduce the frequency of face-to-face interactions between children and their family and friends. Approximately 40% of respondents reported that they prefer to interact with friends online through comments and messages on social media rather than meeting in person. This suggests that while these platforms increase online social interaction, there is a decrease in face-to-face interactions that are important for the social development of pre-adolescent children (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

In addition to the social impact, this study also found that the use of short video platforms has a significant impact on the emotional condition of pre-teens. As many as 55% of respondents reported that they felt happier and more excited after using this platform, especially after receiving likes, comments, or recognition from friends. However, around 25% also reported that they often felt anxious or stressed if the videos they uploaded did not get the expected response. This indicates an emotional dependence on social validation in cyberspace (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Signs of addiction to short video platforms also emerged in this study. As many as 30% of respondents admitted that they found it difficult to stop watching videos, even when they realized that they had spent too much time on the platform. They felt compelled to continue watching videos because of the endless scroll feature implemented by TikTok and other platforms, which psychologically stimulates addictive behavior (Febrina, 2019).

Excessive use of social media also has an impact on the academic performance of pre-teens. As many as 40% of respondents reported that they found it more difficult to focus on schoolwork after using short video platforms for several hours. Parents also confirmed that their children experienced decreased motivation to study and tended to procrastinate on homework due to being too focused on social media (Sanny, 2023).

Parental supervision of pre-teen children's use of short video platforms in Medan City is relatively low. As many as 60% of respondents stated that they did not receive strict time limits from their parents regarding social media use. Most parents interviewed also admitted that they had difficulty supervising their children's online activities due to a lack of understanding of how the platform works (Livingstone, 2019).

Despite some negative impacts, the use of short video platforms also has a positive impact on the development of children's creativity. As many as 50% of respondents reported that they felt more creative after using TikTok or YouTube Shorts to create videos. They learned new skills such as editing videos, adding music, and displaying interesting visual content. These skills can be beneficial in the long run if directed properly (Chambers et al., 2019).

Teachers in schools in Medan are also recognized as having an important role in educating children about the wise use of social media. However, this study found that most teachers do not fully understand how to provide effective digital education. Lack of training in digital literacy is one of the main obstacles faced by educators in helping students manage their use of social media (Livingstone, 2019).

Pre-teens tend to imitate what they see on short video platforms. Around 35% of respondents admitted to having imitated behavior they saw in videos, including behavior that may be inappropriate or contrary to local social and cultural values. This suggests that social media has the potential to significantly influence children's behavioral norms, which may result in a shift in values among pre-teens (Mendoza, 2020).

Interestingly, around 30% of respondents admitted to being aware of the negative impacts of excessive social media use, including addiction and effects on mental health. Some children even said they tried to reduce their use of social media, but had difficulty due to peer pressure to stay active on the platform (Auxier & Anderson, 2021).

Based on the results of this study, it is important for parents, teachers, and policy makers to work together to educate pre-teens about healthy and wise use of social media. Clear time limits, content monitoring, and open discussions about the impacts of social media can help children use these platforms in a more positive and productive way.

2. Positive and Negative Impacts of Using Short Video Platforms on Personality Development and Social Interaction of Pre-Teenagers in Medan City

This study aims to identify the positive and negative impacts of using short video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts on the development of personality and social interactions of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. Increasing Self-Confidence One of the dominant positive impacts of using short video platforms is increasing self-confidence in pre-adolescent children. As many as 60% of respondents reported that they felt more confident after frequently creating and sharing videos on platforms such as TikTok. They feel more comfortable expressing themselves through videos, especially when they get support in the form of likes, positive comments, and new followers. This is in line with research showing that social media can be a means of developing self-identity in children and adolescents (Livingstone, 2019).

Creativity Development The use of short video platforms also stimulates creativity in pre-teens. Around 55% of respondents stated that they like to be creative with new ideas when making videos, including in terms of video editing, music selection, and creating visual narratives. The process of making this video provides an opportunity for children to hone their creative skills. The content produced can vary, from dance videos to tutorials on certain skills. Previous research also shows that digital media can be a tool for expressing children's creativity (Chambers et al., 2019).

Improved Communication Skills Most of the children involved in the study also showed improvements in their communication skills. They learned to organize their ideas in a more structured and engaging way, both verbally and non-verbally, when creating video content. As many as 50% of respondents reported that they felt more comfortable communicating, both online and in person, after being actively involved in this social media platform. Social media has helped them learn how to interact and adapt to their audience.

Fostering a Sense of Solidarity The use of short video platforms also facilitates broader social interactions among pre-teens. Around 45% of respondents said they felt more connected to their friends and other children around the world through video challenges or collaborations. They felt part of a supportive online community, which promoted solidarity among users (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). The platform gave them the opportunity to collaborate with friends in making videos, which in turn developed teamwork skills.

Positive Impact on Learning A small portion of respondents (around 20%) stated that they gained educational benefits from short video platforms. They watch educational content, such as cooking tutorials, scientific experiments, and short lessons presented in a fun format. These platforms provide quick and easy access to useful information, which can support children's cognitive development and learning skills (Cheng et al., 2021).

Negative Impact on Social Balance Despite the many positive impacts, the study also revealed some significant negative impacts of using short video platforms. One of the most striking negative impacts is the decrease in face-to-face interactions between children and their families. As many as 40% of respondents reported that they spend less time with family or friends in person due to being too focused on using social media. This decrease in social interaction can affect children's ability to build healthy interpersonal relationships in the real world (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

Negative Imitative Behavior Around 35% of respondents admitted that they often imitate behaviors they see in viral videos, both positive and negative. Unsafe or inappropriate viral challenges, such as dangerous challenges involving extreme physical actions, are among the most frequently imitated behaviors. This can be harmful to children, both physically and mentally, especially when they do not understand the risks behind the challenge (Mendoza, 2020).

Social Pressure and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) As many as 30% of respondents reported that they felt pressured to stay active on social media platforms because they were worried about missing out on trends or losing followers. The FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) phenomenon is one of the emotional problems experienced by pre-teens who intensively use short video platforms. They feel the need to always be involved in the latest trends to get social validation from their friends (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Social Anxiety and Self-Dissatisfaction Some respondents (25%) stated that they felt anxious when the videos they uploaded did not get the expected response, such as likes or comments. Relying on positive responses from online audiences makes them more susceptible to emotional problems such as anxiety and self-dissatisfaction. This can negatively affect the

development of their self-confidence, especially when they compare themselves to others who get more attention on social media (Oberst et al., 2020).

Disruption of Sleep Patterns and Physical Health Another negative impact is disruption of sleep patterns. As many as 30% of respondents admitted to using short video platforms until late at night, which resulted in lack of sleep. This habit can affect their physical health and cognitive abilities at school, including reducing concentration and memory. Previous studies have also shown that excessive use of social media, especially before bedtime, can disrupt the sleep quality of children and adolescents (Daulay, 2019).

Decreased Academic Performance Intensive use of short-form video platforms has also been linked to decreased academic performance in some pre-adolescents. As many as 35% of respondents reported that they often procrastinate on schoolwork or homework due to the amount of time spent watching or making videos. This suggests that there is a potential negative impact on academic focus and accountability that parents and teachers should be aware of (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

Influence on Social and Cultural Norms The content consumed by pre-teens through short video platforms does not always conform to local cultural norms and values. Some respondents admitted that they were often exposed to content that was contrary to social norms, such as impolite behavior or displaying lifestyles that were not appropriate for their age. This can affect children's perceptions of socially acceptable behavior, which ultimately affects their character and moral development (Livingstone, 2019).

Lack of Parental Supervision Most respondents reported that they did not receive adequate supervision from their parents regarding social media use. Around 55% of parents interviewed admitted that they had difficulty monitoring their children's activities on short video platforms due to limited knowledge about the technology. This increases the risk of children being exposed to inappropriate or even harmful content (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

The Need for Digital Literacy The results of this study also show the importance of digital literacy education among pre-teens and parents. As many as 60% of respondents stated that they did not fully understand the long-term impacts of social media use on their personality and social interactions. Parents and teachers have an important role in providing guidance on healthy and responsible social media use (Livingstone, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study shows that the use of short video platforms has a complex impact on the social and emotional behavior of pre-adolescent children in Medan City. Although there are positive impacts such as increased creativity and self-confidence, there are also risks that need to be watched out for, such as addiction, impulsive behavior, and decreased academic achievement. Therefore, a holistic approach is needed to manage social media use among children so that the benefits can be maximized and the risks minimized.

Recommendations for Healthy Social Media Use Based on the findings of this study, a balanced approach is needed in utilizing short video platforms. These platforms can be used as tools to develop creativity, communication skills, and self-confidence, as long as their use is well regulated. Parents, teachers, and policymakers must work together to set time limits for use, monitor the content consumed, and provide education on digital literacy to children so that they can use the platform positively.

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