Determination of Adolescent Worldview - Combating Negative Influence of Social Media

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Abstract

Use of social media creates positive or negative impacts on adolescents. There are a number of factors enabling adolescents to make use of social media positively. One of the factors studied in this research is the adolescent worldview. The adolescent worldview greatly determines the way she behaves and her attitude towards social media. The result of this research shows that adolescent worldview may release and enables her to reject negative impacts of social media, particularly from modern culturalisms as relativism, individualism, emotionalism, presentism (present-time ism), materialism, autonomy, victimism, and turn it into a positive impact on herself. Worldviews may be differentiated based on three categories namely religion, spirituality and secularity. This research is conducted by explorative-qualitative approach, using case study research method. Data collection process was conducted by in-depth interview with late adolescents.

Key Words: Worldview, Social Media, Adolescent

Abstrak

Penggunaan Media sosial menimbulkan dampak yang positif juga negatif terhadap remaja. Terdapat sejumlah faktor yang membuat remaja bisa memanfaatkan media sosial dengan positif. Salah satu faktor yang diteliti dalam penelitian ini adalah wawasan dunia yang dimiliki anak remaja. Wawasan dunia yang dimiliki anak remaja sangat menentukan bagaimana ia bersikap dan berperilaku terhadap media sosial. Hasil penelitian ini, menunjukkan bahwa wawasan dunia anak remaja dapat melepaskan dan memampukannya menolak dampak negatif media sosial khususnya dari isme-isme budaya modern seperti relativisme, individualisme, emosionalisme, presentisme (kekinian-isme), materialisme, otonomi, victimisme (korban-isme) dan mengubahnya menjadi sesuatu yang positif buat dirinya. Wawasan dunia bisa dibedakan berdasarkan tiga kategori yakni agama, spiritualiti dan sekuler. Penelitian ini dilakukan melalui pendekatan kualitatif bersifat eksploratif, dengan menggunakan metode penelitian studi kasus. Adapun proses pengumpulan data diperoleh lewat wawancara mendalam terhadap anak remaja akhir.

Kata Kunci: Wawasan Dunia, Media Sosial, Anak Remaja

Introduction

The current development of information technology brings human to a period known as e-life, where human lives are greatly influenced by various electronic-related necessities. We are familiar with the terms *e-commerce, e-government, e-education, e-library, e-journal, e-medicine, e-laboratory, e-biodiversity,* and other electronic-based terms. The development of this information media has been continuously changing with many extraordinary innovations driving the number of users as of today to be almost 6 billion people (customers) connected with each other (*Kompas*, May 3, 2013). The presence of new media does not only cause the positive impacts but the negative ones also. One of those is related to cyber crime. Based on Symantec research, Indonesia has been ranked 6th in the world for the malware-spam-zombie category, whereas in 2010 Indonesia was still ranked 28th for spam-zombie (Kompas.com, 2012/05/16).

Social media also succeeds in influencing many adolescents to embrace modern culture full of -isms such as *relativism, individualism, emotionalism, presentism (present-time ism), materialism, autonomy, victimism.* These -isms will produce adolescents having the attitude which is no longer critical to social media negative effects, even indifferent attitude, no self-control, consumtive, selfish, indifferent to the applicable rules.

Adolescent worldview greatly determines her attitude and behavior towards everything exposed to her. Each person, in this case adolescent, has a worldview to be her reference in behaving and for her attitude. There are three types of worldview known in general, namely those which are religious, secular and spiritual in nature. As revealed by Tripp (2010), that the real problem is not in the culture or technology but in the user thereof. Therefore adolescents need a protector, but is it a religious, secular or spiritual one?

Theoretical Framework

Many negative impacts of social media befall very young users as well as those regarded as maturity. A number of researchers (1990s)- Atkin, Jeffers and Neuendorf, 1998 in Giles (2003.267) found the facts related to "what influences individuals to "go online" or use online media". Through surveys conducted by telephone in Midwestern United States during 1966, they found that, most of typically "innovative" internet customers were adolescents, affluent, educated and mostly were boys. Other finding showed that adolescents used the internet not to find information. Similar to Gross's finding, 2004, of which he found that adolescents in the developing countries were heavy internet users. Boys tended to use computers and played games compared to girls. But in general, there was no difference between both genders. He stated that adolescents spent much of their time for online communication with people who have had offline interaction with them (Bjorklund & Blasi, 2012: 558).

Statistically, social media users generally are plentiful, Safco (2012). There are three kinds of social network making them of great interest, among others: Facebook with 800 million users; Twitter with more than 200 million users and Linkedin with 120 million users. Of the three, social network users have the most interest in Facebook. These data show how much influence this social media has in human lives. Why? There are many explainable reasons , but this matter has been described by the Use and Gratification theory of Katz et al. (1974), stating that people use a certain media related to the satisfaction that may be given by such media to the user's need. Basically, social media has several characteristics that may fulfill the user's need, among others, having the qualities of (1) transparent, (2) dialogic (3) networking relations, (4) multi-opinions, (5) multi-forms, and in its embodiment form, like: social media press release, video news release, internet and other composing elements, social networking community as influencer or the combinations thereof. Juju & Sulianta (2010: 7).

Adolescent living nowadays clearly is not the same as the adolescent living prior to today's development of information technology. Rapid changes occur in almost all areas, giving great influence to human lives in general and adolescent lives in particular. This was described by Giddens (2001), in his book *Runaway World*, explaining that globalization as the impact of science and technology development and advancement has brought the impact of changes in human lives in almost all spaces of this earth.

Information and communication technology is part of human culture. Tripp (2010: 164) in his book *Age of Opportunity,* viewed the issue from a religious perspective. He revealed that cultural struggle would always be related to right and wrong, truth and untruth, good and bad, belief and disbelief, as well as human desire and the will of God. Specifically, according to Tripp, it was important to have cultural awareness which must be owned by every person par-

ticularly adolescents in facing every culture, including in this case, communication technology, specifically social media. Cultural awareness meant therein was not merely appreciating classical music, opera etc, but the understanding of how spiritual struggle occurred in the culture in which we lived. Since the real problem did not lie in the culture, in this case not in the technology, but in the user's self. Tripp explained that the filter was not rules or prohibition, but they (adolescents) needed a protector in the form of worldview and righteous life according to their conviction. Why is worldview important? The development of media or information technology currently is truly serious. There are many research proving that with the massive presence of information technology, many changes occur in the community, particularly in adolescents ranging 12-18 years old who experience many changes as described above. Those changes might be classified into several modern cultural sub-themes, among others, known as relativism, individualism, emotionalism, presentism (present-time ism), materialism, autonomy, victimism, Tripp (2010).

Bailey in Samovar (2013) stated "The worldview of people is the way they interpret reality and events, including images of themselves and how they relate to the world around them." Bailey said that worldview includes images of reality based on a set of assumptions on how the world works. Cooke and Klopf suggested "Worldview is a culture's orientation toward God, humanity, nature, question of existence, the universe and cosmos, life, moral and ethical reasoning, suffering, death and other philosophical issues that influence how its members perceive their world." Worldview will question serious issues in the community and generally it would be questions commonly raised. In this case, there are links between history, culture, religion and worldview. Bartels in Samovar (2013) reaffirmed these links by concluding: "The foundation of a nation's culture and the most important determinant of social and business conduct are the religious and philosophical beliefs of a people." Furthermore, it becomes clear that beliefs would be the source of rules of behavioral pattern perception, ethical codes and institutional behavior in which the economic activity takes place.

Nash (2000) shared the same views. Worldview is a set of beliefs concerning the most important issues in this life. Basically every person has worldview constituting the essential part existed in every person.

Nash asserted that this worldview may be referred to as a conceptual scheme used by every person to put and adjust all that he believes, and interprets or assesses a reality either consciously or unconsciously. Nash suggested that, every reaction appeared from one's self is never detached from his worldview or constitutes a consequence of the worldview that he embraces. Samovar (2013: 117) added, that worldview comes from a culture transmitted through a multitude of channels arranged by a number of elements and takes various forms which may be classified in three categories, namely traditional religion, secular humanism, and spirituality. (1) In this case, religion is deemed as a form of worldview. Though in many occasions there are intersections of the three orientations in viewing the reality. Religion provides knowledge about the universe, a set of principles or beliefs concerning the nature of life and death, concerning creation and human relations, and the connection of human and good human nature. (2) It is also the case with secularism, which is deemed as a worldview. The idea of secularism as worldview has become part of human experience for a very lengthy period as people give their attention to the meaning of life and experience about death. There are many boundaries of secularism; to describe secularist worldview we may refer to Atheism, Agnosticism, Rationalism dan Deism concepts. (3) Spirituality as worldview. There are two different approaches. *First,* due to exposure from popular culture, the concept and use of the word *spirituality* tends to be fashionable and trendy. *Second, a* notable figure in this view was Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist who had the view, "Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outside, dream. Who looks inside, awakens."

This sprituality stressed on (1) Self discovery, namely not thinking of merely who you are, but your choice of what you would be, (2) Learn to appreciate silence, quietness, and sufficient meditation, (3) Practice mindfulness. Learn to observe the environment and how you behave in the environment. (4) Being involved is a creative self-expression. By being active in various activities as yoga, dance, and other similar activities, 5) Find simplicity in your lifestyle.

Material and Methodology

The researcher conducted the research by qualitative methodology, as stated by Moleong (2007: 2) "This research was intended to grasp the phenomenon experienced by the research subjects for in-

stance: the behavior, perception, motivation, act and others. Logistically and by way of description in the form of words and language in a particular natural context uses scientific method". Research method used was case study with explorative research approach or type, namely a research with the purpose of delving data without the operation of concepts, or testing the concept on the reality being researched. Everything concerning reaearch was conducted in the field. Formulation was found in the field, data constituted the source of theory based on data, and therefore the theory was produced and developed in the field: Kriyantono (2006: 68). The source of data in this research was acquired from two types of data source, namely *the primary and secondary*. Primary data was acquired by in-depth interview method with the research objects namely the worldviews of two adolescents. The primary source used in this research was referred to as informant. According to Moleong (2007: 90) "An informant is the person in charge who provides information on the situation and condition of the research background." In this research, the informant were two late adolescents namely those in the aged ranging from 18-21 years old. Data collection technique conducted in this research was by in-depth interview. The analysis unit of this research was the worldview of adolescents in ages 18-21 years old

Result and Discussion

Bailey in Samovar (2013) suggested that worldview is the way people interpret reality and all events, including the image (concept) of themselves and how they relate it with the world around them. Cooke and Klopf said that worldview is a cultural orientation of God, humanity, nature, questions related to the existence, universe and cosmos, concerning life, moral ethics, suffering, death and other philosophical issues affecting the way an individual views his world. Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism and Tawney's Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* asserted, that worldview has a link with behavior. In a research, it was found that the ages around 13 (junior high school) until 16 (senior high school) are the ages where both informants had a lot of experience placing them as adolescents who are susceptible to social media influence. There were at least 3-10 social media that they used, among others Friendster, Instagram, Telegram, Ask FM FB, Line, Skype, Twitter, Path, Snapchat, Facebook, and Whatsapp. The female informant namely MGI experienced cyber bullying

either from her own friends or "strangers".

MGI admitted that she experienced this incident when she was intensively using Facebook social media. MGI realized the reason her "bulliers" did the bullying was because she had the "hedonist" image due to frequent photos uploading in which she appeared like a model, also due to photos uploading when she enjoyed food considered as fancy. MGI thought that what she did was her rights and allowed for every person as long as it did not detriment other person's rights. This MGI's view was influenced by relativism since she neglected other existing standards. Her view concerning 'allowed' and 'not allowed' was very much determined by her own values, and so it showed MGI of being individualist since she did not care about other people's view. Her view also described herself of having presentism since she did not consider the impact of how she behaved toward her view on one issue and on other people's view, in other words she tended to think for the time being only. And finally, MGI was also being a materialist since in her decision she did not relate the matters to God's sovereignty considering she was a Christian, though earlier she was a Buddhist. In addition to photos uploaded, MGI concentrated more on matter, such as body, jewelry and fancy food. Besides, the attitude heading to victimism was also seen in MGI since when she was bullied, she looked for other objects on which she could blame, namely her confession that she was shaped by her experiences, her weakness was the result of what others (strangers and her grandmother) did and the situation outside her control.

When reaching 18 years old, MGI had many changes. Her experience as a cyber-bullying victim made her decided to be more careful in using social media. Her strong personality, shaped as a result of education from her grandmother, made her survive and became more careful in uploading any content on her social media. Her carefulness in uploading any content on social media, according to her, was determined more by consideration of good and bad, profit and loss, rather than by the consequence caused from the social media that she used. As proven by the decision she took namely to be mindful of the concept projected by each matter (photo) to be uploaded, making her reaped the outcome of an offer to be a model for cosmetic ads. From this experience, she also gave opinion advicing to her friends to use social media wisely to avoid negative experience as she once had. MGI acknowledged that she has repeatedly

advised her friends particularly those younger than her to be careful in using social media, by explaining the negative impact that it was capable of making. Changes of MGI in using social media which had created a positive impact namely an offer to be a model for ads, were caused by a perspective referring more to secular views and spirituality with obvious reasons, among others, MGI would use the media by considering the advantage or benefit to be gained personally. Other than that, MGI did not involve Christian values in accordance with the religion that she embraced in her decision to use social media more carefully. MGI did not honestly say that she did not relate her decision based on spiritual consideration, but it was obvious from her confession that she did it based on self discovery namely based on her wish of what she will become in the future. Practicing mindfulness, namely learn to observe the environment and how would you behave in the environment, MGI wanted to be accepted by her environment including the one she referred to as "stranger".

MGI's experience differed from ADP's. ADP has parents both of whom worked as private company employees. They were Catholic. ADP was the eldest child of three siblings. At his 20, the intensity in using social media was declining due to demands of college activity. He was active in student activity namely TV production club. He realized there was a demand to be a role model to his club members so he was more careful in using social media. He was truly aware of the negative side of social media and therefore ADP tried to avoid a high frequency of usage. One reason was that ADP wanted to give a good example to his club members. His social media activity was, for instance, Youtube not in playful manner but for college activity. In average, ADP spent Rp100,000 for phone credit. The most frequently used social media was Instagram, particularly for his photographs to be uploaded. He experienced a negative effect of social media in his elementary school time. It was his sixth grade when he started to use cellular phone. Earlier he used to play with friends but then he frequently spent time alone in his room playing cellular phone. ADP felt that there have been some changes since junior high school when he liked playing games more, while earlier before using games gadget he liked to play with his friends. Social media changed him. He spent more time to play games, even accessing porn videos. He tended to be quiet. ADP played games because it was fun until finally he could not control his time. In

this case, ADP's drive was greatly influenced by individualistic thought. He did not mind other people's view. ADP also did not mind the long-term impacts from watching porn videos (presentism). His initial decision to watch porn video was due to curiosity and subsequently more about fulfilling his desire or libido (presentism). ADP did not have a clear standard of why he had to reject unwise use of social media because it was obvious from his confession that he used social media due to impulse only (relativism). ADP also did not have functional awareness of the existence of God and the call to live for His glory (materialism)*,* ADP used his feelings (emotionalism) as personal guiding system. The reason for using the media was what he considered good, namely the reason leading to feelings. ADP followed his feeling impulse.

ADP changed in his final senior high school year when his parents bought him a camera to start photography activity. His father frequently reminded him of helping his mother rather than keep playing gadget. His mother also reminded him that his uncontrolled habit of using gadget was a sin. His father's approach rarely related to religion, but rather giving him advice not to be a burden to his mother in the future. In addition to his parents, ADP admitted a moment at church, when his Pastor rebuked the congregation for using gadget when the service was ongoing. The experience left a mark in him, that gadget could make other people to be uncomfortable. He agreed with the Pastor that every person must be wise in using the media. ADP once reminded other persons especially those who were close to him not to depend on the media. But he thought many of his friends had hostile attitude and did not want to listen. His friends' reaction made him to be silent for he remembered his grandmother's advice which also became his father's principle in treating him. He also decided to be wise in using social media and consider its up- and downsides, since he was the eldest child that must give a good example, and also a demand as the chairman of the TV Production Club at his campus. He had experience with parents who gave advice without coercion; facility and chance as well as support from parents and experience with the Pastor and the responsibility as the club chairman made ADP decided to reduce social media activity and were better in managing his social media. ADP decision with these positive results obviously was mostly determined by secular worldview and spirituality compared with the religious ones, since ADP decision was

very much determined by how he should be accepted by his environment, parents and club members (Self discovery). There was also 'Practice mindfulness' element, namely learn to observe the environment and how he behaved in his environment.

Conclusion

The result of this research indicated that late adolescent worldview has decisive effects on an adolescent' attitude or how he behaves to social media. Explorative approach by collecting data through in-depth interview of two late adolescents age 18-21 showed several findings among others: 1) That adolescents in aged ranging 15-18 (senior high school level) were easily affected by negative impacts of social media 2) As the finding of Atkin, Jeffers and Neuendorf, 1998 in Giles, 2003, p.267 that male adolescents use the media not to find information but to play games, which was in fact similar to the finding in this research. The male late adolescent has used gadget to play games since junior high school, unlike the female adolescent who used it for friendship. 3) Adolescents will change the way they use social media when reaching 18 years old or when entering higher education namely when they are college students. 4) Changes in adolescents are very much depend on other factors involved, among others, parents who are actively monitoring, reminding or even explaining how to use social media and at the same time explaining the impacts thereof. 5) The other factor is the presence of other activities offered by parents. 6) The worldviews of both informants are not a pure worldview from religion but the combination of secularism and spiritualism since their attitude and behavior to the media are determined more by the consideration of *Self* discovery and *Practice* mindfulness. Nevertheless, the researcher in this study does not intend to find weaknesses of a worldview but to learn how the worldview of late adolescents determines their attitude and behavior towards social media.

The researcher recommends a further research which is similar of its kind. The research recommended is a grounded research, the purpose of which is that from the result of this case, this study research using an empirical generalization would establish concepts specifying the concept of the data found, as well as developing the theory. In other words, this research creates a further research under this topic being discussed.

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